

# HASTE TO THE WEDDING

BY

W. S. GILBERT & GEORGE GROSSMITH

1892

Edited by David Trutt

# HASTE TO THE WEDDING

## AN OPERETTA

WRITTEN BY W. S. GILBERT

COMPOSED BY GEORGE GROSSMITH

(This piece is original only as far as regards its musical setting. The plot is a very free adaptation of “Le Chapeau de Paille d'Italie.” )

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In 1873, W. S. Gilbert's play *The Wedding March* debuted at the Court Theatre, written under his pseudonym F. Latour Tomline. It was a free adaptation of Eugène Marin Labiche's *Un Chapeau de Paille d'Italie* ("The Italian Straw Hat").

In 1892, W. S. Gilbert (words) and George Grossmith (music) presented the operetta *Haste To The Wedding* at the Criterion Theatre. This was during the "carpet quarrel" period of between *The Gondoliers* and *Utopia Limited*. The operetta was a musical version of the 1873 play. What follows herein, is the operetta libretto. The version of the libretto used is from Gilbert's 1911 *Original Plays - Fourth Series*.

It is assumed that anyone interested in this book is familiar with the substance and background of the play and opera; the introduction will therefore be devoted to clarifying how they will be presented.

There are a number of references in *The Wedding March* and *Haste To The Wedding* to music playing "*Haste to the Wedding*." This refers to a popular Irish song. Perhaps this is the source of the title of the Gilbert and Grossmith operetta.

The play had the characters MR. POPPYTOP and ANNA MARIA POPPYTOP from Pettytwiddleum, and the milliner SOPHY CRACKTHORPE. Gilbert changed them for the operetta to MR. MAGUIRE and MARIA MAGUIRE from Pettytwiddllm, and the milliner to BELLA CRACKENTHORPE.

In the opera, Foodle has been downgraded to a "loutish simpleton."

The hat of the play is simply trimmed with poppies. But the hat of the opera is trimmed in a much more unique, and Gilbertian, way.

Gilbert appropriated much material unchanged from his play into the opera. However, he also performed the word-smithing for which he is noted. The operetta was not as successful as the play; many attribute this to the inferior quality of Grossmith's music as compared to what Sullivan had produced for Gilbert's Savoy Operas.

The reader will recognize many snippets and phrases which have found their way into the Savoy Operas. Gilbert has carelessly omitted the important characters CAPTAIN BAPP and LEONORA BUNTHUNDER from the Dramatis Personae, but the editor has restored them to the listing.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

WOODPECKER TAPPING	(a Bridegroom)
MR. MAGUIRE	(Market Gardener from Pettytwiddllm)
UNCLE BOPADDY	(a Deaf Gentleman)
COUSIN ALFRED FOODLE	
THE DUKE OF TURNIPTOPSHIRE	(an Emotional Noble)
MAJOR-GENERAL BUNTHUNDER	(a Companion of the Bath)
CRIPPS	(a Milliner's Book-keeper)
WILKINSON	(a Policeman)
BARNS	(Retainer at Market Harborough)
JACKSON	(Woodpecker's Valet)
CAPTAIN BAPP	(of the Guards)
MARCHIONESS OF MARKET HARBOROUGH	(an Emotional Noblewoman)
LADY POPTON	
MARIA MAGUIRE	(a Bride)
BELLA CRACKENTHORPE	(a Milliner)
PATTY PARKER	(a Lady's Maid)
MRS. LEONORA BUNTHUNDER	

*Wedding Guests and Members of the Upper Aristocracy.*

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(Act I, Scene 1.—*Room in MR. WOODPECKER TAPPING'S house. Door C. Doors R and L. JACKSON discovered dusting chairs. Enter PATTY, on tip-toe.*)

PATTY. Is it all right, Mr. Jackson?

JACKSON. All is right, Patty. (*Kisses her.*)

PATTY. Now, none of that, if you please. Your master, Mr. Woodpecker Tapping, is to be married to-day, and you told me I might come and see the wedding presents. Where are they?

JACK. In the next room—you shall see them presently.

PATTY. But how comes it that the wedding takes place from the bridegroom's house, and why are all the wedding presents sent there?

JACK. Because the bride, Miss Maria Maguire, lives at Pettytwiddllm, in a remote corner of Wales—and as Mr. Tapping can't get leave to go down to a remote corner of Wales, a remote corner of Wales has to come to him.

DUET—JACKSON and PATTY.

JACK.	To-day at eleven, Young Woodpecker Tapping Will enter the heaven Of matrimonee— To 'Ria Maguire That beauty entrapping Woodpecker Esquire United will be.
(Dancing.)	And the bells they will jingle, The wine it will bubble, As Woodpecker, single, Turned Woodpecker double, Reforming his ways, which are rather too free, Walks into the heaven of matrimonee!
PATTY.	Young Woodpecker Tapping (Professed lady-killer) Is rarely caught napping By widow or maid, But her fascinations— Her gold and her siller— All considerations Have thrown in the shade.

(Dancing.)                    So the bells they will jingle,  
    The wine it will bubble,  
    As Woodpecker, single,  
    Turned Woodpecker double,  
    Reforming his ways, which are rather too free,  
    Walks into the heaven of matrimonee!

(Enter UNCLE BOPADDY, who catches them dancing. They stop abruptly when they see him. He is very deaf, and carries a bandbox.)

BOPAD. Don't mind me—it's only Uncle Bopaddy—nobody minds Uncle Bopaddy! Anybody come yet?

JACK. (with great show of deference). Not yet, you ridiculous old rag-bag! Not yet, you concentrated essence of disreputable senility.

PATTY. (aside to JACKSON). Hush! hush! you'll make the old gentleman angry.

JACK. Oh, no—he's as deaf as a post—he can't hear. (Shouting to him.) You can't hear, can you? (To PATTY.) I always talk to him like that; it amuses me very much. (To BOPADDY, who is much struck with PATTY.) Don't you think that at your age you might find something better to do than to go about chucking young girls under the chin, you disreputable old vagabond?

BOPAD. Yes, yes—you are perfectly right. I told him so myself; but, bless you, you might as well talk to a post! (To PATTY.) Here, my dear, take this (giving her parcel). It's a little present for the bride—now don't crush it, there's a nice little gal!

PATTY. All right, old sixpennorth of halfpence!

BOPAD. (much amused). Yes—you're quite right. I often do so myself. Ha! ha! (Exit PATTY, with parcel.) What a nice little gal! Very nice little gal! Don't know that I ever saw a nicer little gal!

JACK. Go along, you wicked old pantaloon, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, at your age! (Gives him a chair.) There, sit down, and hold your wicked old tongue!

(Exit JACKSON.)

BOPAD. (sits). Thankee, kindly. Remarkably civil, well-spoken young man, to be sure! Don't know that I ever met a nicer-spoken young man.

(Enter WOODPECKER TAPPING.)

WOOD. Well, here's a pretty piece of business.

BOPAD. My nephew—my dear nephew (shaking his hand). Where's the wedding party—have they arrived?

WOOD. They're coming—in eight cabs. But listen to my adventure. I was riding in Hyde Park just now, and I accidentally dropped my whip—

BOPAD. (*shaking his hand*). My boy, those sentiments do honour to your head, and your heart.

WOOD. What sentiments? Oh, I forgot—he's deaf. No matter. Well, I dismounted and picked it up, and then discovered that the noble animal had bolted, and was at that moment half a mile away.

BOPAD. But I go farther than that. I go so far as to say that a good husband makes a good wife.

WOOD. Here's an old donkey!

BOPAD. Thank you, my boy, I am—I always was.

WOOD. Well, after a long run I came up with my spirited grey, and found him in the act of devouring a Leghorn hat, belonging to a young and lovely lady who was indulging in an affectionate *tête-à-tête* with a military gentleman who may or may not have been her betrothed. I jumped on my horse—apologized to the lady, threw her a sovereign (or it might have been a shilling—I'm sure I don't know), and this is all the change I got out of it (*showing the remains of a straw-hat*).

BOPAD. Dear me, that's a very nice straw—a very nice straw! I don't know that I ever saw a nicer straw! Ha! now that's very curious.

WOOD. Eh?

BOPAD. Nothing. It's curious—it's a coincidence. It's just like the one I've given Maria for a wedding present. Hah! At what time is the wedding?

WOOD. Eleven (*shows him on fingers*).

BOPAD. Eh?

WOOD. Eleven! (*shouting*).

BOPAD. You must speak a great deal louder—I can't hear.

WOOD. Eleven (*whispering*).

BOPAD. Oh! eleven. Why didn't you say so at first? (*Looking at watch.*) Half-past ten—just time for a glass of sherry. I saw it on the sideboard as I came up—you'll find me at the sideboard as you go down. (*Exit BOPADDY.*)

WOOD. So, in one hour I shall be a married man! Married to the daughter of a human porcupine—one of the most ill-tempered, crotchety, exacting old market-gardeners in Great Britain. Maria is a charming girl—she has only one drawback—a cousin, Alfred Foodle, who was brought up with her. He kisses her. It's permitted in some families. It's permitted in hers. I don't quite see why—he's as big as I am. The best of it is, *I'm* not allowed to. Of course it's all right, because they were brought up together. At the same time, I wish he wouldn't.

