

THE MOUNTAINEERS
BY
GUY EDEN (LYRICS)
AND
REGINALD SOMERVILLE (MUSIC)

1909

Edited by Scott Farrell and David Trutt

THE MOUNTAINEERS
A ROMANTIC COMIC OPERA IN THREE ACTS

BOOK BY
GUY EDEN AND REGINALD SOMERVILLE

LYRICS BY
GUY EDEN

SET TO MUSIC BY
REGINALD SOMERVILLE

First produced at the Savoy Theatre, London
Wednesday, September 29, 1909
Under the management of Mr. C. H. Workman

Libretto provided courtesy of Scott Farrell

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This opera first appeared at the Savoy Theatre on September 29, 1909 under management of Charles Workman. Workman was the principal comedian at the Savoy, and famous for his portrayals of the comedy roles in Gilbert and Sullivan operas. Roles like the Major General and Sir Joseph and KoKo and Jack Point, and he was very famous in London and the provinces. Upon retirement of Mrs D'Oyly Carte in March 1909, Workman took over Savoy management in an effort to keep Savoy traditions in London going, and rather than produce the works that made him famous, he presented entirely new pieces in the same way that Richard D'Oyly Carte did in the 1890s when Gilbert and Sullivan were not working together, and *The Mountaineers* was the first production in Workman's season of light opera.

Six years had passed since a new opera appeared at the Savoy, so the announcement that Savoy traditions were to be revived as in its golden age caused quite a sensation. London turned out to see the new opera. The audience was overly enthusiastic on opening night, the critics were rather lukewarm about the opera, and their reviews all say the same things: "*The Mountaineers* can boast refinement, a gentle picturesqueness, and general amiability; but there is nothing in the piece to surprise the attention, to appeal to the imagination, or to tickle the sense of humour. It is inoffensive, but it is unexciting; it has a certain ingenious charm, but it is not exactly exhilarating, and this applies as much to the libretto as it does to the music. The music strikes no new notes in comic opera, and the result is that only once in a while do we get anything with a touch of individuality in it. The opera lacks the distinction that everyone had hoped for."

The need for reinforcements was quickly felt and Arthur Wimperis was invited to breathe life back into the dying opera. Wimperis was the lyricist for the highly successful musical *The Arcadians* which premiered in April 1909, and it was thought that his association would generate a little more interest. Wimperis wrote a number of new songs and revamped the dialogue, placing the emphasis on comedy. The piece did rather better from mid-October but the changes went for very little and *The Mountaineers* closed on November 27, after 61 performances. This might imply that the opera was a failure. It was NOT a failure, it was an indifferent success, and the reason it was pulled off is because W.S. Gilbert came forward with his opera *Fallen Fairies*, which Workman rushed into rehearsal. Two weeks later *Fallen Fairies* opened and was an immediate failure. *The Mountaineers* did not die off there. There was a revival with much of the same cast in 1910 and a provincial tour, a premiere in Barcelona, a French adaptation for premieres in France and Belgium, and two radio broadcasts in the 1920s. These events prove that *The Mountaineers* is worth a good deal more than Workman's hasty substitution might lead one to believe.

The Libretto version presented herein is the first edition of the opera. Those who are unfamiliar with the opera may wish to begin with the SYNOPSIS on Page 59. For more information about this opera, please see my book *The Final Savoy Operas: A Centenary Review*, now available on www.lulu.com. On lulu Find, insert "Final Savoy Operas".

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

PIERRE (Chief Custom House Official)	Mr. C. H. Workman
FRITZ (a bold mountaineer)	Mr. Claude Flemming
CONRAD (a man of the city)	Mr. Laurence Legge
GUSTAVE (a Custom House Official)	Mr. Reginald Lawrence
FRANCOIS (Custom House Man)	Mr. Sydney Ashcroft
LOUIS (Custom House Man)	Mr. A. Wellton Fordham
SERGEANT FREDERICO	Mr. Frank Perfitt
A PRIEST	Mr. A. Everett
A CITIZEN	Mr. D. Fergusson
CLARICE (Pierre's daughter)	Miss Elsie Spain
ANNETTE (the village coquette)	Miss Jessie Rose
MISS SPINIFEX (a travelling English spinster)	Miss Kate Forster
YVONNE	Miss Ruby Gray
ARMANDINE	Miss Mabel Burnege
CELESTINE	Miss Gladys Lancaster
YVETTE	Miss Josset Legh
NOELIE	Miss Hilda Vining
PRUDENCE (Maid to Miss Spinifex)	Miss Marjorie Dawes
BRIDESMAID	Miss Fay Temple
BRIDESMAID	Miss Giovanni Botto

ACT 1. A Frontier Alpine Village. Page 5

ACT 2. Interior of Pierre's Chalet. Page 27

ACT 3. A Frontier Alpine Village. Page 44

(A few weeks elapse between Act 2 and Act 3.)

Period - The early part of last Century (early 1800's).

The Opera produced by Sydney Ellison.

The Dresses designed by Percy Anderson.

The Scenery by W. Raphael.

[See Page 59 for a Synopsis of *The Mountaineers*.]

(ACT 1 - Scene: *A Frontier Alpine Village. To L. Inn in the Chalet style with shrubs, tables and chairs. Entrances L. and L.U.E. below and above Inn. To R. Custom House with large archway leading to road. R.U.E. a lych gate leading to church. On back cloth landscape of valley with snow-capped mountains in the distance.*)

(No. 1 - Opening Chorus)

VILLAGERS, MARKET-PEOPLE *and* CUSTOM HOUSE MEN.

Hither again on our market day
Come we with spirits all light and gay.
Come with our butter and eggs to sell,
Come for the gossip we love so well.
Happy once more old faces to meet,
Happy our neighbours and friends to greet.
Poor though we be, there are none so gay
'Mid sunshine bright on our market day.

CUSTOM HOUSE MEN. As you all can plainly see
Douaniers [*custom officers*] stern and brave are we.
Nothing here can pass us by,
Nought escape our eagle eye.

YVONNE. Like the bees that throng a hive
Into every box you dive.

MEN. One thought only in our mind—
Smuggled articles to find.

WOMEN. Burning, too, with fiendish joy,
If the owners you annoy.

MEN. Ha! Ha! Ha! If that is so,
'Tis our duty, as you know.
Well, we're very glad to meet you
And with all good wishes greet you,
Though your methods may be drastic
And your morals so elastic
That you greedily hold tight on
Anything you chance to light on
From an earring to a stocking,
Which, you know, is very shocking!
Still, for once we'll class this booty
As the just reward of duty,
And to prove it now we meet you
And with all good wishes greet you.

CHORUS (*reprise*). Hither again on our market day
Etc.

(Enter ANNETTE from the Inn.)

ANNETTE. Good-day, friends, I am delighted to see you all again.

ALL. Good-day, Annette.

ANNETTE. Dear me! I really can't think how I get through the week until market day. You can't imagine how stupid it is in the village, with only you stuffy Custom House gentlemen.

LOUIS. We thought you liked us, Annette.

ANNETTE. Individually, yes. Collectively, no. In rotation, yes. Simultaneously, no; and as you are always at certain hours collectively employed at your professional duties, and at others simultaneously employed in making love to me, I get no opportunity of discovering whether I have any individual attachment. (Enter GUSTAVE through Archway.) How are you to-day, Gustave? Any symptoms of moral deterioration? Any latent germs of wickedness?

GUSTAVE (*dejectedly*). Alas, none!

ANNETTE. Dear, dear! What can we do for you?

GUSTAVE. Don't pity me, I implore you. It only adds to the burden of my miserable integrity! Do what I will, I cannot commit even the tiniest peccadillo.

ALL. Horribly sad!

GUSTAVE. Yes, isn't it! Why is it that I cannot profit as do my inferiors here by the golden opportunities that flaunt themselves in my face?

ALL. Why?

GUSTAVE. Why should a mocking destiny have established me as an officer of customs—have thrown in my way possibilities of gigantic fraud—under the beneficent protection of the law—and at the same time implanted in me a sense of high-minded rectitude that faces me at every turn? Oh, it's horrible!

YVONNE. Horrible!

GUSTAVE. There have been moments when, in searching through bags and portmanteaux, I have come upon articles of toilette that have made my mouth water. One word "contraband," one sudden twitching of the fingers, and they would have been the property of the law—held in trust by me for an indefinite period!—But my constitutional integrity thwarted me!

ALL. Ah!

GUSTAVE. Only yesterday, in ransacking the luggage of a lady bicyclist I came across a trouser button. For days I have wanted a trouser button. Without a trouser button, *any* catastrophe was imminent; but no! conscience murmured "chance it"—and I am still chancing it! (*General consternation.*) Now in searching through the passengers' luggage that came by yesterday's diligence [*horse-drawn carriage*], I daresay you all picked up a thing or two here and there?

FRANCOIS. In our classic Swiss metaphor—"What do *you* think?" (CUSTOM HOUSE MEN *produce from their pockets a varied assortment of stolen articles.*)

GUSTAVE (*wildly*). I knew it! I knew it! And conscience stood between me and a trouser button—and a bone one at that!

ANNETTE. I don't know whether you are all aware of it, but to-day is Clarice's birthday.

ALL. Clarice's birthday!

ANNETTE. Certainly it is. You gentlemen of the Customs should have known that it was the birthday of the daughter of your chief, but you are so *very* dull.

