

W. S. GILBERT

***SONGS
OF A SAVOYARD***

W. S. Gilbert

Songs of a Savoyard

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THE DARNED MOUNSEER

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I SHIPPED, d'ye see, in a Revenue sloop,
And, off Cape Finisteere,
A merchantman we see,
A Frenchman, going free,
So we made for the bold Mounseer,
D'ye see?
We made for the bold Mounseer!
But she proved to be a Frigate—and she up with her ports,
And fires with a thirty-two!
It come uncommon near,
But we answered with a cheer,
Which paralysed the Parley-voo,
D'ye see?
Which paralysed the Parley-voo!
Then our Captain he up and he says, says he,
“That chap we need not fear,—
We can take her, if we like,
She is sartin for to strike,
For she's only a darned Mounseer,
D'ye see?
She's only a darned Mounseer!
But to fight a French fal-lal—it's like hittin' of a gal—
It's a lubberly thing for to do;
For we, with all our faults,
Why, we're sturdy British salts,
While she's but a Parley-voo,

D'ye see?

A miserable Parley-voo!"

So we up with our helm, and we scuds before the breeze,
As we gives a compassionating cheer;

Froggee answers with a shout

As he sees us go about,

Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer,

D'ye see?

Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer!

And I'll wager in their joy they kissed each other's cheek

(Which is what them furriners do),

And they blessed their lucky stars

We were hardy British tars

Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo,

D'ye see?

Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo!

THE ENGLISHMAN

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HE is an Englishman!

For he himself has said it,

And it's greatly to his credit,

That he is an Englishman!

For he might have been a Roosian,

A French, or Turk, or Proosian,

Or perhaps Itali-an!

But in spite of all temptations,

To belong to other nations,

He remains an Englishman!

Hurrah!

For the true-born Englishman!

THE DISAGREEABLE MAN

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IF you give me your attention, I will tell you what I am:
I'm a genuine philanthropist—all other kinds are sham.
Each little fault of temper and each social defect
In my erring fellow-creatures, I endeavour to correct.
To all their little weaknesses I open people's eyes,
And little plans to snub the self-sufficient I devise;
I love my fellow-creatures—I do all the good I can—
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

To compliments inflated I've a withering reply,
And vanity I always do my best to mortify;
A charitable action I can skilfully dissect;
And interested motives I'm delighted to detect.
I know everybody's income and what everybody earns,
And I carefully compare it with the income-tax returns;
But to benefit humanity, however much I plan,
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

I'm sure I'm no ascetic; I'm as pleasant as can be;
You'll always find me ready with a crushing repartee;
I've an irritating chuckle, I've a celebrated sneer,
I've an entertaining snigger, I've a fascinating leer;
To everybody's prejudice I know a thing or two;
I can tell a woman's age in half a minute—and I do—
But although I try to make myself as pleasant as I can,

Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

THE COMING BY-AND-BY

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SAD is that woman's lot who, year by year,
Sees, one by one, her beauties disappear;
As Time, grown weary of her heart-drawn sighs,
Impatiently begins to "dim her eyes"—
Herself compelled, in life's uncertain gloamings,
To wreath her wrinkled brow with well-saved "combings"—
Reduced, with rouge, lipsalve, and pearly grey,
To "make up" for lost time, as best she may!

Silvered is the raven hair,
Spreading is the parting straight,
Mottled the complexion fair,
Halting is the youthful gait,
Hollow is the laughter free,
Spectacled the limpid eye,
Little will be left of me,
In the coming by-and-by!

Fading is the taper waist—
Shapeless grows the shapely limb,
And although securely laced,
Spreading is the figure trim!
Stouter than I used to be,
Still more corpulent grow I—
There will be too much of me
In the coming by-and-by!

THE HIGHLY RESPECTABLE GONDOLIER

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I STOLE the Prince, and I brought him here,
And left him, gaily prattling
With a highly respectable Gondolier,
Who promised the Royal babe to rear,
And teach him the trade of a timoneer
With his own beloved bratling.

Both of the babes were strong and stout,
And, considering all things, clever.
Of that there is no manner of doubt—
No probable, possible shadow of doubt—
No possible doubt whatever.

Time sped, and when at the end of a year
I sought that infant cherished,
That highly respectable Gondolier
Was lying a corpse on his humble bier—
I dropped a Grand Inquisitor's tear—
That Gondolier had perished!

A taste for drink, combined with gout,
Had doubled him up for ever.
Of *that* there is no manner of doubt—
No probable, possible shadow of doubt—
No possible doubt whatever.

But owing, I'm much disposed to fear,
To his terrible taste for tippling,
That highly respectable Gondolier
Could never declare with a mind sincere