## SONG—WOODPECKER.

Maria is simple and chaste—  
     She's pretty and tender and modest—  
 But on one or two matters of taste  
     Her views are distinctly the oddest.  
 Her virtue is something sublime—  
     No kissing—on that there's a stopper—  
 When I try, she says, "All in good time—  
     At present it's highly improper."  
     Such virtue heroic I call,  
         To complain were the act of a noodle—  
     She's allowed to kiss no one at all  
         But her cousin—her cousin: young Foodle;  
 Now a maiden could never offend  
     By embracing her father or brother;  
 But I never could quite comprehend  
     Why cousins should kiss one another.  
 Of course it's an innocent whim—  
     Beneath it no mischief lies hidden.  
 But why is that given to him  
     Which to me is so strictly forbidden?  
     It's as innocent as it can be;  
         He's a kind of performing French poodle.  
     But why withhold kisses from me  
         Which are freely accorded to Foodle?

*(Enter CAPTAIN BAPP and LEONORA.)*

WOOD. Who's this?

BAPP. This is the scoundrel's house, and (*seeing WOODPECKER*) this is the scoundrel!

WOOD. Confusion! It's the lady of the Leghorn hat, and her military admirer!

LEON. Dear Captain Bapp, be careful!

BAPP. Leonora, leave this to me. (*To WOODPECKER*). Well, sir, suppose you offer this lady a seat! (*WOODPECKER gives LEONORA a chair, and is about to take another.*) Don't sit down yourself, sir! How dare you attempt to sit down in this lady's presence? Now, sir, to business. You have grossly insulted this lady.

WOOD. How?

BAPP. In the first place, you devoured this lady's hat.

WOOD. Pardon me—my horse devoured her hat.

BAPP. A quibble, sir; you are responsible for his action. You devoured this lady's hat; and you then have the audacity to throw her this contemptible coin as compensation! (*Showing WOODPECKER a shilling.*)

WOOD. (*aside*). It was a shilling! I thought it was. (*Aloud.*) Sir, it was a mistake—allow me to rectify it. (*Gives him a sovereign.*)

BAPP. Fire and fury! what's this?

WOOD. That is a sovereign—or pound—for the hat.

BAPP. Insult upon insult! We have not come here for compensation.

WOOD. Then, what the deuce have you come for?

BAPP. In the first place, an apology.

LEON. No, no, I forgive him! Come away—it's not necessary.

BAPP. Leonora, *will* you leave this to me? Well, sir, the apology.

WOOD. Well, sir, I apologize.

BAPP. Unreservedly?

WOOD. Unreservedly. Now, what is the moral of all this, Leonora?

LEON. Sir!

BAPP. By the God of War—!

WOOD. I call you Leonora, because I don't know your other name. The moral of this is—if you will walk out in Hyde Park with surreptitious captains in the Army—

LEON. Sir, you are in error. This gentleman is my cousin. We were brought up together.

WOOD. Oh, I see; he's your Foodle.

BAPP. This Lady's *what*, sir?

WOOD. Her Foodle. I say you're her Foodle. You don't know what I mean; but you may depend upon it you are. I wish you'd go.

BAPP. Oh, but I haven't done yet. This hat, sir, is a present from the lady's husband.

WOOD. What! There's a husband, is there? Oh, Leonora, I should have expected this from Bapp, but I'm surprised at *you*.

LEON. My husband is the most jealous man in the world, and if I go home without it he'll kill me. There's only one thing to be done—you must get another exactly like it.

WOOD. With pleasure—to-morrow.

BAPP. To-morrow! And what's to become of the lady in the mean time?

LEON. Oh, I'll remain here (*sits*).

WOOD. Here!—in my house? On my wedding-day? Impossible!

MAGUIRE. (*without*). Woodpecker!

WOOD. The wedding-party have arrived, and do *not* suppose that that is a bull of Bashan. [*Referring to Maguire's loud voice.*] No—it is my father-in-law elect! (*Shouts.*) Coming! (*To LEONORA.*) Stop—I see a way of doing it. I'll invent an excuse to call at a milliner's on the way to the Registrar's, and tell her to send one here.

MAGUIRE. (*without*). Woodpecker!

WOOD. Coming! (*To BAPP.*) Will that do?

BAPP. (*to LEONORA.*) Will that do?

LEON. (*to BAPP.*) That will do.

BAPP. (*to WOODPECKER.*) That will do.

MAGUIRE. (*furiously*). Woodpecker!

WOOD. He's coming up—he mustn't find you here. Go in there—quick! (*Places BAPP in room R and LEONORA in room L.*) Just in time!

(*Music, "Haste to the Wedding." Enter the wedding party, composed of semi-grotesque old-fashioned and countrified couples. They dance round the stage. MARIA, in bridal dress, dances on with FOODLE, a loutish simpleton; BOPADDY follows, and finally MAGUIRE in a towering rage.*)

CHORUS—EPITHALAMIUM. [*Praise to bride and groom.*]

Ring, ye joybells, long and loudly,  
Happy hearts together tied—  
Bridegroom's heart is swelling proudly  
As he takes his blushing bride!

MAGUIRE. (*furiously*). It's off! It's off!

WOOD. What's off?

MAGUIRE. The wedding! I won't have it!

SONG—MAGUIRE.

You've kept us all waiting outside!  
Such insults I never foresaw:  
You've insulted your beautiful bride—  
You've insulted your father-in-law!  
You've insulted our excellent guests—  
You've pooh-poohed the connubial knot—  
You've insulted the flymen  
Who'd drive you to Hymen—  
By George, you've insulted the lot!  
Yes, yes, yes,  
By George, you've insulted the lot!

ALL.

MAGUIRE. It's off! Her affection's misplaced!  
 It's off! such a man I disown!  
 It's off! take your arm from her waist!  
 It's off! let the lady alone!  
 And your beautiful bride, who belongs  
 To a father who never ignores  
 Insults by the dozen,  
 She'll marry her cousin—  
 Here, Foodle, be happy—she's yours!

ALL. Yes, yes, yes,  
 Here, Foodle, be happy—she's yours!

(MARIA goes weeping to FOODLE, who embraces her.)

CHORUS. Ring, ye joybells, long and loudly,  
 Happy hearts together tied—  
 Bridegroom's breast is swelling proudly  
 As he takes his blushing bride!

WOOD. St! st! st! Suppose I apologize.

MAGUIRE. Then it's on again.

WOOD. Then I apologize.

MAGUIRE. (*joyfully*). It's on again! (*to FOODLE, who is embracing MARIA.*) Foodle, my boy, it's on again!

FOODLE. (*releasing her*). Oh, Maria! (*MARIA reverts to WOODPECKER.*)

CHORUS. Ring, ye joybells, long and loudly,  
 Happy hearts together tied—  
 Bridegroom's breast is swelling proudly  
 As he takes his blushing bride!

MARIA. Oh! (*screams*).

ALL. What's the matter!

MARIA. Oh, something's pricking me!

WOOD. A pin? Allow me (*proceeds to remove it*).

MAGUIRE. (*stopping him*). How dare you, sir!

MARIA. How dare you!

ALL. For shame!

MAGUIRE. Foodle, remove the pin! (*FOODLE crosses to MARIA and removes the pin from Maria's back, kisses it, and pricks his lips accidentally.*) They were brought up together (*addressing WOODPECKER, who is furious*). Now then, are we all ready? Then away we go!

*(Music commences "Haste to the Wedding," the guests are dancing off.)*

WOOD. Stop! *(Music and guests stop short—aside.)* I must find some excuse to stop at a milliner's—what shall I say? I can't tell them I've got to stop and buy a hat for one lady on my way to be married to another!

MAGUIRE. *(who, like the others, has been standing on one leg in the exact attitude in which he was stopped).* Nearly finished your soliloquy, Woodpecker?

WOOD. *(aside).* Ha! I know! *(Aloud.)* Hullo! It's very awkward—I've lost the licence!

MAGUIRE. What!

ALL. Lost the licence!

MAGUIRE. It's off! Another instance of insulting neglect! It's off! Foodle shall have her! *(Hands her to FOODLE.)*

FOODLE. *(embracing her).* Maria!

CHORUS. Ring, ye joybells—

WOOD. Stop! Don't be absurd—it's very easily rectified. We must call at Doctors' Commons on the way to the church, and get another. You can remain below in the cabs while I apply for it. *(Aside.)* They're all country people, and don't know the difference between Doctors' Commons and a milliner's shop. *(Aloud.)* Will that do?

MAGUIRE. It's on again! *(To FOODLE, who is embracing MARIA.)* Foodle, my boy, it's on again!

CHORUS. Ring, ye joybells—

MAGUIRE. Will you stop that? Foodle, take the bride—pair off and away we go! *(Music "Haste to the Wedding." All dance off, WOODPECKER last.)*

WOOD. If ever I marry again, it shall be into a family without a Foodle! *(Exit WOODPECKER, after the others.)*

END OF ACT I - SCENE 1

(Act I, Scene 2.—*A Milliner's Show-room. Some bonnets and two common milliners' dolls' heads on table up L. High desk with ledger R. Wide opening C, with doors. Enter BELLA CRACKENTHORPE, a Milliner.*)

BELLA. (*calling off stage*). Now, make haste, young ladies—attend to your work and don't chatter. Upon my life I've been very fortunate! I only purchased this business four months ago, and I've quite a large connection already! Ah! it's not everywhere that civility and punctuality, combined with the latest Paris fashions, are to be obtained at a moderate advance on Store prices.

BALLAD—BELLA.