FRANCOIS (*in a disappointed tone*). Dear me how very provoking! Yesterday, in the course of my professional investigations, I came across several articles that would have done nicely as a present.

ANNETTE. Oh, you needn't worry about presents. She ought to be satisfied with what Conrad gave her.

ALL. Conrad!

ANNETTE. Yes, Conrad, the gentleman who has been staying for the last three weeks or so at our Inn. There have been fine going goings on between him and Clarice, I can tell you. He gave her a lovely gold locket only this morning.

GUSTAVE. But what about Fritz? I always thought that he and Clarice would make a match of it.

ANNETTE. Of course you did, stupid, and so did everybody else, but since the rich and handsome Conrad arrived from town things have changed, I assure you.

ALL. Poor Fritz!

ANNETTE. Oh, I've no patience with Fritz! Why doesn't he stay and keep an eye on her instead of crawling about in the mountains after chamois [*small goatlike antelopes*]? Chamois, indeed! Hush! Here's Clarice! Now don't forget to say something nice to her, though I don't think that it's at all necessary for *you gentlemen* to be too demonstrative!

(*Enter CLARICE, L.U.E.*)

(*No. 2 - Entrance of CLARICE*)

ALL. Many happy returns of the day!
Clarice, may years as yet untold
Rich stores of happiness unfold
And blessings without measure.
May you, in future days, receive
What, in your heart, you most believe
To be life's richest treasure.

CLARICE. Dear friends, it's very kind of you
To speak so sweetly,
An' I would thank you, and I could
Express it neatly.
Instead of glad, my heart is sad,
For cares in plenty
Oppress the maid so prim and staid
Whose age is twenty.

ALL. Ah, yes, it's really very true,
We ought to sympathise with you
At patriarchal twenty!

CLARICE. And yet the maid whose years have reached a score,
As you perhaps have seen,
May sometimes chance to know a good deal more
Than one of seventeen.
One may have youth, but no "esprit de corps,"
When only seventeen.

ALL. Oh, yes, a maid is really very green
At seventeen.

CLARICE. A maid of twenty has but little fear
Of man's persuasions,
She rightly feels that he is insincere
On most occasions.
Sly words will make her heart no longer now
To thrill with pleasure,
For practice will have taught this maiden how
To take his measure.

WOMEN. We really think it very right
That she should take his measure.

MEN. We think a tailor, not a maid,
The one to take his measure.

ALL. Many happy returns of the day!

CLARICE. Really, it is very kind of you all to give me this unexpected welcome! It makes one quite rejoice to have a birthday.

GUSTAVE. Do you think so?

CLARICE. Of course! When one is young, as you and I, my dear Gustave. Let me see, how old are you?

GUSTAVE (*gloomily*). Thirty, and I look fifty, and feel a hundred!

CLARICE. Now, I want to ask you all in return for your good wishes to come to the little dance that I have at last persuaded poor dear papa to give this evening. Dear papa doesn't as a rule like giving things, he doesn't so much mind tak - I mean receiving. But there! You will all come this evening, won't you?

YVONNE. Of course we will! A dance? How jolly!

CLARICE. That's very kind of you. Papa will be quite delighted, I'm sure. He didn't say that he would, and I'm not sure that he'll tell you that he is, but you'll read his intense enjoyment in his expression.

(*People Exit L.U.E. The CUSTOM HOUSE MEN through archway R. CLARICE, ANNETTE, GUSTAVE, ARMANDINE and YVONNE remain.*)

ARMANDINE. I hope that Fritz will be back in time. It would be very sad if he were to miss the dance.

CLARICE (*compassionately*). Yes, I shall be sorry for poor Fritz if he's not here. But after all, what inducement is there for him to come? He never seems to care to stay here more than an hour or two at a time, and then is off to the mountains.

YVONNE. There was a time when he cared to stay and you used to be glad to see him.

CLARICE. My dear Yvonne, you are quite refreshingly mysterious, and I do so love mystery. When, oh when, was that happy time?

GUSTAVE. Ah, we can all answer that. Before the young man who is staying at the inn came here, three weeks ago.

CLARICE (*pretending not to understand*). A young man! Three weeks ago—let me think.

(*ARMANDINE and YVONNE link arms, snigger, and go off L.U.E.*)

ANNETTE (*aside*). Think, indeed!

CLARICE (*as if suddenly grasping the idea*). Ah! Conrad!

ANNETTE. Yes, Conrad! (*Gives GUSTAVE a push.*) Run along, stupid!

(*GUSTAVE Exit R. ANNETTE goes into inn; CONRAD is heard singing off; CLARICE shows signs of pleasure as she listens. She hides behind a shrub.*)

(No. 3 - Song - CONRAD)

CONRAD. Was it the sigh of a passing soul
Or song of the whispering trees?
Was it the voice of the leafy boughs
That sway to the evening breeze?
No, for my heart tells me truer than this,
Speaks of a rapture to be,
Whispers that down the sweet pathway of flowers
My darling, my life comes to me!
Was it the sound of the distant stream
That ripples away to the sea?
Was it the dirge of the dying day
Or drone of the drowsy bee?
No, for the music was sweeter by far
That music of stream or of tree,
'Twas the voice of my dear one whispering low,
Tremblingly calling to me.
Dear love, dear love, I am here, I am here,
I am waiting—waiting for thee, my love!

(CLARICE *comes forward.*)

CONRAD. Clarice!

CLARICE. You mustn't say "Clarice" in that tone. You really mustn't. It sounds much too cosy. What would anyone think who heard you?

CONRAD. They would think that my whole soul spoke in one little word. They would think that, to me, there was no music so sweet as the one little name "Clarice." Clarice! Why, it suggests the freshness of the rose, the sweetness of the—the—blushing violet; the ripeness of a—a—a— (CLARICE *laughs.*) Ah, shatter but one stone of hope's foundation on which I rest, and I will fall a crumpled ruin at your feet.

CLARICE (*laughs*). A three weeks' ruin!

CONRAD. True, I have known you only three weeks, but in that time I have lived a century. (*gently*) Ah! I am so glad to see you are wearing the locket I gave you.

CLARICE. Some would say that I did wrong in accepting it from a comparative stranger—for you are that, aren't you?

CONRAD. Ah! Clarice, don't call me a stranger. Tell me you will try to care for me, if only a little.

CLARICE. Now, do you know that it is just what Fritz used to say to me, regularly, twice a day, before you came.

CONRAD. Who is this Fritz? Some stupid, country bumpkin, I'll be bound, who presumes to pester you with his uncouth attentions. Ah, Clarice, why will you not believe in the love that I have for you? I am rich; why will you not promise to be mine?

CLARICE. But what would poor Fritz say?

CONRAD. Fritz again! Clarice, I love you ten thousand times more than he can or ever will do.

CLARICE. Do you think so? You wouldn't say that if you could see him sometimes. His passionate outbursts quite frighten me.

CONRAD. Then why not listen to my more tender pleading?

CLARICE (*thoughtfully*). And yet there was something fascinating in his fiery, stormy violence.

CONRAD (*hopelessly*). Oh, Clarice, do tell me of his manner of wooing, that I may endeavour to hit the happy medium between his way and mine.

CLARICE. Well, I will. But in any case I don't promise anything, mind—remember that!
(*No. 4 - Duet - CLARICE and CONRAD*)

CLARICE. Like the summer lightning flashing o'er the plain,
Like the torrent rushing wildly to the sea,
Like the hurricane a-roaring or the thunder-clouds outpouring
Is the fierceness of his eager love for me.

CONRAD. Well, perhaps that's very charming, but it sounds to me alarming,
And his method doesn't quite appeal to me!
Like the sunlight playing lightly on the dew,
Like the roses blushing coyly on a tree,
Like the breezes softly sighing when the summer day is dying
Is the sweetness of my tender love for thee.

CLARICE. I don't know that it oughter, but it sounds like milk and water,
And the method doesn't quite appeal to me.
Like an avalanche upon the mountain side,
Like a lion rushing fiercely on his prey,
In his arms he'll try to hold me, and in close embrace enfold me!
If there happens to be no one in the way.

CONRAD. Well, that lightning form of courting
May be bold and very sporting,
But I wonder what your worthy Pa would say?
At my lady's feet, with tender, manly grace,
All humbly I would sink upon my knee,
And her fingers softly pressing, in a manner most caressing,
I would show her what a lover ought to be.

CLARICE. Well, it may be want of feeling, but I don't quite like the kneeling,
And the method won't appeal at all to me.

CONRAD. Then, Clarice, I'll strive most eagerly to learn
The blending of the lion and the lamb,
And by regular devotion, strive to waken your emotion
And prove to you the lover that I am.

CLARICE. Now, Conrad, that is very nice and kind
To talk in such a sympathetic way,
But as I'm wrong in staying, you must pardon me for saying
We'll adjourn this matter till another day.

(Dance. Exeunt CLARICE and CONRAD, L.)

(GUSTAVE and CUSTOM HOUSE OFFICERS and MEN enter through archway, R.)

GUSTAVE. Come along! Hurry up! The diligence will soon be here, and it will be old
game over again. I'm sick of passengers. I'm more sick of luggage.

FRANCOIS. Cheer up, Gustave, think of all we'll get.

GUSTAVE. Hum. What you'll get! *(General bustle. Enter PIERRE, L.U.E.)*

PIERRE. Gentlemen, let me congratulate you. Your noisy zeal does you credit—
infinite credit. That you will maintain the highest traditions of the great department to
which you belong, I have no shadow of doubt. I would, however, remind you that on
this, as on other occasions, the State—represented by my unworthy person—will be glad
to receive any little donations that the diligence passengers—represented, gentlemen, by
you—will care to offer. Perhaps I may be permitted to mention incidentally that the State
has not lately received any Number 17 collars, of which the State has run rather short. I
see, too, on reference, that the State's neckties have become somewhat frayed, and a
further supply would testify to the zeal of her officers; and if any articles of toilette
calculated to heighten the State's personal appearance were to be forthcoming, the State
would not take it unkindly. You are with me, gentlemen!

ALL. We are!

GUSTAVE. I wish to state that, unhappily, I am not to be relied on to perpetrate any
petty larceny. It's a miserable confession of weakness, but I can't help it!

PIERRE. Indeed it is! Besides, apart from the State, the interests of the travelling
public have to be regarded, and there are certain people travelling who have to be brought
to a proper sense of their own general obnoxiousness.

(No. 5 - Travelling Song - PIERRE)

PIERRE. There are people who in travelling by some unhappy knack
 Contrive to be a nuisance and a bore;
 To share a carriage with 'em puts your nerves upon the rack,
 And you vow that you will never travel more;
 But if I can grip their luggage by a lucky fortune's chance,
 I know what little duties to perform.
 And for these unpleasant people—I can tell 'em at a glance!
 I contrive to make it very, very warm.

There are wretched, stuffy people who won't have the window down
 With the temperature at ninety in the shade;
 There are others who use naughty words and tell you with a frown
 That they always like to call a spade a spade!
 There are women who in carriages for smoking will contrive
 By some inherent cussedness to swarm,
 But for these, and people pestering to know when they'll arrive,
 I contrive to make it very, very warm.

There are people who, alighting from the train, will never fail
 To always leave the carriage door ajar;
 There are wretched little babies who emit a plaintive wail,
 And make you blush by calling you Papa;
 There are some who on your trousers never fail to wipe their boot
 Without the faintest symptom of a qualm,
 But for these and for the man who smokes a Brummagem cheroot,
 I contrive to make it very, very warm.

There are people who are never free from an everlasting cold,
 And snuffle till you think they'll have a fit;
 There are bores who have long stories—each a chestnut to unfold,
 And cackle at their own belated wit.
 There's the would-be legislator who drones on what he would do
 By way of cheap political reform,
 But for these and many others—you perhaps could name a few—
 I contrive to make it very, very warm.

(Dance.)

(Sound of bells and horses' hoofs in the distance, denoting the approach of the diligence. The MARKET PEOPLE and VILLAGERS enter L.U.E. General animation.)

(No. 6 - CHORUS)

CHORUS. Once again the merry jingle
Hark! Hark! A well known sound we hear!
How our pulses leap and tingle,
Shout hurrah! The diligence is near.
To your stations now you'll hurry,
Ha! Ha! Your duty now is clear.
Soon will be the rush and scurry:
Shout hurrah! Our harvest time is here.

CUSTOM HOUSE MEN.

To our stations now we hurry,
Ha! Ha! Our duty now is clear;
Soon will be the rush and scurry,
Shout hurrah! Our harvest time is here.
Now has come our task enthralling,
Ha! Ha! No duty now we fear.
Bags and luggage overhauling,
Shout hurrah! The diligence is near.

(Enter PASSENGERS, a PRIEST, and a CITIZEN through archway R. Men carry in luggage; each douanier places himself opposite a trunk. General excitement.)

PIERRE (to passengers). Gentlemen, it is my duty to inform you that there are certain little formalities now to be gone through, which, though perhaps irksome to you, are, I regret to say, necessary to the well-being and comfort of the State which I have the honour to represent. I need hardly say, gentlemen, that you have nothing to declare!

ALL. Nothing!

PIERRE. Thank you, gentlemen! Your candour is refreshing—quite refreshing! A more unanimous avowal of innocence has rarely come to my notice in the course of many years' experience. Thank you so much. Officers of the Customs—charge!

(CUSTOM HOUSE MEN proceed to ransack luggage. Enter MISS SPINIFEX through archway. She wears early Victorian get-up, small parasol, shawl, curls, etc., and is followed by PRUDENCE.)

MISS S. Oh, what a terrible sight for a poor, lone woman! Good Mr. Officer, I throw myself upon—

PIERRE (hastily). My dear Madam, I beg that you will do nothing of the sort. I am a respectable widower and I really can't allow familiarities before these gentlemen.

MISS S. You look good and kind; will you not support me in this hour of trial?

PIERRE. My good woman, you really must not put these indelicate questions. I have a small family of my own to support! Have you any luggage?

MISS S (*flurriedly*). Oh, yes—a little parcel which I stupidly left in the coach.

PIERRE (*to FRANCOIS*). Francois, the lady's parcel! (*Exit FRANCOIS, R.*)

MISS S. What a very pretty uniform, Mr. Officer! So delicate in colouring! So sweetly chaste!

PIERRE. Do you think so? Very kind of you, I'm sure. (*aside*) A discriminating little party!

MISS S. And how well it becomes your figure!

PIERRE (*chuckling*). It does—it does! (*aside*) Charming little girl!

MISS S. Ah, what would life be to us if it were not for these too, too transient gleams of manhood's military majesty!

PIERRE. Quite true, quite true! (*aside*) Takes me for a general! She's an intoxicating little cherub! (*Enter FRANCOIS, LOUIS and two CUSTOM HOUSE MEN R., carrying enormous box.*)

FRANCOIS. The lady's parcel, sir.

PIERRE (*aghast*). Parcel! I call it a row of houses! My good woman, did this come on an earthquake?

MISS S. I didn't think it was so heavy when it left my dear, dear home.

PIERRE. And it won't be so heavy when it leaves *my* dear, dear home. Your keys, madam!

MISS S (*producing them*). There, but you won't make me blush, will you, kind sir?

PIERRE (*unlocking and then diving into box pulls out article of dress*). Dear me, what's this?

PRUDENCE. How dare you!

MISS S. Thank you, Prudence. Oh, you wretch!

PIERRE (*pushing it back*). I beg your pardon! My official soul, a diamond bangle! Any more of these at home?

MISS S. Lots more. I've quite a nice collection.

PIERRE. Lots more! How very interesting! (*Begins to pocket bangle.*) I'm a diamond collector myself.

MISS S (*watching him pocket bangle*). I wouldn't for the world appear unreasonable, but—ahem!

PIERRE (*seeing her outstretched hand*). I beg your pardon—a little misunderstanding! May I place it on your youthful little wrist?

MISS S. Why, I am called the oldest little heiress in England.

PIERRE. Are you indeed! And a very nice ripe title too!

MISS S. Not that I am really old. Many a young man in my country has told me that!

PIERRE (*aside*). I don't like these young men—they know too much!

(*During above dialogue, the CUSTOM HOUSE MEN have been bringing various articles of jewellery, etc., to PIERRE who pockets them. They now help passengers with their luggage, carrying it back to the diligence through archway. GUSTAVE, who has been struggling to pocket a small parcel, eventually runs to PIERRE.*)

GUSTAVE (*weepingly*). Here! Here! I can't keep it!

PIERRE (*angrily*). I wish you wouldn't interrupt me when I'm getting on so nicely. Oh! Ah! (*Taking article from GUSTAVE.*) Jewellery—well, in the interests of the State— (*Examines it. Aside.*) Paste! (*Aloud.*) Take it away! Would you rob the poor girl of her trinkets? I'm disappointed in you, Gustave—I blush for you!

(*GUSTAVE rushes off. FRANCOIS, LOUIS and two CUSTOM HOUSE MEN are preparing to carry MISS SPINIFEX'S box back to the diligence.*)

FRANCOIS. Now then, back to the diligence.

PIERRE. The diligence! No! The Inn! Yes! The diligence moves off! The Inn remains on! Thank you! The Inn!

(*FRANCOIS and CUSTOM HOUSE MEN go into the Inn. During the foregoing scene, the market people have been worrying the other passengers and PRUDENCE to buy their wares, and have followed them off.*)

MISS S. How noble, how generous of you not to allow us poor passengers to be deprived of our little goods. You are an exceptional man!

PIERRE. I am! I am! I accept anything— (*Aside.*) except paste.

MISS S (*sadly*). You are married!

PIERRE. Not at the moment.

MISS S. Then you are a lone widower?

PIERRE. I am! but I am prepared to loan myself out for a term of years on weekly installments.

MISS S. Your poor wife was, of course, devoted to you?

PIERRE. She was! She was very much gone—and now she *is* gone! (*exhibits emotion*).

MISS S. Can I do nothing to quell such manly sorrow?

PIERRE (*eagerly*). You can! Why tear yourself from us? Why not stay here for a time and learn to know me better? I'll put every facility in your way for acquiring a thorough knowledge of me!

MISS S. (*coyly*). Would you really wish me to remain?

PIERRE. There's nothing I could wish more. (*Aside.*) Since I met the little parcel!

(No. 7 - Duet - MISS SPINIFEX and PIERRE)

PIERRE. If you tarry in this valley
Gentle maiden, for a while,
It will be my special duty
All your lone hours to beguile.
I am really well worth knowing
And all modestly may say
I'm the prettiest, the wittiest,
The nippiest, the quippiest,
The daintiest official of the day.