By dreams of ample profits lured,  
 And overflowing till,  
 By easy payments I secured  
 Stock, fixtures, and goodwill.  
 But fixtures are but means to end,  
 Goodwill's a term misplaced,  
 Unless with them you deftly blend  
 Politeness and Good Taste.  
     Without you, money paid is waste,  
     So hail, Politeness and Good Taste!  
 Without your calm unpurchased aid,  
     Work hardly as one may,  
 The finest business in the trade  
     Falls off and fades away.  
 The stock depreciates in tone,  
     The goodwill dwindles fast,  
 The humble fixtures, they alone  
     Are faithful to the last!  
     Ye fixtures, though but means to ends,  
     You do your best, my humble friends!

(*Enter WOODPECKER, in breathless haste.*)

WOOD.

I want a hat of finest straw,  
 At once—a handsome one.  
 Trimmed with an armadillo's claw,  
 Three truffles and a bun,  
 Two thingummies of peacock blue,  
 A what's-its-name on each,  
 A snuff-box and a cockatoo,  
 Two mackerel and a peach.  
 If you have such a thing in stock,  
 I'll buy it—(*looking at watch*) half-past ten o'clock!

RECIT.

BELLA.

Ah, heavens (*recognizing him*)! 'Tis Woodpecker! Oh judge and juries!

WOOD.

'Tis Bella Crackenthorpe, by all the furies! (*aghast*)(*aloud*)

You've nothing like it in your shop?  
 No consequence; good morning!

BELLA.

Stop! (*holding his coat-tails*)Ah, false one! (*WOODPECKER much depressed.*)

BALLAD—BELLA.

You offer to take me, one fine day  
 To the Naval Exhibition;  
 You borrow the money from me to pay  
 The price of our admission.  
 The rain pours down on my brand-new dress,  
 And boots of thin prunella. [*woolen fabric*]  
 Do you stand me a hansom? Oh dear, no!  
 You stand me under a portico,  
 Like a shabby young fellow, and off you go  
 To borrow a friend's umbrella!  
 The rain goes on, and the days they grow—  
 To months accumulating;  
 And patiently under that portico  
 They find me waiting—waiting.  
 To her allegiance staunch and true  
 Stands your deserted Bella.  
 At length six weary months have passed;  
 The weather, no longer overcast,  
 Clears up—and you return at last  
 Without that friend's umbrella!

WOOD. I forgot the umbrella. I'll go and fetch it. (*Going.*)

BELLA. (*stops him*). Not if I know it!

WOOD. (*aside*). Confound it! And the wedding party at the door, in eight cabs!

BELLA. To think that this contemptible creature actually promised to marry me!

WOOD. Marry you? Why, of course I did! Marry you? Certainly I will!

BELLA. You will?

WOOD. Why, of course! What do you take me for?

BELLA. And you didn't desert me in order to run after somebody else?

WOOD. Ha, ha! As if I'd dream of anybody else!

BELLA. Oh, what a relief! Oh, Woodpecker! (*In his arms.*)

WOOD. Now, then; I want a Leghorn hat trimmed with a parrot's head, an armadillo's claw, two mackerel, one peach, three truffles, and a bun.

BELLA. (*jealous*). Oh, for some young lady, I suppose?

WOOD. For some young lady! That's very likely; come, you know me better than that. No; it's for a Captain in the Guards, who wants it as a birthday present for—for his Colonel.

BELLA. Well, by an odd coincidence, I believe I happen to have the very thing; and you shall have it on one condition: that we dine together at Simpson's this afternoon—

WOOD. (*aside*). Very likely!

BELLA. And that you take me to the Adelphi Theatre this evening!

WOOD. Capital! excellent idea! I was just saying to myself as I came in, "What in the world shall I do with myself this evening?" and the Adelphi Theatre is the very thing. Now, then, where's the hat?

BELLA. In the next room. Come along, and don't let me catch you making eyes at the young ladies! (*Exit BELLA.*)

WOOD. (*in despair*). Here's all the wedding party coming upstairs!

(*Music, "Haste to the Wedding."* Enter MAGUIRE, MARIA, FOODLE, BOPADDY, and the wedding party, two and two, all dancing round the stage. The guests range themselves on the left of the scene.)

MAGUIRE. So here we are in Doctors' Commons! (*To WOODPECKER.*) I think you told us this is was Doctors' Commons?

WOOD. Yes, yes—but why in the world have you left your cabs?

MAGUIRE. Never mind that—have you got the licence?

WOOD. No—the—the Registrar has not arrived yet; that is, he's busy. Go back to your cabs and I'll go and fetch him. Oh, dim! dim! dim!

(*Exit WOODPECKER hurriedly after BELLA.*)

MAGUIRE. It's all right—it *is* Doctors' Commons. My friends, let us behave ourselves, we are in Doctors' Commons. Let those who have gloves put them on. I—I am much agitated; and you, my child?

MARIA. Papa, the pin is still there!

MAGUIRE. Walk about, my child, and it will work down. (*Goes to desk.*) Here is the entry-book. We shall all have to sign our names in it.

MARIA. Papa, what are they going to do to me?

MAGUIRE. Nothing, my child. The Registrar will say to you, "Do your parents consent to this marriage?" and you'll reply, "I am." (*Looking off.*) Oh, the Registrar is coming. (*To FOODLE, who has only got one glove on.*) Put on your other glove, will you?

FOODLE. I can't—I've lost it!

MAGUIRE. Then put your hand in your pocket. (*FOODLE puts the gloved hand in his pocket.*) Not that one, stupid! the other one! (*FOODLE does so.*) Now, then, prepare to receive the Registrar!

(*Enter CRIPPS, out of breath and wet through.*)

AIR—CRIPPS AND CHORUS.

CRIPPS. Gracious, how I have been running,  
Backwards, forwards, in the rain—  
Impecunious clients dunning;  
All my trouble, too, in vain!

CHORUS. Bow to the Registrar!  
He can the licence grant—  
He is the man we want—  
Bow to the Registrar! (*All bow to CRIPPS.*)

CRIPPS. Sitting in wet things is odious,  
Rheumatiz my nature loathes;  
So, behind this desk commodious,  
I'll at once change all my clothes!

CHORUS. This is the Registrar!  
He can the licence grant—  
He is the man we want—  
Bow to the Registrar!

(*In the meantime, CRIPPS has dived under the desk and is concealed from view.*)

## RECIT.

MAGUIRE. Why, where's he gone? He's disappeared from view!  
Hallo, you sir! Hallo! (*Craning over desk.*)

CRIPPS. (*showing his head only.*) Good day to you!

MAGUIRE. This is my daughter, sir.

CRIPPS. One moment, pray.

MAGUIRE. These are her bridesmaids—this her bridal day!

CRIPPS. (*aside.*) No doubt a wedding party, come to make  
Some purchases!

MAGUIRE. Our names, perhaps, you'll take?  
(*CRIPPS, who has taken off his coat, puts it on again, and prepares to take their names.*)

MAGUIRE. My name is Anthony Hurricane Egg,  
Bartholomew Capperboy Property Skegg—  
I haven't done yet—Conolly Maguire—

CRIPPS. But really—

MAGUIRE. I haven't quite finished—Esquire!

CHORUS. (*rising from their seats, and dancing up to the Registrar and back again.*)  
His name is Anthony Hurricane Egg, &c.  
(*All sit down suddenly.*)

CRIPPS. (*speaking.*) Sir, The Christian names are immaterial.

MAGUIRE. Oh! (*Sings*) Oh, I was born at Pettybun  
On a Saturday—on a Saturday—

CRIPPS. (*speaking.*) Your place of birth is also immaterial!

MAGUIRE. Oh! (*Sings*) In eighteen hundred twenty one,  
On the fourth on May—On the fourth on May—

CRIPPS. (*angrily.*) My dear sir, I don't want your biography—you have told me quite  
enough!

MAGUIRE. Very good. (*To BOPADDY, in normal voice.*) Now it's your turn. (*Loudly.*) Now it's your turn. (*In a whisper.*) Now it's your turn.

BOPAD. Oh—my turn (*advancing with dignity*). Sir (*to CRIPPS*), before I consent to become a witness in this matter—

ALL. (*bursting into chorus*). On a Saturday—on a Saturday!

BOPAD. I should like to express my views as to the qualifications of a witness—

ALL. (*as before*). On the fourth of May—on the fourth of May!

CRIPPS. What is he talking about?

BOPAD. In the first place, he should be of full age. I am. In the second, he should be a Briton by birth. I am. In the third—

ALL. Oh, he was born at Pettybun,  
On the fourth of May—on the fourth of May,  
In eighteen hundred twenty-one,  
On a Saturday—on a Saturday!  
(*All sit suddenly.*)

FOODLE. (*looking off stage*). Oh, uncle, uncle! look here! (*During the dialogue that follows BOPADDY has been much fascinated with the two milliners' dolls' heads, flirting first with one, then with the other, as if unable to make up his mind which of them he prefers.*)

MAGUIRE. What! my son-in-law elect, kissing a young woman! It's off! It's off!  
Foodle, my daughter is yours!

FOODLE. Maria! (*Putting his arms round her.*)

(*Enter WOODPECKER.*)

WOOD. Why in the world haven't you gone back to your cabs?

MAGUIRE. Sir, it's off! It's off!

WOOD. Very good.

MAGUIRE. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

WOOD. I am. What have I done?

MAGUIRE. You dare to ask that when I saw you through that door with a young woman in your arms!