MISS S. Gentle sir, I too may mention
In the land that gave me birth
I'm regarded as a maiden
Of considerable worth.
It is not my fortune only,
For the wicked men all say
I'm the nattiest, the chattiest,
The haughtiest, and naughtiest
The oldest little heiress of the day.

BOTH. In our own respective countries
We have well survived the test,
And can each be safely labelled
As a sample of the best.

PIERRE. All the maidens of this valley
My perfections much adore,
But my amatory coldness
Fills each heart with feelings sore.
All advances I discourage,
And they tearfully all say
I'm the stoniest, aloniest,
The spoofiest, aloofiest,
Standoffiest official of the day.

MISS S. Though perhaps I may not look it,
I have many charms whereby
As a useful speculation
I am viewed with longing eye.
But my maidenly alertness
Causes everyone to say
I'm the hoaxiest and coaxiest,
The teasiest, and squeezeiest,
The coyest little maiden of the day!

BOTH. In our own respective countries
We have well survived the test,
And can each be safely labelled
As a sample of the best.

PIERRE. I would therefore call attention
To my symmetry and grace,
And would bring to special notice
My inimitable face.
If you'll study me and learn me,
In a week or two you'll say,
I'm the horseiest, and sauciest,
The spiciest, enticiest,
The giddiest official of the day.

MISS S. Though my disappointed lovers
Are disposed to me upbraid,
You will find that I am really
Quite a silly little maid.
When you learn to know me better
I am sure that you will say
I'm the slenderest, and tenderest,
The rosiest and cosiest,
The quaintest little heiress of the day!

PIERRE. Though this antiquated maiden
Is a painful sight to see,
With my limited exchequer,
She is just the wife for me!

MISS S. This beautiful official
Almost turns my heart to stone,
For I feel that he adores me
For my little self alone!

(Dance and exeunt into Inn.)

(Enter FRITZ, L.U.E.)

FRITZ. The same story each time I return to the village from the mountains. Clarice and Conrad! Clarice and Conrad! till the air seems to ring with the mockery of it. And yet, but a few weeks ago, she seemed to love me, whilst now— (Enter CLARICE, L.)

CLARICE (*hesitatingly*). Fritz—you here!

FRITZ. I am afraid that I do come as a somewhat unpleasant surprise; but believe me, I am not here to interfere with *your* happiness.

CLARICE. Ah, Fritz, why do you talk like that? You know that I am glad to see you and besides we want you to come to our dance this evening.

FRITZ. That's very good of you! I'm in such a merry mood for dancing!

CLARICE. You will come, Fritz?

FRITZ (*fiercely*). What? to see you in the arms of this man who has robbed me of you—to make myself the laughing stock of the whole village—no thank you!

CLARICE. You are horrid and I—I am very unhappy.

FRITZ. Ah, Clarice, you do care for me a little!

CLARICE. Not when you are so unkind to me! I don't believe that you love me one bit now.

(No. 8 - Song - FRITZ)

FRITZ. How canst thou doubt that still I love thee?
 Why greet me now with words of pain?
 Has thou forgotten my devotion?
 Have all my vows been said in vain?
 Have I not sworn thy love to cherish,
 Have I not prayed my life would be
 One lasting witness of my gladness,
 One breathing proof of love for thee?
 When roses cease to yield their fragrance,
 When sunrise fails to light the sky,
 When mighty oceans stay their flowing,
 When flowers in springtime droop and die;
 Then, only then, can I forget thee,
 Then only then our lives shall part,
 Speak, for thy slave am I for ever,
 Fondly beloved as thou art!

FRITZ (*trying to take her in his arms*). Clarice, now you know what I feel for you!

Clarice (*struggling from his grasp*). Oh, don't!

FRITZ. See, Clarice! I knew that to-day was your birthday. That is the real reason that brought me back. Will you wear this little keepsake to remind you of my love for you? (*He produces a gold chain from his pocket.*)

CLARICE (*aside*). A gold chain? Oh, what shall I do?

FRITZ. Won't you let me put it round your neck?

CLARICE (*confusedly*). No! No! I don't care to take so valuable a gift.

FRITZ. What! from me to you! That is not like you, Clarice—come, dear, you will accept it?

CLARICE (*holding her hand to her neck*). You know that—I—I don't care for jewellery.

FRITZ (*who has suddenly seen the locket she is wearing*). You don't—then what is this? Who has given you this? (CONRAD *has entered, L.*)

CONRAD. A somewhat peremptory demand! May I ask by what right you presume to question Miss Clarice?

FRITZ. By the same right that I ask who the devil are you, sir?

CLARICE. Oh—Conrad—Fritz! Calm yourselves I implore you!

FRITZ (*fiercely*). Then this is the Conrad that I have heard so much of? We are well met, Sir.

CONRAD. Forgive me if I venture to say that the particular joy of our meeting is not quite clear to me.

FRITZ. Then perhaps you will understand me when I tell you that you are no honest man to stay here hanging about this village in the hope of winning the love of the girl who, until you came, had no thought for anyone but me, rough as I am.

CONRAD. This is all very pretty and very heroic, but I don't quite see what your infant love has to do with me! Perhaps it would be as well to hear what Miss Clarice has to say?

CLARICE. Please don't quarrel!

FRITZ (*fiercely*). Do you love this man?

CLARICE (*distressedly*). No! No! I mean—

FRITZ (*laying his hand roughly on CLARICE'S arm*). That is enough!

CONRAD. You shall answer to me for this.

FRITZ. That is my one desire!

CONRAD. So be it!

(*Enter PIERRE from Inn.*)

PIERRE. Dear, dear—what's all this? It's most distressing to be constantly interrupted when I'm getting on so nicely. I really can't be interfered with like this—just as she was inscribing her angel name in my birthday book too! I consider your conduct most suburban, not to say undaughterly, seeing that I'm sacrificing myself in your interests.

CLARICE. You are doing nothing particular that I know of, Papa!

PIERRE. Nothing! Listen to the saucy baggage! Do you call another mother nothing? Let me tell you, miss, that this is a very special occasion! I can't provide you with a mother *every* Tuesday!

CONRAD. I'm sure that the lady who has won your admiration is of surpassing attraction, sir. (PIERRE *writhes*.) But there is another of whom I would speak to you. I have known your charming daughter for only a few weeks, but in that time, I have learnt to love her.

PIERRE (*excitedly*). Then take her my good Conrad, take her, I implore you!

CLARICE. Oh, papa!

FRITZ. I have something to say too, sir. For me there is no one so dear in all the world!

PIERRE (*agitatedly*). Then take her, Fritz! She is yours!

CLARICE (*interrupting*). Really, papa, your manner is extraordinary. I can't understand!

(No. 9 - *Quartette* - PIERRE, CLARICE, FRITZ, CONRAD)

PIERRE. It is really most disarming
When one wishes to be charming
To be met by sounds alarming
In this very sudden way.
All my arts I've been employing
For my ancient maid's decoying
And to call it most annoying
Is the least that I can say.
Through love's mazes I've been steering
In a manner most endearing
And a fascinating leering
I have studied to a T;
But to have this sudden balking
When my golden goose I'm stalking
Is enough to set one talking
In a most immoral key.

CLARICE. In spite of all my tears and my entreating
Their angry thoughts, alas! I know full well,
And what will happen at their vengeful meeting,
The coming time alone can surely tell.
What bitter ending to a day of gladness,
What shadows dear to dull so fair a day,
Where once was joy, now reigns but silent sadness,
And new-born fear drives happiness away.

FRITZ. Since my proffered love's rejection
 All my pride and my affection
 Is replaced by deep dejection
 And my heart is turned to stone.
 To the mountains grim and hoary
 I will bear my sorry story
 And amid their rugged glory
 Live in sorrow and alone.
 All in vain my eager suing,
 Since this man with subtle wooing,
 Has affected my undoing
 In a manner most complete.
 But my heart, with anger burning,
 Now for vengeance sure is yearning,
 As this young man will be learning
 In the hour when we meet.

CONRAD. The days of happy ease and soft contentment
 I clearly see are drawing to an end,
 For I must face his anger and resentment
 And life and honour surely must defend.
 But what care I, when rapture beyond measure
 Awaits me in the love that will be mine,
 Aught would I risk to win so great a treasure,
 Aught would I dare for maiden so divine.

(All passengers enter, except SPINIFEX, L.U.E. followed by crowd of market people who are worrying them to buy their wares. There is a general hubbub.)

A CITIZEN. Go away, you tiresome people. Go away!

A PRIEST *(to PIERRE)*. Here, Mr. Inspector, call off these rural monstrosities.

(At the noise ANNETTE enters from Inn, followed by the other passengers. GUSTAVE and CUSTOM HOUSE OFFICERS and MEN enter R.)

PIERRE. Silence in the pig market! Don't bother me with your trifles. I've got much more important matters on hand. Why here are two men proposing at the same time for my delightful daughter.

A CITIZEN. This is really most novel and exciting.

PIERRE. Exciting indeed. This is a highly respectable village, I'd have you understand, Sir. I call it most distressing. *(To CLARICE.)* Well, miss, what have you to say? You can't marry 'em both.

CLARICE. But, Papa, they haven't either of them proposed to me!

CONRAD *and* FRITZ (*together*). Clarice—

PIERRE. My good girl, I may be peculiar, but I don't quite see what more they can do.