WOOD. (*aside*). He saw me! (*Aloud.*) I admit it, sir!

MARIA. (*crying*). He owns to it!

ALL. (*crying*). He owns to it!

FOODLE. My darling! (*Embracing MARIA.*)

WOOD. Will you stop that hugging?

FOODLE. She's my cousin—we were brought up together.

MAGUIRE. It's quite allowable—she's his cousin.

WOOD. His cousin! Oh, then, the lady I was embracing is *my* cousin!

ALL. Oh indeed—that's quite another matter!

MAGUIRE. It's on again! Foodle, my boy, it's on again!

FOODLE. (*relinquishing* MARIA). Old teetotum!

MAGUIRE. Introduce me to your cousin—I'll invite her to the wedding.

WOOD. (*aside*). Bella at Maria's wedding! (*Aloud*.) It's of no use—she can't come—she's in mourning.

MAGUIRE. What, in a pink dress?

WOOD. Yes—it's for her husband.

MAGUIRE. (*convinced*). Oh. Well, we're quite ready, sir, when you are (*to* CRIPPS). (*All sit in a row opposite desk.*)

WOOD. What are they doing?

CRIPPS. I really must make a complete change. I'll go into the next room—there's no one there. (*Going towards door with his dry clothes under his arm.*)

MAGUIRE. Where are you going?

CRIPPS. I shall catch my death of cold if I don't—I really can't help it—you must excuse me. (*Exit* CRIPPS.)

MAGUIRE. My friends, let us follow the Registrar.

(*Music. They all dance after CRIPPS in couples, BOPADDY last, with one of the doll's heads, and kissing his hand to the other.*)

WOOD. Where the deuce are they all going?

(*Enter* BELLA.)

BELLA. Here's your specimen (*giving remains of hat*). I'm very sorry, but I can't match it.

WOOD. What!

BELLA. If you like to wait three weeks I can get you one from Florence.

WOOD. Three weeks!

BELLA. I only know of one like it in London.

WOOD. I buy it—mind, I buy it.

BELLA. Impossible! I sold it a week ago to—

WOOD. To whom?

BELLA. To The Marchioness of Market Harborough!

(*Exit* BELLA.)

WOOD. This is pleasant! A Marchioness! I can't call on a Marchioness and ask her how much she wants for her hat!

*(Enter CRIPPS R, with his dry clothes under his arm, pursued by the wedding party, dancing as before, BOPADDY last, with the doll's head. They exeunt after CRIPPS L. Music forte while they are on—pianissimo when they are off.)*

WOOD. Hi! Mr. Maguire, where are you going? *(WOODPECKER is about to follow.)*  
*(Enter JACKSON.)*

JACK. Sir, I've just come from home.

WOOD. Well, is the Captain there still?

JACK. Yes, he's there, but he ain't still. The lady has fainted, and can't leave the house.

WOOD. Wrap her up in a blanket and send her home at once! *(Exit JACKSON.)* I must have this hat at any rate. *(Refers to Blue Book.)* The Marchioness of Market Harborough—Carlton Gardens. I'll get married first, and then I'll call on her. But what shall I do with the wedding party? I know. I'll shut 'em up in the Duke of York's Column. I'll say to the keeper, "I engage this Column for twenty-four hours—let no one out."

*(Exit WOODPECKER.)*

*(Enter CRIPPS from L, with his dry clothes, very breathless.)*

CRIPPS. Why the deuce do the people follow me everywhere? It's impossible for me to change my clothes!

*(Enter all the wedding party as before. Music forte. CRIPPS runs round stage and off, followed by wedding party. BOPADDY last, with the doll's head. He is much exhausted with running.)*

END OF ACT I.

(Act II.—*Reception Room at the MARCHIONESS OF MARKET HARBOROUGH. A handsomely furnished front and back drawing-room in Carlton Gardens. The two rooms separated by handsome double curtains which are closed during the early part of the Act. A sumptuous luncheon is laid on the table in back-room, but concealed from audience by curtains. Doors R and L. Window up stage L. Small table R with vase and bouquet. Grand piano L.C. Enter BARNS, an old family retainer.*)

BARNS. (*announcing*). The Duke of Turniptopshire!  
(*Enter DUKE. Exit BARNS.*)

DUKE. Admirable! Magnificent! What gorgeous decorations! What refined taste! What have we here? (*Looks through curtains.*) A most luxurious cold collation! Seven and sixpence a head, if it cost a penny! I wonder if (*looking around him*) there's no one coming—I wonder if I might venture to take just one tartlet! I will—(*Takes a tartlet from table and eats it.*)

(*Enter the MARCHIONESS OF MARKET HARBOROUGH.*)

MARCH. Well, Duke.

DUKE. Marchioness (*embarrassed, with his mouthful*)—I—I—delighted to see you.

MARCH. (*more in sorrow than in anger*). Ah, Duke, Duke—you've been picking the luncheon again! Now, that's too bad!

DUKE. I'm sorry—very, very sorry. Forgive me, it was thoughtless—criminal if you will, but I was ever a wayward child, accustomed to have his every whim gratified, and now, in middle age, I find it difficult to shake off the shackles that custom and education have riveted on me. (*In tears.*)

MARCH. (*in tears*). You were my late husband's early friend!

DUKE. (*with an effort*). And now, my dear Marchioness, whom do you expect at your concert this morning? Tell me all—do not fear—you can trust me implicitly!

MARCH. I feel I can! Well, then, there's Lord and Lady Popton, the Duke and Duchess of Deal, Colonel Coketown, the Dowager Duchess of Worthing, Lord and Lady Pentwhistle, and the Archbishop of Bayswater.

DUKE. (*aside*). All dem [*damn*] snobs. (*Aloud.*) And who sings?

MARCH. The most delightful creature in the world—no other than the distinguished falsetto, Nisnardi, who arrived only a week ago from Bologna, and who has already turned all the crowned heads of Europe! He can go up to G!

DUKE. Gad bless me, what a gift!

MARCH. You have no idea how delightfully eccentric he is.

DUKE. Well, you know, a man who can touch an upper G is not like us common fellers: he's a genius—a genius.

MARCH. Exactly. I asked him to sing two songs this afternoon, and sent him a cheque for three thousand guineas; here is his reply: (*reads*), "Madam, you ask me to sing two songs. I will sing three; you offer me three thousand guineas—it is not enough—"

DUKE. Dem foreigner!

MARCH. "It is not enough; my terms are—a flower from your bouquet!"

DUKE. A what?

MARCH. "A flower from your bouquet!" Is it not romantic?

DUKE. It's a poem—a "ballade!" Pardon this weakness! (*Wiping his eyes.*)

MARCH. Dear, dear Duke! (*Wiping her eyes.*) You know the Princess Polpetti—with the pretty feet?

DUKE. I know her pretty feet.

MARCH. What do you think were his terms for singing at her concert?

DUKE. I don't know. He seems fond of flowers—perhaps a pot of mignonette?

MARCH. Nothing of the kind—one of her old slippers!

DUKE. (*in tears*). Don't—demme, I can't stand it—I can't, indeed!

MARCH. What tenderness—what sympathy! (*Pressing his hand.*) You were my late husband's early friend! (*Noise and carriage heard.*) Here are my guests, and I've been crying! I mustn't be seen in this state! Duke, oblige me by receiving them—I'll be down in one minute.

(*Exit MARCHIONESS.*)

DUKE. (*takes out snuff-box, opens it as if about to take snuff, produces powder-puff, and powders his face to remove traces of tears*). Why am I cursed with this tremulous sensitiveness? Why are my heartstrings the sport and toy of every wave of sympathetic second-hand sentiment? Ah! ye small tradesmen and other Members of Parliament, who think rump steak and talk bottled beer, I would give ten years of my life to experience, for one brief day, the joy of being a commonplace man!

## SONG—DUKE.

Oh butcher, oh baker, oh candlestick-maker,  
     Oh vendors of bacca and snuff—  
 And you, licensed vittler, and public-house skittler,  
     And all who sell sticky sweet-stuff—  
 Ye barbers, and Messrs. the Bond Street hair-dressers  
     (Some shave you, and others do not)—  
 Ye greasy porkpie men—ye second-hand flymen—  
     All people who envy my lot (*taking up tambourine*),  
     Let each of you lift up his voice—  
     With tabor and cymbal rejoice  
     That you're not, by some horrible fluke,  
     A highly-strung sensitive Duke!  
         An over-devotional,  
         Super-emotional,  
         Hyper-chimerical,  
         Extra-hysterical,  
         Wildly-aesthetical,  
         Madly phrenetical,  
     Highly-strung sensitive Duke!  
 You men of small dealings, of course you've your feelings—  
     There's no doubt at all about that—  
 When a dentist exacting your tooth is extracting,  
     You howl like an aristocrat.  
 But an orphan cock-sparrow, who thrills to the marrow  
     A Duke who is doubly refined,  
 Would never turn paler a petty retailer  
     Or stagger a middle-class mind!  
     So each of you lift up his voice  
     With cymbal and tabor rejoice  
     That you're not, by some horrible fluke,  
     A highly-strung sensitive Duke!  
         &c. (*Dances to tambourine accompaniment.*)

(Enter BARNES.)

BARNES. Your Grace, a gentleman is below who desires to speak with her ladyship.

DUKE. (*seizing him by the throat, with startling energy*). His name—his name! Do not deceive me, varlet, or I'll throttle you!