CLARICE. Well, they have neither of them proposed to me according to the custom of our village.

FRITZ. The Edelweiss!

CONRAD. In Heaven's name; what is that custom?

ANNETTE. Why, don't you know that no right-minded girl in our village will listen to a man's suit until he has shewn his pluck by bringing her a sprig of Edelweiss from the highest peak yonder.

CONRAD. What an extraordinary custom!

CLARICE. Yes, but there is good reason for it—listen—

(*No. 10 - Legend - CLARICE*)

CLARICE. I'll tell you of the maiden
Who lived here years ago,
The maid who now lies sleeping
Where sombre pine trees grow.
This maiden had two suitors
And each did love her well,
But which to wed the maiden
Alas! could never tell.
Then each of these suitors besought her
To say which she loved the best
Till the maid in despair bethought her
To put their love to test.
So she said "Go seek in the mountain
Where the edelweiss blooms in the snow
And, on him who first shall bring it,
My hand I will bestow."
With joyful heart, each suitor
Went forth, strong in his love,
To seek the little flower
That grew high up above.
But long the way and weary,
And night fell cold and chill
As on and up they struggled,
Up and onward still.

CLARICE. Then the gale blew fast
 With its wintry blast
 As it never blew before!
 The lightning flashed
 And the thunder crashed
 With a sudden, sullen roar.
 Alas! for the weary lovers
 Whose task was nearly o'er,
 Alas! for the weary lovers
 Who sank to rise no more!

 A maiden sat a-weeping
 Beside her chalet door,
 A-weeping for the lovers
 Who came again no more.
 A maiden's heart was breaking,
 And e'er a month had fled,
 Worn out with weary watching,
 The little maid lay dead.

ANNETTE. Now you have heard the story of the Edelweiss! A challenge for you, gentlemen!

ALL. A challenge—aye, indeed!

ANNETTE. And only right, Clarice, that you should be wooed in the manner of our own country.

ALL. Aye, right indeed!

(No. 11 - Act I Finale)

CONRAD. Fair maiden, at your word I'll take you
 And forth I'll go
 Amid the snow
 To seek the flow'r
 My bride to make you.

ALL. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!

FRITZ. I, too, will seek the edelweiss
 A mountaineer am I,
 And am sure to find the flower
 That nestles up on high;
 Yes, I will seek the edelweiss,
 For danger, what care I?
 Ha! Ha!
 For danger, what care I?

CHORUS. For danger, what cares he?
CLARICE. Ah, Fritz, the truth at last is told
For that thou lov'st me as of old
I plainly see.
This message sweet to thee I sing,
"Go forth and be the first to bring
This flower to me!"

FRITZ. To thee! No! No!
I fear thou art mistaken;
Since thou this fellow here
As lover now hast taken,
The edelweiss I'll gladly seek
With this thought and no other,
To cast it at the feet of him
Thy new found lover!

PIERRE. I'm very loath to lose you both
As clearly one must be my son,
But still beware, look over there—
The sky is black, you'll lose the track!
It's wrong you know!
Why farther roam? Please stay at home.

CHORUS. Shake hands, we say,
Don't go, we pray.
Don't go!

CLARICE. I beg and pray that you will stay
And think no more
Of words that I, in vanity,
Have said before.
See how the black clouds gather fast,
The storm winds blow!
This dreadful night may be your last
If forth you go!
Oh! woe is me if this should be
For, from to-day,
My life would be a misery.
In mercy, stay!

CHORUS. We beg and pray that you will stay
 And think no more
 Of words that she, in vanity,
 Have said before.

FRITZ. Storm or no storm,
 One thing alone I know,
 Come gale or calm,
 This very night I go.

CONRAD. And I, this very night, I go!

FRITZ. The mountain track you think a street
 All paved and lit with flashing lamps
 To light the way for tender feet.
 Yes, go! And I will wait, I say
 A good six hours ere starting on my way.

PIERRE. On this matter now of starting
 Bless my soul, why fuss and stew?
 It's the getting back in safety
 That's the thing you've got to do!

ALL. Bravo! Bravo!
 Away to the mountains, away, away!
 When love beckons onward, why who would delay?
 There's nought that a gallant can fail to do,
 When love in the heart beats loyal and true;
 So, quit you like men and without delay
 Away to the mountains—away! away!

(Picture: CONRAD at back. FRITZ seated downstage L., his arms gloomily crossed, CLARICE in ANNETTE'S arms.)

CURTAIN - END OF ACT 1

(ACT 2 - Scene: A room in PIERRE'S chalet. A large fireplace down R. Doors R.U.E. and L. Casement window and street door at back. The room is cleared for dancing and is gaily lit and decorated.)

(No. 12 - Mazurka)

CLARICE, ANNETTE, GUSTAVE with CHORUS dancing as they sing.

Trip we now our dainty measure,
 Light our hearts with mirth and pleasure;
 Who could rest with pulses throbbing
 To the music's rhythmic sobbing?
 Here are naught but faces smiling,
 Dimpled cheeks and forms beguiling,
 Eyes with merry mischief glowing,
 Tender looks of love bestowing.
 Mirth and music, love and laughter,
 Echo loud from floor to rafter,
 As with hearts filled high with pleasure,
 Trip we now our dainty measure.
 Tripping lightly, tripping brightly,
 Spirits young and gay.
 Tender look of love bestowing
 At the close of day.

ARMANDINE. Where's our host? Where's Pierre? He doesn't appear to want to see us.

YVONNE. He doesn't appear because he doesn't want to see us (Enter PIERRE.)

PIERRE. I suppose, ladies and gentlemen, that it is the correct thing for me to say that I am delighted to meet you.

ALL. Of course, Pierre.

PIERRE. Well, I don't mind saying it, and when a man *says* a thing, you presume him to mean it, eh?

ALL. Of course.

PIERRE. Then, on this occasion, as it is the custom, I don't mind your presuming! By the way, how are your appetites this evening?

ALL. Splendid!

PIERRE. Splendid? You are perhaps hopeful of a good supper! That's very disappointing!

CLARICE. Oh, Papa, you shouldn't say that you'll be disappointed.

PIERRE. I didn't say so! The disappointment, my child, will be entirely on their side—when they see the supper! But, by the way, ladies and gentlemen, I wish this evening to present to you a lady who has recently dropped among us like a jewel from another firmament. As Providence has beneficently ordained that she should drop in front of me, I have taken the liberty of picking her up, and will now present her to you—to look at. You are kindly requested not to touch!

ANNETTE. Is she pretty?

PIERRE. Don't be absurd, Annette!—is she pretty?—what have looks got to do with it in a case like this? So like you to ask these silly questions! Ah! here she comes! Now, I beg of you to receive her with becoming dignity. (*Enter MISS SPINIFEX, L.*) In the name of all present, I bid you welcome, fair lady. (*Guests laugh loudly. PIERRE says hurriedly.*) My good friends, I think that a little light refreshment would not come amiss. You will find a limited supply in the next room. Good-bye for the moment! (*Chorus laugh and go off.*) (*To MISS SPINIFEX.*) Dear lady, some slight refreshment I think!

MISS S (*bowing*). It is very kind of you, I'm sure, and most comforting! I'm such a nervous little stranger. (*Seeing GUSTAVE.*) But dear me! What a splendid looking hero! Splendid reserve invariably thrills me! (*Aside.*) Peace, little heart!

PIERRE. It's exceedingly gracious of you to admire my subordinate, but ahem! We don't usually regard him as one of our picturesque objects of interest. Now when viewing *me*, sightseers have been heard to observe—

MISS S. Quite so! (*To GUSTAVE.*) Forgive my maidenly alertness. May I—(*Aside.*) How exquisitely tranquil!

PIERRE (*aside*). This attention to Gustave is extremely embarrassing.

MISS S (*to GUSTAVE*). May I address you?

GUSTAVE. Speak on!

MISS S. Young man! You are superlative!

GUSTAVE (*aside chuckling*). That sounds improper—I'm getting on!

PIERRE (*angrily*). Don't grin like that, it's positively indecent. Come away, Gustave—come away!

MISS S. Gustave—what a sweet name!

GUSTAVE (*chuckling*). Comparatively so, I think!

ANNETTE (*in a hoarse whisper*). If you chortle again in that unpleasant way, I'll stick this pin into you.

GUSTAVE. Go away! I'm feeling wicked.

PIERRE (*aside*). If this goes on, bang go my diamonds! (*Aloud to MISS SPINIFEX.*)
Madam, can I tempt you with a doughnut!

MISS S. How fascinatingly rural—Mr. Gustave, will you escort a little stranger?

GUSTAVE. Ecstatic!—my arm! (*Offers his arm and proudly leads her off, L.*)

PIERRE (*furiously*). This is mutiny! Black, double-eyed mutiny of the most flagrant type!
And to think, of all my subordinates, it should be the guileless Gustave! It's horrible!

ANNETTE. Oh, Pierre, what shall I do?

PIERRE. What will you do? My good woman, it can signify to nobody what *you* do.
The question is, what shall *I* do?

ANNETTE (*petulantly*). Gustave has given me the cold shoulder.

PIERRE (*savagely*). I can promise you that there'll be nothing cold about him, if I can
get a convenient opportunity of warming him—with safety to myself. Did you see the
way she looked at him?