BARNES. I have know your Grace, man and boy, these eighteen months, and I have never told you a lie yet. The gentleman declines to give his name, but he says that he wrote to her ladyship this morning.

DUKE. It is he—the falsetto—the supreme Nisnardi! Show him up, and treat him with the utmost courtesy. He can touch an upper G!

BARNES. An Upper G! Gad bless me, what a gift!

(Exit BARNES, in amazement.)

(Enter WOODPECKER timidly.)

WOOD. (*mistaking the DUKE for a servant*). I say—Chawles, come here, my man. Half-a-crown for you. (*Gives him money.*) Now then, just give this note to her ladyship (*gives him a note*), there's a good fellow.

DUKE. (*pocketing the coin*). In one moment; the Marchioness will be here directly. In the meantime, permit me to introduce myself—the Duke of Turniptopshire!

WOOD. The what!

DUKE. The Duke—

WOOD. Go on, you're joking!

DUKE. Not at all—observe—(*Twirls round and postures.*) Are you convinced?

WOOD. I am! (*Aside.*) And I took him for a flunkey! I've given a live Duke half-a-crown—and I'm going to ask a live Marchioness how much she wants for her hat! I shall never be able to do it!

DUKE. (*aside*). He speaks English very well, but he's clearly an Italian, he has such a rummy [*queer*] waistcoat. I'll draw him out a bit. (*Aloud.*) Princess—pretty feet—old slippers—ah, you dog!

WOOD. (*puzzled*). Pretty feet?

DUKE. Yes, pretty feet—pretty little tootsicums! I've heard all about it, you see.

WOOD. (*aside*). The upper circles appear to have a method of expressing themselves which is entirely and absolutely their own. (*Aloud.*) Could I see the Marchioness?

DUKE. Yes, I'll send word to her. Ha! ha! (*with deep meaning*). Songs—old slippers—flower from a bouquet—three thousand guineas! My dear sir, you're delicious—you're simply delicious!

(Exit DUKE.)

WOOD. It's quite clear to me that I shall never be equal to the intellectual pressure of aristocratic conversation. So I'm married at last—really and truly married. On leaving Bella's, we started for the Church—Maria and I were made one—and now if I can only get the hat from the Marchioness, everything will end happily. (*Looking out of window.*) There's the wedding party—in eight cabs—waiting patiently until I come down. I told them—ha! ha!—that this was the Piccadilly Hotel, and that I would go up and make arrangements for the wedding breakfast! And they believe it! I hear the Marchioness. I hope she got my note.

(*Enter MARCHIONESS R. She approaches him melodramatically.*)

MARCH. Stop—don't move! Let me gaze upon you until I have drunk you in. Oh! thank you. (WOODPECKER, *much astonished exhibits symptoms of nervousness—buttoning his coat, putting on his hat and taking it off again.*) Ah, you are cold—cold—cold! You are unaccustomed to the rigour of our detestable climate.

WOOD. As you say, it's a beast of a climate—

MARCH. Ah, sir, I can offer you an hospitable welcome, and an appreciative company, but I cannot—alas! I *cannot* offer you an Italian sky!

WOOD. Pray don't name it—it's not of the least consequence. (*Aside.*) I never shall understand the aristocracy!

MARCH. Ah, Bella Italia! It's a lovely country!

WOOD. It is a dooced lovely country! Oh, I beg pardon!

MARCH. What a wealth of Southern emphasis! What Italian fervour of expression!

WOOD. I—I did myself the honour of writing a note to your ladyship—

MARCH. A most delightful note, and one that I shall always carry about me as long as I live.

WOOD. Thank you. (*Aside.*) She's very polite. (*Aloud.*) In that note I ventured to ask you to grant me a slight favour.

MARCH. Oh, of course—how extremely dull of me! Well, you shall have what you want.

WOOD. Really?

MARCH. Really—though you're a bold bad man. (*Turns to bouquet.*)

WOOD. At last, at last the hat is mine! I wonder how much she wants for it. Shall I beat her down? No, no, you can't beat down a marchioness! She shall have her price.

MARCH. (*giving him a flower*). There is the flower you asked for—bold bad man!

WOOD. A flower? There's some mistake—I want an article of attire.

MARCH. An article of attire?

WOOD. Yes; didn't you get my note?

MARCH. Yes, here it is. (*Taking note from her bosom.*)

“My terms are—a flower from your bouquet—Nisnardi.”

WOOD. Nisnardi? What's that?

MARCH. Hush, eccentric creature—my guests are arriving.

(*Enter BARNS.*)

BARNS. (*announcing*). Lord and Lady Popton, Colonel Coketown, the Marquis of Barnsbury, Lady Pentwistle, the Archbishop of Bayswater, and the Duke and Duchess of Deal.

(*Exit BARNS. Enter LORD and LADY POPTON, COLONEL COKETOWN, and other guests.*)

MARCH. My dear Duke—my dear Lady Popton—allow me you to present to you the incomparable Nisnardi! (*All bow reverentially to WOODPECKER.*)

LADY P. (*crossing to him*). And are you really Nisnardi?

WOOD. (*aside*). I must brazen it out. (*Aloud.*) I am.

LADY P. Incomparable falsettist!

WOOD. (*aside*). Good heavens, I'm a singer—a falsettist! Why, I'm a bad baritone!

LADY P. And are you really about to favour us with a specimen of your marvellous talent?

MARCH. Signor Nisnardi is most kindly going to sing three songs.

ALL. How delightful! Charming! What a treat!

WOOD. (*aside*). I must get out of this fix at once. (*Aloud.*) Marchioness, I have a most extraordinary—and I am afraid you will say—unreasonable request to make.

MARCH. Oh, name it!

WOOD. But it's a secret!

MARCH. Oh, I'm sure our friends will excuse us. (*Guests bow and exit.*)

WOOD. Marchioness, I am the slave of impulse!

MARCH. I know you are.

WOOD. Eh? Oh! Well, it's a most remarkable thing, but when a whim enters my head, I lose my voice until it is gratified. A whim has just entered my head, and listen! (*Grunt.*)

MARCH. Heavens, what is to be done?

DUET—WOODPECKER and MARCHIONESS.

WOOD.

The slave of impulse I,  
 Born 'neath the azure sky  
 Of beautiful Firenze.  
 With fierce desires I brim,  
 When I conceive a whim,  
 That whim becomes a frenzy.  
 A wish ungratified,  
 Wounds my Italian pride,  
 Like stab of sharp stiletto.  
 My blood is turned to gall;  
 I cannot sing—I squall,  
 And, this is worst of all—  
 Away goes my falsetto,  
 My exquisite falsetto!

MARCH. (*aside*).

Oh, heavens! should it befall,  
 My guests it will appal,  
 If, when assembled all—  
 Away goes his falsetto!  
 His exquisite falsetto!

WOOD.

My blood is turned to gall;  
 I cannot sing, I squall,  
 And, this is worst of all—  
 Away goes my falsetto,  
 My exquisite falsetto!

MARCH.

Lord of the Upper G,  
 By peers of high degree  
 Assiduously courted;  
 Falsettist all divine,  
 No heaven-sent whim of thine  
 Ought ever to be thwarted.  
 Society should strain  
 Each nerve to spare thee pain,  
 Whatever's on the tapis;  
 The impulse I admire  
 That's born of Southern fire:  
 I know what you require—  
 Here—take it, and be happy.

(*Takes off her shoe  
 and gives it to him.*)

MARCH. (*hopping*).

The impulse I admire  
 That's born of Southern fire:  
 I know what you require—  
 So take it, and be happy!

WOOD. (*puzzled*).

Although I much desire  
 A part of your attire,  
 That's not what I require—  
 That will not make me happy!

WOOD. But this is not what I want.

MARCH. (*hopping*). You said it was an article of my attire.

WOOD. Yes—but—it's the other end!

MARCH. The other end? (*Still hopping.*)

WOOD. You wear [*pronounced 'were'*] a straw hat.

MARCH. I was—I mean I do—

WOOD. It is for that straw hat that I have conceived this indescribable longing! Is it not a mad idea?

MARCH. Mad? Not a bit—most reasonable. I understand perfectly—you want it as a *pendant* to the slipper.

WOOD. (*aside*). The aristocratic mind seems to go about in slippers!

MARCH. You shall have it at once. Oh, divine creature!

(*Exit MARCHIONESS, hopping off.*)

WOOD. In two minutes the hat will be mine, and then I must be off before they have time to discover the imposture. I'll tell Maguire that they've no private room to spare at the Piccadilly Hotel. I wonder how the old boy is by this time (*goes to window*). There are the cabs—eight of them! Ha! ha! I can almost hear him growl!

(*Enter MAGUIRE through curtains, rather tipsy, with a bottle of champagne in one hand and a glass in the other. WOODPECKER is leaning out of the window.*)

RECIT.

MAGUIRE. Now, Woodpecker! until you come, my dear sir,  
We cannot budge a peg!

WOOD. Why, what the dickens are you doing here, sir?  
Explain yourself, I beg!

SONG—MAGUIRE.

Why, we're all making merry  
On port and on sherry,  
It's liberal, very—

At price you don't sti-hickle!

When you spoke of our fooding,  
Thinks I, he's allooding

To chops and to pooding,

Bread, cheese, and a pi-hickle—

All very good things though they certainly be.  
But that's not the menoo at the Piccadilee.