ANNETTE. And the audacious way he smirked at her! He has *never* done that to me,
and I've given him every opportunity.

PIERRE. I'll show her what the feelings of an outraged widower are! I'll flirt horribly!
I'll leer at every woman I meet; the more hideous she is, the more I'll leer at her. I'll ogle
even you, Annette! Prepare to receive my ogle! (*Strikes attitude.*)

ANNETTE. Oh, if I only had a man to flirt with, I'd show him!

PIERRE. I don't mind lending myself to you as a special favour, but you really mustn't
keep me!

ANNETTE. I said a *man*.

PIERRE. Peevish!

ANNETTE. Oh, how miserable I am!

PIERRE. And to think of the lovelight in those diamonds!

(*No. 13 - Duet - PIERRE and ANNETTE*)

PIERRE. For fury and strife, my feelings are rife,
For terrible slaughter I'm yearning;
My soul is afire with desperate ire,
I long to see somebody burning;
To break every law, to wallow in gore
Would give me much gratification,
To hear a cat wail as I chopped off her tail
Would be a delightful sensation.

BOTH. To chop a cat's tail, we're sure, couldn't fail
To be a delightful sensation!

ANNETTE. My feelings are such it would solace me much
 To make myself rude and unpleasant
 For none could be quite cheerful you see
 With things just as they are at present;
 I'm burning to tell, for I know the girls well,
 Who paint and powder their faces;
 I long to deride the girls who are dyed
 And point at their hair with grimaces.

BOTH. We neither are loth, for 'twould tickle us both
 To point at their hair with grimaces.

PIERRE. I'm longing to do some villainy new
 To make people tremble and shiver;
 Some horrible crime, just to fill in the time,
 And put people's nerves on the quiver.
 To scuttle a ship on a holiday trip,
 And watch her sink low in the water,
 Or better again to wreck a full train
 And grin at the murderous slaughter.

BOTH. It clearly is plain in wrecking a train
 We fairly could revel in slaughter!

ANNETTE. To spend all the day in a riotous way
 Is now my absorbing ambition.
 That old ladies may view whatever I do
 With deep and unbounded suspicion;
 To smoke a cigar at our village bazaar
 Would give me most infinite pleasure;
 To drink bottled beer with a masculine leer
 Would be a delight beyond measure.

BOTH. It's not at all queer that to drink bottled beer
 Would be a delight beyond measure.
 Though we've both been treated badly,
 We most cordially agree,
 But although we've had our bluster,
 When the facts we come to muster
 It is very sad for we.

PIERRE. Oh, it's very sad for she!
 ANNETTE. And it's sadder far for he!

BOTH. In conjunction, let us chorus,
 It is *very* sad for we. (*Dance and off, R.*)

(Enter CLARICE, R.)

CLARICE. I cannot stay and listen to their laughter when my heart is aching. (*She goes to window and looks out, snow is falling.*) To think that anyone should be out of doors on such a night—that I should have sent two brave men to risk their lives merely to gratify a foolish vanity. Poor Fritz! How wrong I was to have taken Conrad's locket. I feel I can't wear it any longer. It seems like tempting Providence afresh.

(*She takes the locket off and lays it in its case on the chimney-piece. There is a knock at the door. CLARICE opens it. Enter FRITZ disguised as an old organ-grinder.*)

FRITZ. Shelter, shelter I beg for an old man, a poor wanderer. Shelter from the storm.

CLARICE. Come in my friend, whoever you may be. Come in.

FRITZ. I thank you, kind lady. I beg but rest for awhile. My limbs are tired and I am weary, for the way has been long, oh! so long.

CLARICE. My heart is sore for those who are out in the storm to-night.

FRITZ. Aye, and rumour has it that even while we speak, two men, to please the passing whim of some shallow-hearted wench, are clambering amongst the mountains risking their lives in search of a love token of their devotion. Thank heaven the sight of your bright fire means more to me than the brightest glow in any woman's eyes!

CLARICE (*agitated*). How could she foretell that the night would be so wild, that the pitiless snow would fall so fast?

FRITZ. Perchance she rejoices at the thought of ridding herself of the pair of them.

CLARICE. Oh! how can you be so cruel?

FRITZ. Forgive me! If I mistake not I read the truth in *your* eyes. What is more, pretty lady, I can learn the story from your hand—

CLARICE. No, no. I dare not hear it.

FRITZ. Come, fear not! (*He takes her hand, which she reluctantly surrenders to him.*)

(No. 14 - Duet - FRITZ and CLARICE)

FRITZ. Just let me hold your little hand
 That I the past may understand;
 The right one, please,
 Now stand at ease
 And you shall learn your fate.

CLARICE. I hope that I am doing right,
 One moment pray, not quite so tight,
 Your methods, too, please expedite,
 It's growing rather late.

FRITZ. That you've a lover's plainly true,
Why, bless my soul, not one, but two!
A mountaineer, and one, see here,
In city born and bred.

CLARICE. My heart is filled with sore distress,
How could he guess, how could he guess.

FRITZ. That's true so far as you confess
In blushes rosy red.

CLARICE

It's just as plain as plain can be
The truth my hand may show full well,
But which the lover dear to me
I'll never, never tell!

FRITZ

It's just as plain as plain can be
The truth I surely cannot tell.
Ah! would indeed that I were he
Whom she should love so well.

FRITZ. My skill I'll venture now to test
In seeking whom you love the best;
And I may state your future fate
This line should clearly show.

CLARICE. Whate'er your skill in magic love,
I pray you cease and look no more,
For what the Fates may have in store
I do not seek to know—

FRITZ. You must agree it is not meet
My labours should be incomplete.
Why, yes, 'tis clear the mountaineer
Your heart has set aglow!

CLARICE. Though you the truth would fain descry,
'Tis labour lost, for know that I
Have naught to tell and my reply
Is neither yes nor no—

CLARICE

It's just as plain as plain can be
The truth my hand may show full well,
But which the lover dear to me
I must decline to tell.

FRITZ

It's just as plain as plain can be
The truth, alas! I cannot tell.
Ah! joy indeed if I were he
Whom she should love so well.

(CLARICE *exits* R.)

FRITZ (*despairingly*). Does she care for me, I wonder? (*He spies the locket left on the mantelpiece by CLARICE.*) What is this? (*Taking the locket up.*) His locket! My rival's locket, that has been the cause of all this trouble between us!

(PIERRE *has entered.*)

PIERRE. Who and what are you! What are you doing here and what's that you've got in your hand! My daughter's locket! You're a thief, man—a thief—do you hear me?

FRITZ. A thief? No, no, not I! (*He throws off his disguise.*)

PIERRE. Fritz! Fritz! The little Fritz I have known ever since he was a boy so high! A thief.

(*No. 15 - Song - PIERRE*)

PIERRE. An old man sat in the twilight gloom
 With his bags of gold beside him.
 Poor old man, sad was he,
 Gone was his son far across the sea
 And the sight of his gold had sorely tried him.
 "All my wealth was for him," was the old man's cry,
 "I have sent him away—will he come ere I die?
 Will no angel footsteps guide him?"
 "Ah! lack-a-day," sighed the old man then,
 "Rough are the ways in the lives o' men,
 Sad is the story,
 Grim is the day,
 Lone is my life with my boy away."
 The old man smiled as he sat and dreamed
 Of his son with tender yearning,
 Poor old man, dazed was he
 As he saw a hand come stealthily
 And clutch at the gold with fingers burning.
 "Tis the hand of my son!" was the old man's cry,
 "Like a thief in the night he has come ere I die,
 Like a thief to his home returning!"
 "Ah! lack-a-day," sighed the old man then,
 "Vain are the dreams in the lives o' men!
 Sad is the story,
 Hope dies away,
 Broken my heart at life's closing day."

SERGEANT. Who am I? Well, I'll tell you.
 (Song.) Of non-commissioned officers of blood and thunder fame,
 I'm foremost in the fighting as in Cupid's little game.
 All modestly I'd mention that my name's on every tongue
 Where tales of love are whispered and the deeds of war are sung.
 But what a soldier prizes more than any loud "viva"
 Are just these simple pleasures and I'll tell you what they are:
 A well-filled pipe, a well-filled bowl,
 A smile from the eyes of beauty;
 A man you'd please, just give him these,
 And he's fit for a soldier's duty!

O'er all the men beneath me I exert a subtle spell
 By magic of the eye and of a scathing tongue as well.
 When leading them to battle I have even heard it said
 They'd gladly miss the foeman if their shot hit me instead!
 But what care I since ever through the battle smoke afar
 I see the joys that wait me and I'll mention what they are:
 A well-filled pipe, a well-filled bowl,
 A smile from the eyes of beauty;
 A man you'd please, just give him these,
 And he's fit for a soldier's duty!

ANNETTE (*entering and seeing* SERGEANT). Oh, what a beautiful man!

SERGEANT. Now that you understand that although in a *general* sense I am only a sergeant, I will proceed to enlighten you further. There is a rumour of immediate war (*consternation*) and I am hastening to the front. (CLARICE *enters* L.) Yes, war! Why not? As you must all know, relations between our country and the neighbouring Power have for some time been strained, and now it seems that they are at breaking point. We shall have a nice kick-up before long, and Sergeant Frederico, as usual, will be in customary request.

ANNETTE. When will it be?