MAGUIRE. Why, bless us, there's dishes  
Of fowls and of fishes—  
Of all that's delishes—  
    There's muckle and mi-hickle!  
There's puddings and ices,  
And jambong in slices—  
And other devices  
    Our palates to ti-tickle!  
Fine Frenchified fixings—delicious they be—  
But they do the thing well at the Piccadillee.

CHORUS (*within*). There's puddings and ices,  
And jambong in slices—  
And other devices  
    Our palates to tickle!  
Fine Frenchified fixings—delicious they be—  
But they do the thing well at the Piccadillee.

WOOD. Here's a pleasant state of things! We shall be kicked out—given into custody—a honeymoon in Holloway Jail! (*Enter MARCHIONESS, still hopping.*)

MARCH. Well, have they brought you the hat?

WOOD. (*trying to hide MAGUIRE*). Not yet, my lady. If you would kindly ask them to hurry a little—

MARCH. (*seeing MAGUIRE*). Who is this nobleman?

WOOD. That nobleman? Oh, this nobleman is a nobleman who always accompanies me—everywhere!

MARCH. Your accompanist? Indeed, a good accompanist is invaluable. (*To MAGUIRE.*) And you, sir, are also Italian?

MAGUIRE. (*also hopping, sympathetically*). I? Oh, I come from Pettywiddllm.

WOOD. (*hastily*). Pettywiddllm, a romantic village on the Abruzzi. His name is Magghia: he was formerly a brigand, but he's reclaimed. He's quite harmless.

MARCH. A reclaimed brigand? How supremely interesting. Then, If everything is ready, my guests shall come in—they're dying to hear you. (*To MAGUIRE.*) Will you oblige me with your arm?

MAGUIRE. (*gives his arm to MARCHIONESS*). More guests! What a wedding this is, to be sure! (*Exeunt, both hopping.*)

WOOD. I'm going mad, I feel it. My reason totters on its throne.

(*Enter PATTY, with bandbox.*) PATTY. Here's the straw hat!

WOOD. The straw hat! Hurrah! Saved—saved! Take this sixpence—and be happy. (*Opens bandbox and takes out a black straw hat.*) A black straw! Positively a black straw! Come here, miss, there's some mistake. I want a Leghorn hat, trimmed with a parrot's head, an armadillo's claw, two mackerel, one peach, three truffles, and a bun!

PATTY. Oh! my lady gave that one to her niece, Mrs. Major-General Bunthunder.

WOOD. All the ground to go over again! Where does she live?

PATTY. Twelve, Park Street, Grosvenor Square.

WOOD. Right! Vanish! (*Exit PATTY.*) My course is clear—I must be off, and leave my father-in-law and the wedding party to square matters with the Marchioness.

(*Exit WOODPECKER, rapidly.*)

(*Re-enter MARCHIONESS and MAGUIRE with the MARCHIONESS'S guests.*)

MARCH. Now, if you will kindly take your places, the concert will begin. Why, where is Signor Nisnardi!

(*Enter DUKE, leading WOODPECKER by the ear.*)

DUKE. He was actually bolting! I napped him just as he was getting into eight cabs.

WOOD. No—no, you are mistaken! I had forgotten my tuning-fork, and I was going to fetch it! (*Aside.*) Oh dim! dim! dim!

ALL. (*applauding*). Bravo! bravo!

WOOD. (*aside*). This is most awkward! I'm a bad baritone! What in the world shall I sing them?

(*MAGUIRE sits at piano and strikes a few discords. WOODPECKER begins on a ridiculously high note.*)

BOPAD. (*behind curtains*). Ladies and Gentlemen!

ALL. Eh! (*Movement of surprise.*)

BOPAD. As the oldest friend of Maria Tapping, I beg to propose the health of the bride! (*Exclamations from MARCHIONESS and her guests.*)

WEDDING GUESTS. (*behind curtains*). Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

CHORUS OF WEDDING GUESTS.

Hurrah for the bride with a right good will—

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

For the bridegroom bold who pays the bill—

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

For his father-in-law give three times three,

And three for her cousin—young Foodle he—

And three for this capital companee—

Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

(*BARNS rushes on and draws the curtains, discovering the wedding party at luncheon. BOPADDY on a chair with one foot on the table, with doll's head in one hand and glass of wine in the other. Music changes to "Haste to the Wedding." Party all rise and come down dancing two and two. They cross the stage, dancing off. BOPADDY last with doll's head, WOODPECKER having disappeared as soon as the curtains opened. MARCHIONESS faints in DUKE'S arms. General consternation among her guests. Curtain.*)

END OF ACT II.

(Act III, Scene 1.—*Dressing Room in MAJOR-GENERAL BUNTHUNDER'S house. Door R and L. Large screen R, with double hinges to fold both ways. The MAJOR-GENERAL is discovered within the screen in full uniform, taking a footbath; a blanket conceals his legs. His boots are on the floor L of screen. A hot-water can stands near them. His trousers hang on the screen.*)

SONG—BUNTHUNDER.

Though called upon I've never been  
 To court a warrior's tomb,  
 Or to defend my Sovereign Queen  
 In battle's dread boom—boom!  
 Resistless I, when I am stirred  
 To doughty deeds of wrath,  
 So on myself I have conferred  
 The Order of the Bath!

You trace my humour's devious path?  
 You see my meaning through?

(*impressively.*)  
 (*disappointed.*)

The knightly Order *the Bath*—  
 I don't believe you do!

Let me explain—you're in the dark—  
 The "Bath" a high degree  
 Conferred on warriors of mark,  
 But *not* conferred on me.  
 From "Bath" we easily derive  
 This *footbath*—common delf—  
 And *that's* the compliment that I've  
 Conferred upon myself.

(*explaining.*)

This bath—of crockery or delf  
 A play on meanings twain.

(*mortified.*)

I'm sorry: I forgot myself—  
 It sha'n't occur again.

BUN. It's a most extraordinary thing that my wife should not have returned—I can't understand it at all. My wife said to me this morning, at a quarter to nine o'clock, "Bunthunder, I'm going out to buy a pint of Barcelona nuts," and it's now twenty minutes past five in the afternoon, and she has not yet returned. By dint of worrying myself about her I've got a splitting headache, and for a splitting headache there's nothing like putting one's feet in hot water. Where can she be? (*Rising.*) Oh, Leonora, Leonora, if I thought you were deceiving me, there is no vengeance that would be too dire! (*Knock at street door.*) There she is—there she is at last! she's coming upstairs. (*Resuming his seat. Knock at room door.*) Come in, come in! I'm taking a footbath, but come in.

(*Enter WOODPECKER.*)

DUET—WOODPECKER and BUNTHUNDER.

WOOD. Your pardon, sir. Am I addressing  
The Major-General Bunthunder,  
I greatly wonder?  
In search of him I roam.

BUN. I am, as you are rightly guessing,  
That most unhappy warrior—  
No man sorrier—  
But I am not at home.

WOOD. (*suspiciously*). You're not at home?

BUN. No, sir, I'm not at home.

WOOD. This information is distressing;  
If you will shortly be returning,  
My soul is burning  
With keen anxiety to know?

BUN. I've gone abroad on business pressing;  
When home from places foreigneering  
I shall be steering  
Is quite uncertain! Go!

WOOD. (*doubtfully*). Uncertain? Oh!

BUN. It's quite uncertain! Go!

SOLO—WOODPECKER.

From the Marchioness's,  
Whom nobody guesses

To be of the rank of a peeress or peer—

In courtesy lacking

They sent us all packing,

And each with a very fine flea in his ear.

Those Johnnies and Jackies

The overfed lackies

They “went for” the bride and her guests with a rush—

The combat was heated

But we were defeated

By insolent armies of powder and plush.

And Mister Maguire,

Who's raging with ire,

Has taken an oath by the powers that he,

That restaurant-keeper

Shall not close a peeper

Until she has published an apologee!

Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Until she has published an apologee!

BUN. Well sir, what's all that to me, sir? Will you go, sir?

WOOD. Oh, I see (*raising blanket*), you're taking a foot bath.

BUN. (*furious*). I won't listen to you. I'm not well. I've got a headache! Who are you?

WOOD. Woodpecker Tapping—married this morning: the wedding party is at your door, in eight cabs.

BUN. I don't know you, sir! What do you want?

WOOD. Your wife.

BUN. (*rising*). My wife! Do you know my wife?

WOOD. Not at all, but she possesses something that I am most anxious to purchase.

BUN. We don't sell it. Will you go?

WOOD. Not till I've seen Mrs. Bunthunder.

BUN. She's not at home. (*Sings.*)

WOOD. Nonsense, I know better! I dare say she's in here—at all events, I mean to look.

(WOODPECKER *closes the screen round BUNTHUNDER, concealing him from the audience, and leaving his boots outside on his L. WOODPECKER then runs into room R.*)

BUN. He's a thief! He's a burglar! Wait one moment—only one moment, until I've finished dressing!

*(Enter MAGUIRE L, limping.)*

MAGUIRE. My son-in-law is a most remarkable person; he invites us to his house, and when we get there, he shuts the door in our faces! Fortunately the lock didn't catch, and here I am. Now, now I shall be able to take off these confounded tight boots which have been bothering me all day!

BUN. *(in screen)*. One moment—only one moment! *(Taking his trousers, which are hanging over the top of the screen.)*

MAGUIRE. Hallo, Woodpecker! He's in here. Ha! *(Seeing BUNTHUNDER'S boots.)* The very thing; that's uncommonly lucky! *(Takes off his own boots and puts on BUNTHUNDER'S.)* The very thing! *(They are much too large for him.)* Dear me, what a relief. *(Puts his own boots by screen, where BUNTHUNDER'S were.)*

BUN. *(reaching round screen for his boots, and takes MAGUIRE'S)*. Now for my boots—wait one moment—only one moment!

MAGUIRE. I say, my boy, your wife's below.

BUN. Oh, my wife's below, is she? Just one moment—I'm nearly ready!

MAGUIRE. All right! I'll go downstairs and tell them all to come up.

*(Exit MAGUIRE. At the same moment enter BOPADDY.)*

BUN. *(in screen)*. My feet seem much swollen, I can scarcely get my boots on; but no matter. Now, then! *(Coming out of screen sees BOPADDY, whom he mistakes for WOODPECKER, swings him round.)* Now, you scoundrel, I've got you!

BOPAD. Don't—I don't want to dance—I'm quite tired out!

BUN. It's not the same—it's another of the gang! *(Noise heard within.)* He's in there! *(Rushes off R.)*

BOPAD. Another wedding guest, and in regimentals, too! Dear, dear—Woodpecker is certainly doing it uncommonly well!

*(Music, "Haste to the Wedding." Enter MAGUIRE, FOODLE, MARIA, and the wedding party, all dancing on in couples. They dance round the stage, and range themselves at back.)*

MAGUIRE. That's right, my dears—stop there, because Woodpecker hasn't quite finished dressing—he's behind the screen, and he won't be a minute, and you mustn't look, any of you. *(The screen is now open.)* Woodpecker, my boy, your wife is here; and while you're completing your toilet, I'll give you both a bit of matrimonial advice, drawn from my own experience.

## SONG—MAGUIRE.

If you value a peaceable life,  
 This maxim will teach you to get it:  
 In all things give into your wife,—  
 I didn't—I lived to regret it.  
 My wife liked to govern alone,  
 And she never would share with another;  
 Remarkably tall and well grown,  
 She had plenty of muscle and bone,  
 With an excellent will of her own—  
 And my darling takes after her mother!  
 Oh, if early in life  
 I had happily known  
 How to humour a wife  
 With a will of her own,  
 We should not have been snarling  
 All day at each other—  
 And, remember, my darling  
 Takes after her mother!  
 Never wake up her temper,—I did—  
 And smash went a window, instanter;  
 Invariably do as you're bid,—  
 I didn't—bang went a decanter.  
 Give in to each whim,—I declined—  
 At my head went a vinegar-cruet.  
 Whatever inducement you find,  
 Never give her advice of a kind  
 That is known as "a bit of your mind,"—  
 I did—and the crockery knew it!  
 Oh, if early in life  
 I had happily known, &c.



WOOD. Now, her husband's a jealous old fellow,  
A savage old Tartar, no doubt,  
A middle-class, white-washed Othello—  
One leg in the grave, and one out!

BUN. (*much amused*). Ha, ha! Ho, ho!  
Sly dog!

WOOD. Sly dog!

BOTH. Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

WOOD. Now, you'd think he'd abuse her or thrash her,  
Just to give her a kind of a fright.  
(*Spoken.*) My dear sir, he'd simply and silently smash her!

BUN. (*emphatically*). And, by George, he'd be perfectly right!  
Ha, ha! Ho, ho!  
Sly dog!

WOOD. Sly dog!

BOTH. Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

WOOD. Now, assist me if you could be brought to,  
We'd hoodwink Othello, I bet—

BUN. No, really I don't think I ought to,  
I don't think I ought to—and yet—  
Ha, ha! Ho, ho!  
Sly dog!

WOOD. Sly dog!

BOTH. Ha, ha! Ho, ho!

WOOD. Here are the fragments—decorated they, (*With specimen.*)  
With choicest gifts of Flora's.

BUN. By all the blighting tricks that devils play, (*Recognizing them.*)  
This hat is Leonora's!  
Her name, sir—Leonora's! (*Pointing to name in hat.*)

WOOD. Quite right, it's Leonora's!  
Ha, ha! Ho, ho!  
Sly dog!

BUN. Be quiet, sir! The married lady  
 For whom, with motives base and shady,  
 A furnished lodging you've provided,  
 Turns out to be my wife misguided!

WOOD. What!

BUN. (seizing him). Scoundrel, villain, scurvy traitor!  
 Peace of mind exterminator!  
 So, for private tater-tater,  
 With my wife you've made a fixture!

WOOD. Let me go, sir—you're mistaken,  
 Or my anger you'll awaken;  
 I object thus to be shaken  
 Like an eighteenpenny mixture!

## ENSEMBLE.

BUNTHUNDER.  
 Fire and fury!  
 Judge in ermine  
 (With a jury)  
 Shall determine  
 How to treat this social wrong,  
 sir—  
 Come along, sir—come along,  
 sir!

WOODPECKER.  
 Cease your fury!  
 Judge in ermine  
 My injury  
 Shall determine!  
 Your remarks are clearly wrong,  
 sir—  
 Much too strong, sir—much too strong,  
 sir!

(BUNTHUNDER drags WOODPECKER off L. Music changes to "Haste to the Wedding."  
 The wedding party enter C, dance in couples across the stage, after them. BOPADDY last  
 with the doll's head.)

END OF ACT III - SCENE 1

(Act III, Scene 2.—*A street, with Square in the distance. A rainy night. WOODPECKER'S house L, another house beyond it. Police-station R. A lamp C, supported by brackets from each side of the stage. A lamp-post L.U.E. Window of first floor of police-station is practicable. Door-steps to WOODPECKER'S house, a light in one window. A gutter crosses the stage. Music, "Haste to the Wedding." Wedding party enter from L.U.E., dancing in couples round stage, with umbrellas up. BOPADDY politely holding umbrella over doll's head.*)

MAGUIRE. (*leading them*). This way, my friends—this way! Hallo! look out for the gutter! (*He jumps over it—all the wedding party follow, jumping over it in succession.*)

MARIA. Oh, papa, where's Woodpecker?

MAGUIRE. Eh, isn't he here? Why, he has given us the slip again!

MARIA. Papa, dear, I'm so tired—I can't go any farther! (*Sits on step of WOODPECKER'S house.*)

FOODLE. And my new boots hurt me, so that I must sit down. (*Crosses and sits by her.*)

MAGUIRE. (*stamping about in Major-General's boots*). Ha, ha! so did mine, but I've changed 'em.

MARIA. Oh, papa, why did you send away the cabs?

MAGUIRE. Why? I've paid 'em eleven pounds fifteen already—isn't that enough? But where are we?

ALL. I don't know.

MARIA. Woodpecker told us to follow him to his house. Number Eight, Little Pickleboy Gardens, Mulberry Square.

MAGUIRE. Perhaps this is Mulberry Square. (*To BOPADDY.*) Your great grandfather used to live in London—is this Mulberry Square?

BOPAD. Yes—yes, it is—splendid—splendid weather for ducks and peas! Ha, ha! Oh, yes—for ducks and peas!

MAGUIRE. He's doting—doting!

(*Enter WILKINSON, a policeman. Wilkinson sneezes.*)

MAGUIRE. Here's a policeman, I'll ask him. (*Very politely.*) I beg your pardon, but will you be so polite as to tell me if this is Little Pickleboy Gardens, Mulberry Square?

WILK. (*sternly*). Move on! (*Exit WILKINSON.*)

MAGUIRE. And I pay taxes to support that overbearing underling! I feed him, I clothe him, I lodge him, and I pay him; and in return he tells me to move on! Insupportable bureaucrat!

FOODLE. (*who has climbed up lamp-post, and read name of street*). Hurrah! Little Pickleboy Gardens. It's all right—here we are!

MAGUIRE. And here is Number Eight. (*To MARIA, who is sitting on the doorstep*.) Get up, my dear.

MARIA. Papa, dear, it's no use—I must sit down somewhere.

MAGUIRE. Not in a muddy road, in a thirty-seven and sixpenny wedding dress, my love. Why don't they come? (*Knocks*.)

FOODLE. There's a light in the first floor.

MAGUIRE. Then Woodpecker must have arrived before us. (*Calls*.) Woodpecker! Woodpecker!

ALL. Woodpecker! Woodpecker!

(*Enter WILKINSON, R.I.E.*)

WILK. (*to BOPADDY, who has fallen asleep on step*). Now, then, can't have that noise here! (*Shakes him*.) Move on! Move on, will you? (*Pushing his shoulder, which is muddy*.)

BOPAD. Thank you, my dear friend; don't you trouble to brush it off; I'll do that when I go in.

(*Exit WILKINSON, L.U.E.*) JACKSON *opens door of WOODPECKER'S house*.)

MAGUIRE. Hurrah! Here we are! Come in!

(*Music commences "Haste to the Wedding" as the wedding party dance into the house*.)

JACK. Stop. (*All stop suddenly in arrested attitudes*.) Out of the question!

MAGUIRE. Eh?

JACK. Impossible, more than my place is worth. Why, the lady is still upstairs! (*Movement*.)

MAGUIRE. A lady! What lady?

JACK. The lady who is stopping with master—the lady without a hat.

MAGUIRE. A lady stopping with your master!

FOODLE. On his wedding day!

MARIA. And without a hat! (*Faints into Foodle's arms*.)