SERGEANT. My dear lady, even *I* don't pretend to know *everything*; all I know is that in a few weeks more, we shall be under arms, and so, as I was passing through the village and heard of your little festivity this evening, I have taken it upon myself to invite myself so that I may give you warning. There will, doubtless, shortly be a calling out of the reserves.

MEN. The reserves!

SERGEANT. Yes, the reserves; and some of you gallant mountain noblemen will be called on to defend your country.

FRANCOIS (*anxiously*). What division will be called out?

SERGEANT. That's not yet decided, but you'll know soon enough when I return again to claim those who have been decreed to follow the drum. But, bless me, you are all safe at present, so why let us disturb this festive evening? I'm indeed happy to be in such pleasant company. Ladies, I am with you—I will remain with you! (*To ANNETTE*) Young lady! (*Enter PIERRE, R.*)

PIERRE. What's all this excitement about? Dear me. (*Looking at SERGEANT.*) Is this an advertisement?

CLARICE. Papa, let me introduce Sergeant Frederico. He is on his way to the front and will stop here for the night.

PIERRE. What! Do you mean to tell me that I have to board this man-o-war?

CLARICE. No doubt he will stay at the village inn. But he brings terrible news. There is a rumour of war, and he says that there will shortly be a calling out of the reserves.

PIERRE. The reserves! Do you mean to say that there's a chance of my being whisked off? I can't go! I won't go! I've a number of calls to return that will keep me at home. Where's my card case? Oh, it's dreadful! Why couldn't you keep it till the morning? I shan't sleep a wink, I know I shan't.

SERGEANT. All right, cheer up! They'll want only us young fellows. You're much too decrepit!

PIERRE. Do you think so? That's very kind of you! I'm very much obliged to you. There was a time when I could face any danger. Now I flush in the presence of a silkworm!

(*SERGEANT with ANNETTE on his arm and the CHORUS exeunt L.*)

PIERRE (*to CLARICE*). Well, Miss, you're a cheerful sort of person to cater for! Anybody'd think you were at a wake!

CLARICE. Oh, Papa, forgive me! I am so miserable thinking of Fritz and Conrad. See how it snows—it must be terrible on the mountain.

PIERRE. Well, why did you send them? 'Pon my word, you women seem to regard men as a right instead of as a luxury.

(*CLARICE exits R. Enter MISS SPINIFEX and GUSTAVE, L.*)

MISS S (*tapping GUSTAVE with fan*). Do you know, you're a very naughty man!

GUSTAVE (*delightedly*). Am I really? What have I said? What have I done? I believe I'm a deuce of a dog if the truth were known. Who is that man we left Annette talking to in the supper room?

PIERRE. A very nice man, I assure you. Annette says he's charming, and Annette knows a thing or two.

GUSTAVE (*dropping MISS S's arm*). Annette is a hussy!

PIERRE (*offering his arm to MISS S*). She is! I've always had that impression myself! I should tell her so, Gustave! You'll find her in the supper room. Good bye!

(*Exit GUSTAVE into Supper Room.*)

(PIERRE and MISS SPINIFEX walk backwards and forwards across the stage.)

PIERRE. Now we are at last alone. Tell me, you will make a nice long stay with us?

MISS S. Do you ask me to stay with you? How sweet of you!

PIERRE. Ahem! well perhaps I didn't quite put it—You see when I said 'with us' I used the simple word 'us' in its national sense. I spoke imperially, Matilda!

MISS S (*coily*). How did you guess my little Christian name?

PIERRE. No guessing is necessary, Matilda, in the case of an officer of the Customs. My official investigations!

MISS S. But you do wish me, the little stranger, to stay on here for a time at the Inn?

PIERRE. Ah, there you have it! You're so quick! Mind you, if I can persuade you to stay with yourself at the Inn, I confess that I do so with ulterior motives.

MISS S. I beg your pardon! Ul—terior?

PIERRE. Tut! tut! there I go again popping off into these foreign idioms—I keep forgetting that you've been such a short while in the Alps.

MISS S (*tragically*). Ah, the Alps! the Alps! The very name thrills me. To see those glorious mountains has been the grand object of my girlish ambition! To feast mine eyes on their rugged beauty has been the one dream of my loveless life.

PIERRE. You've had a nice long sleep, Tildy!

(*Exeunt PIERRE and MISS SPINIFEX. ANNETTE runs in followed by GUSTAVE.*)

ANNETTE. Ha! ha! ha! how amusing! Really, Gustave you mustn't look like that [*unsmiling*]! You can't help it, I know, but you must struggle against it; you must indeed. You'll be the death of me! ha ha!

GUSTAVE. A merry death it would seem! (*Quaveringly.*) Annette, I should be glad to think that I had been the humble means procuring you for a joyous deathbed. I think—I only say think—I'm partial to you, Annette.

ANNETTE (*solemnly*). Say it again, Gustave! Can it be really true that I am loved by anything with a face like that! (*Tapping him on the cheek.*) Like that! (*Tapping him on the other cheek.*)

GUSTAVE. Seems so.

ANNETTE. But I don't think I'm worthy of it! I don't indeed! A face like that would seem to make exorbitant demands on any woman's courage. I'm not a robust woman, Gustave! I really think that the daily contemplation of it would unnerve me!

GUSTAVE. Don't say it, Annette! Don't say it! I've been a good son to my mother, and my face quite lights up when I smile. (*Grins weakly.*)

ANNETTE. No! If that's all the lighting up you can do at this hour of the night, you'll have great trouble with the police.

GUSTAVE (*writhing*). Police! Oh, don't, don't.

ANNETTE. I'll tell you, stupid, the sort of husband I want.

(No. 17 - Song - ANNETTE)

ANNETTE.

I should like here to state
 That the thought of a mate
 Whose expression is one of despair,
 Seems impossible quite
 And you'll say that I'm right
 When you glance at that face over there. (*Indicates GUSTAVE.*)
 What I want is a man—
 Well, I'll try, if I can
 Just to state in a minor degree
 What that man should possess
 Who would do, more or less,
 As a passable husband for me!
 For me,
 Yes, I'll say what my husband should be!
 If I cough half the day
 In a maddening way,
 He must vow that it's music to him;
 If I warble a song,
 Words and music all wrong,
 He must smile at my fanciful whim;
 And when calling we go,
 If a story of woe
 Is told in a dolorous key,
 And I laugh till I choke
 He must roar at the joke,
 That's the sort of a husband for me!
 For me,
 That's the sort of a husband for me!
 He must sympathise quite
 And must say that I'm right
 In whatever the deed I have done!
 If I buy a new hat
 With a brim—just like that!
 He must cheerfully murmur, "What fun!"
 He must stand any shock,
 Be as firm as a rock,
 And must chuckle and chortle with glee,
 When I venture to say,
 "Mamma's coming to stay!"
 That's the sort of a husband for me!
 For me,
 That's the sort of a husband for me! (*ANNETTE and GUSTAVE exeunt.*)

(CHORUS *enter* L *with* SERGEANT.)

(No. 18 - *Good Night* - CHORUS *and* PIERRE *and* MISS SPINIFEX)

CHORUS. The hour is fleeting and we must away,
 Good-night! Good-night!
 The night must no longer be turned into day,
 Good-night! Good-night!

(*Enter* PIERRE *and* MISS SPINIFEX, R.)

CHORUS. We thank you for what we've enjoyed of your charity,
 For all that we've had of good cheer and hilarity,
 Good-night! Good-night!

PIERRE. If you insist that you must go,
 It's not for me to press you—no!
 Although you're bound to face the snow,
 I think perhaps you'd better go—
 In fact I'm sure you'd better go.

CHORUS. It's really true we're bound to go,
 In spite of weather, cold or snow,
 Good-night! Good-night!

PIERRE (*to* MISS S). Fair lady, that no peril thwart you,
 To the inn I will escort you.

MISS S. That's really very kind of you—
 Pray do!

CHORUS. The hour is fleeting and we must away,
 Good-night! Good-night!
 The night must no longer be turned into day,
 Good-night! Good-night!

(*Exit* PIERRE *with* MISS SPINIFEX *by door* C. *The* SERGEANT *with a girl on each arm* *exits* C., *the* CHORUS *following*. *With them are* ANNETTE *and* GUSTAVE *who have entered* R. *The voices are heard dying away in the distance*.)

(CLARICE *enters* R.)

CLARICE. At last they have gone! How thankful I am to be alone! Oh, Fritz. Fritz, come back to me, I love you! No answer—nothing but the noiseless, pitiless falling of the snow! Will the day never come? I am worn out with anxiety and yet I cannot go to bed. I will sit here and await my father's return. (*Sits downstage before fire*.) Oh, how tired and miserable I am! Would that I could sleep!

(No. 19 - Sleep Song - CLARICE)

CLARICE. Bright were the fairy dreams that rose to throng
 The first sweet moments of the day's fair dawning,
 Sweet was the echo of the wild birds' song
 That woke to melody the sun-kissed morning;
 But fairy dreams and song birds' tuneful lay
 Alike have perished with the dying day.
 Gentle sleep, gentle sleep,
 Take me to thy breast.
 All the world is weary,
 Birds have sought their nest.
 Let me find in thee heart's rest.

(CLARICE falls asleep. Gauzes descend.)

(No. 19a - Dream Pantomime Music.)