MAGUIRE. (*furiously*). It's off! It's off! I'll get you divorced, my dear. Foodle shall have you!

FOODLE. Maria!

MAGUIRE. Come along back to Pettywiddllm. There's a train at eleven; we shall just catch it.

MARIA. Oh! papa—papa—

MAGUIRE. What is it, my child?

MARIA. (*tragically*). Am I never—never to see Woodpecker again?

MAGUIRE. Never!

MARIA. Woodpecker, whom I loved so fondly, and who was the very music of my little life?

MAGUIRE. Never!

MARIA. Oh! Then hadn't I better take back my wedding-presents?

MAGUIRE. My dear, you're a very sensible girl. To be sure you had. (*To JACKSON.*) Go and bring out all my daughter's wedding-presents—mind—every one!

(*Exit JACKSON into house. Enter WOODPECKER, as if pursued.*)

ALL. Here is the monster!

MAGUIRE. It's off! It's off! You—you serpent!

WOOD. Hold your tongue—be quiet! I hear him—he's coming!

MAGUIRE. Who's coming?

WOOD. Major-General Bunthunder. (*Listening.*) No—he's missed me—he's got tight boots and he can't run. There'll be time to get Leonora out of the house before he arrives.

MAGUIRE. Oho! So, sir, you own to Leonora?

WOOD. Of course I own to Leonora.

ALL. Oho! He owns to Leonora!

(*Enter JACKSON, from house with his arms full of wedding-presents, done up in parcels.*)

JACK. Here are the wedding presents.

MAGUIRE. My friends, let us each take a parcel (*JACKSON gives a parcel to each, MAGUIRE gets the bandbox given by BOPADDY in Act I*). And now off we go to Pettywiddllm!

WOOD. What's all this?

JACK. Wedding-presents, sir.

WOOD. Oh, this won't do! Drop those things directly! (*All drop their parcels.*)

MAGUIRE. Nonsense—pick them all up again! (*All pick up parcels. WOODPECKER and MAGUIRE struggle for the bandbox.*)

BOPAD. Take care—you'll crush it! It's a Leghorn hat worth twenty pounds!

WOOD. What!

BOPAD. It's my little present—I'm in the trade. I sent to Florence for it, for my little niece!

WOOD. Give it here.

*(Takes bandbox from MAGUIRE—takes out straw hat and compares it with the fragments.)*  
 Good Heavens, it's the very thing! Here's the cockatoo—and the armadillo's claw—and the mackerel—and the peach—why, it's the very thing I've been looking for all day!  
*(Shakes hands with BOPADDY, holding bandbox under his arm.)*

MAGUIRE. *(aside)*. A hat worth twenty pounds! He sha'n't have it, the scamp!  
*(Takes hat out of bandbox unobserved, and shuts box again.)*

WOOD. *(who believes that the hat is in the box)*. Wait one moment—I'll give her the hat and then we'll all go in and enjoy ourselves. *(Exit WOODPECKER into house.)*

MAGUIRE. *(who has watched him off)*. Now, my friends—off we go to Pettytwiddllm.  
*(All going. Enter WILKINSON)*

WILK. Hallo! what's all this? What are you doing with these parcels?

MAGUIRE. We—we are moving.

WILK. What! at this time o' night? This won't do, you know—I know you!

MAGUIRE. Sir!

WILK. What have you got here, eh?

MAGUIRE. That? Oh, that's a—a carriage clock.

WILK. *(opens muff-box and finds a muff)*. That's very like a carriage clock! Come along—all of yer—in yer go!

*(Music, "Haste to the Wedding." They all dance into station-house, except BOPADDY, who is walking off slowly, talking to his doll's head.)*

BOPAD. *(to doll's head)*. It was a nice ickle [*little*] gal! It was a very nice ickle gal! Don't know that I ever saw a nicer ickle gal!

*(WILKINSON coming out of station house, crosses to BOPADDY.)*

WILK. Now, then—come along—in yer go!

*(WILKINSON taps BOPADDY on the shoulder, and points to station. BOPADDY mildly expostulates, and resumes his flirtation with the doll's head. WILKINSON seizes him roughly. BOPADDY again remonstrates. WILKINSON shakes him, BOPADDY suddenly turns furious, flies at WILKINSON, knocks him down, seizes his staff, thrashes him soundly, and finally drags him off triumphantly into station.)*

*(Enter WOODPECKER, CAPTAIN BAPP, and LEONORA, from house.)*

WOOD. Come along; you are saved! I've found the hat! Make haste, put it on and be off before your husband arrives! *(He gives them the bandbox—they open it.)*

ALL. Empty!

WOOD. It was there—I'll swear it was! My old villain of a father-in-law has stolen it!  
(*Enter WILKINSON, from station-house.*) Where is my father-in-law?

WILK. Where? Station 'us.

WOOD. And my wedding party?

WILK. Station 'us. Run 'em all in. (*Exit WILKINSON.*)

WOOD. And they've got the hat! What is to be done?

BAPP. Wait a moment—I know the Inspector—he'll give it to me if I explain the facts.  
(*BAPP exits into station-house.*)

BUN. (*without*). Stop! Cabman! Hi! Put me down here!

LEON. Heavens! my husband! I'll run and hide in your house!

WOOD. Not for worlds! He's coming to search it!

LEON. But what shall I do?

WOOD. I know! I'll give you in charge. Hi! policeman. (*Re-enter WILKINSON.*)  
Take this woman away. Drunk and disorderly. (*Tipping him.*)

WILK. (*R. crosses to her*). What, agin? Come along—I know yer! (*Walks her into station.*)

(*Enter BUNTHUNDER, hobbling.*)

BUN. So, here you are! Open your door! I'll blow her brains out [*Leonora*], and your brains out [*Woodpecker*], and my own brains out!

WOOD. By all means—only take me last! (*Exit BUNTHUNDER, into house.*)

(*CAPTAIN BAPP appears at window of station-house, first floor.*)

BAPP. Quick! quick! here's the hat!

WOOD. Throw it out—make haste! (*BAPP throws hat, which rests on the lamp—just out of reach.*) Confound it. (*Tries to unhook it with his umbrella, but in vain.*)

(*Re-enter BUNTHUNDER from house.*)

BUN. She's not there! Forgive me. I've been unjust!

WOOD. You have. Come under my umbrella. (*Takes BUNTHUNDER'S arm, and puts up umbrella to conceal hat. They both stand under the lamp.*)

BUN. No, no; it doesn't rain! Put the umbrella down. It's quite fine overhead.

WOOD. But it's so wet underfoot.

BUN. That's true. I've made a great fool of myself, sir.

WOOD. You have. (*He jumps to unhook the hat with his umbrella, and makes BUNTHUNDER jump too.*)

BUN. I apologize, sir.

WOOD. I think you should, sir. (*Jumps.*)

BUN. Forgive me, sir.

WOOD. I do, sir. (*Jumps.*)

BUN. What are you jumping for?

WOOD. Violent cramp—indigestion. Can't help it—always takes me so.

BUN. Indeed! Have you tried— (*WOODPECKER jumps again, and comes down on BUNTHUNDER'S toes.*) Don't, sir! I won't be trodden on by bridegrooms!

(*Enter LEONORA from station, followed by MAGUIRE, BOPADDY, and all the guests—one of whom unhooks the hat, which falls to the ground.*)

MAGUIRE. It's all right—it's all right! The Captain has squared the Inspector, and we leave the Court without a stain on our characters! Oh, it's a great country!

FINALE.

CHORUS.

Free, free! Hurrah!

Free, free! Hurrah!

False charges fade into thin air—

This is a great Countree!

When English justice; nobly fair—

This is a great Countree!

Is freely tipped with English gold!

For then the wicked oppressor is sold,

And all stray lambs come back to the fold—

This is a great Countree!

Yes—

This is a great Countree!

LEON. So, sir—I've found you out at last! (*coming forward, wearing the hat*)

WOOD. She's got the hat! (*aside, astonished*)

LEON. At your assurance I'm aghast!

BUN. She's got the hat! (*aside, astonished*)

LEON. While you've been on clandestine jaunts—

BOPAD. She's got my hat! (*aside*)

LEON. I've waited for you—at my aunt's!

I've waited, waited, waited, waited—

All day I've waited for you—at my aunt's!

CHORUS.

She's got the hat—she's got the hat!  
 (We don't know how, but never mind that)—  
 It's tat for tit, and tit for tat—  
 She's got the hat, she's got the hat!

BUN. Forgive me—I have been unjust!

ALL. She's got the hat!

BUN. You'll overlook the past, I trust?

ALL. She's got the hat!

BUN. But, stop! The gate of Heaven shuts!

ALL. She's got the hat!

BUN. Where are the Barcelona nuts?

The Barcelona—Iona—Iona—  
 You have *not* got the Barcelona nuts!

CHORUS.

Well, what of this and what of that—  
 Somehow or other she's got the hat—  
 It's tat for tit, and tit for tat—  
 She's got the hat, she's got the hat!

FINAL CHORUS.

Ring, ye joybells, long and loudly,  
 Happy hearts together tied—  
 Bridegroom's bosom swelling proudly  
 As he takes his blushing bride!

*(During these lines the Bride and Bridegroom bid farewell to the guests and go towards the house. All the others gradually move off R, except BOPADDY, who, still carrying his doll's head, proposes to enter the house with the bridal couple. He is brought back by MAGUIRE as the curtain falls.)*

END OF ACT III.

CURTAIN.