(Dream Tableau appears at back of stage, showing a rugged spot high up in the mountain with a shrine, before which a red light burns. The snow is deep and is falling fast. CONRAD is lying insensible before the shrine. FRITZ enters and seeing CONRAD, gives a gesture of scorn and prepares to pass him by, but the shrine arrests his attention. He takes his hat off, then impetuously approaching CONRAD he raises him in his arms. Drawing a flask from his pocket he presses it to CONRAD's lips. CONRAD shows signs of returning consciousness. Raising him in his arms, FRITZ with a broad gesture points to the valley below. The tableau fades away. CLARICE wakes with a startled cry.)

CLARICE. Have I been dreaming, or can what I have seen be really true?

(No. 20 - Act 2 Finale - CHORUS, CLARICE, PIERRE, FRITZ)

CHORUS (in the distance). Lilli-au-o-ou!

CLARICE (spoken). What sounds are those? Something must have happened!

CHORUS. Lilli-au-o-ou! Lilli-au-o-ou!

CLARICE. (spoken). I tremble with fear!

(She goes to the door and listens. The voices come nearer and nearer.)

CHORUS. Let what has passed for aye remain
 To each a dream that's o'er,
 Forget this night and once again,
 Let all be as before!

FRITZ. It cannot be,
 For you with eager zest
 Have seized the chance most readily
 To put my love to test.

CHORUS. That's very true,
 She doubted you
 And put your love to test.

FRITZ. The fullness of my love
 Was yours beyond reclaim,
 But little valued since the day
 This other lover came.

CHORUS. That she of you
 Thought less is true
 Since Conrad hither came.

FRITZ. The vows that I have uttered I recall
 And you are free!
 On your fair path may no dim shadows fall
 By thought of me.
 No edelweiss I bring to claim you wife,
 From heights above,
 But better far I give you back the life
 Of him you love.

CHORUS. Bravo! Fritz! Bravo!

PIERRE (*to CLARICE*).
 He has served you rightly, Madam, and you'll see upon reflection
 That you can't play "ducks and drakes-es" with any man's affection—
 If you think that you can keep him, whilst you're ogling with another
 You're mistaken, as I frequently impressed upon your mother.
 Never mind, you still have Conrad, and if you should chance to get a
 Wealthy husband such as he is, it will suit your daddy better.

PIERRE (*seeing locket, to CLARICE*).

Here's the present that he gave you, bless my heart, you needn't think it,
That you'll keep the rich one either, if you can't preserve his trinket!

(PIERRE *pompously hands the locket to CLARICE. She for a moment handles it, then throws it away from her in disgust. FRITZ makes an involuntary movement to go to her but controls himself.*)

CHORUS. Hero, we name you
 Man of pluck and daring!
 Chivalrous as foeman,
 None with you comparing!
 Dangers surmounted,
 Cost never counted;
 Banish all sorrow
 In hope of joy to-morrow!

CLARICE. Though my love in anger now you're scorning,
 Still my life is yours alone,
 Speak one word, my heart is breaking,
 Let my grief my fault atone.

CHORUS. Hero we name you.

(CLARICE *falls fainting into chair. PIERRE silently reproves FRITZ, who is overcome with emotion.*)

CURTAIN - END OF ACT 2

(ACT 3 - Scene as in Act 1: A Frontier Alpine Village. To L. Inn in the Chalet style with shrubs, tables and chairs. Entrances L. and L.U.E. below and above Inn. To R. Custom House with large archway leading to road. R.U.E. a lych gate leading to church. On back cloth landscape of valley with snow-capped mountains in the distance. Added are decorations in honour of the Wedding Day of CLARICE and FRITZ.)

(No. 21 - Opening Chorus)

FRANCOIS, VILLAGERS and CUSTOM HOUSE MEN.

ALL. Happy the couple on whom the sun
Pours his ray
In a friendly blaze,
For so they say is marriage begun
In the best of ways.

GIRLS. The light that beams on the bridal hour
Will tinge their life with its magic pow'r.
Thought the storm may sometimes seem to low'r,
At worst 'twill be but an April shower.

ALL. Oh yes, oh yes, 'twill only be
A delicate April shower!

MEN. For him the sky will be ever blue,

GIRLS. That's true! That's true!

MEN. He'll do whatever he wishes to do,

GIRLS. Quite true, quite true!

MEN. Of *his* friends he'll have many; of *hers* but a few!

GIRLS. Well, a few, a few!

MEN. And he'll never come home until after two!

GIRLS. Oh boo! Oh boo!

ALL. Happy the couple on whom the sun
Pours his ray
In a friendly blaze,
For so they say is marriage begun
In the best of ways.

PIERRE. My dress should be a dream
 Of quite the latest state
 And whether it happened to rain or no,
 I'd turn up my trousers a foot or so
 Though why, I cannot state.
 My wife and I should seem
 For ever blithe and gay,
 And we'd take good care we never should meet
 Except at a crush or a birthday treat
 In quite a friendly way.
 I never would complain [This verse does]
 Of what my food should be.
 My wife would know when put to the test
 That so long as I had the very best,
 'Twere good enough for me. [not appear in]
 I'd play the lovesick swain
 At all *theatricals*,
 For so one can manage with utmost ease
 To make fond love, whenever you please,
 To all the pretty *gals*. [the vocal score.]
 My wife and I would start
 A motor made for two,
 And if she should ask in a cosy way,
 I'd take her out for a happy day,
 As husbands sometimes do.
 She cannot have the heart
 To thrust my love aside,
 For she'll very much alter my aged life
 If she'll only consent to be my wife
 And fondly blushing bride.

CHORUS. For she'll very much alter his aged life
 If she'll only consent to be his wife
 And fondly blushing bride.

(*Exeunt* PIERRE L., VILLAGERS L., FRANCOIS L.U.E. and CUSTOM HOUSE MEN R.)

(Enter ANNETTE from Inn.)

ANNETTE. I can't bring that impossible Gustave to the point. He grows more stupid every day. But this letter (*producing letter*) that I received this morning may be of some service.

(Enter GUSTAVE, R.)

GUSTAVE (*gloomily*). Good day, Annette, rollicking day for the wedding, isn't it? Feel quite boisterous myself.

ANNETTE. You shouldn't allow yourself to get too excited. I'm not sure that it would be good for you.

GUSTAVE. On such an occasion as this, I am very much afraid that a little hilarity is justifiable.

ANNETTE. Alas, yes! I regret to say that there is nothing really demoralizing in a moderate display of merriment.

GUSTAVE. I fear not!

ANNETTE. I've been seriously pondering on your unhappy state. A man *ought* to be able to prove himself an abandoned villain. It seems to be easy enough! One has heard of cases!

GUSTAVE. They seem common enough, don't they?

ANNETTE. Now what I've been thinking is this! Why don't you marry someone you positively dislike?

GUSTAVE (*starting*). Oh, horrible! Horrible! The thought revolts me!

ANNETTE (*eagerly*). That's just it! It would be almost a criminal action on your part! As an immoral act, it would be magnificent! Now think of some one you don't care for.

GUSTAVE (*gloomily*). My nature is so beautiful that I love all fellow-men and fellow-women—except—except—

ANNETTE. Except whom?

GUSTAVE. I don't like to hurt your feelings, Annette, but I'm afraid that I don't really care much for you! I once thought I loved you to destruction—but I fear that my love is on the wane.

ANNETTE (*eagerly*). It is! I'm sure of it! Then do it, Gustave! Do it before you grow to love me again!

GUSTAVE (*starting*). Do what?

ANNETTE. Marry me, stupid! It's your only chance of a healthy villainy.

GUSTAVE (*hesitatingly*). You really think that an alliance with you would tend to moral degradation?

ANNETTE. I'm sure of it! You're quite certain you don't care for me?

GUSTAVE. Certain!

ANNETTE. Then you'll marry me?

GUSTAVE. I will!

ANNETTE. You swear it, whatever happens?

GUSTAVE. I do.

ANNETTE (*with a sigh of relief*). Gustave, you're a most noble fellow! If anyone deserves to go through the world without a shred of character, you do. By the way, I had a letter from a gentleman you know of.

GUSTAVE (*fiercely*). Who was it?

ANNETTE (*indifferently*). Oh, no one that would interest you, only Sergeant Frederico.

GUSTAVE (*furiously*). Sergeant Frederico! How dare he write to my affianced bride! The villain! The traitor! Give me the letter!

ANNETTE (*drawing back*). You can't possibly care who writes to me!

GUSTAVE (*furiously*). Do you want to madden me, Miss? I *do* care! I insist on caring! Give me the letter!

ANNETTE (*sweetly*). You *do* care? Then I'll read it to you. (*ANNETTE reads letter.*)

Fair Maiden,

War, as you doubtless know, has just been declared. To-morrow I come to your village to announce the names of those who are ordered immediately to the front, and to take them off with me. I shall hope to see you. Until then, sweet creature, adieu!

Yours through all perils, Frederico.

GUSTAVE (*aghast*). War declared! To-morrow! What is the date of the letter? (*Looks at it.*) Why, to-morrow means to-day. He's coming to claim some of us as soldiers! Oh, Annette, do you think that I may have to go?

ANNETTE (*tearfully*). Gustave, you cannot leave me.

GUSTAVE (*taking her in his arms*). Never! (*Drawing away.*) But oh, there is one little matter! If you are to bloom henceforth in the sunshine of my presence—no more flirting, Miss!

ANNETTE. I flirt! and how about yourself, Sir, with your chuckling and chortling over that bad old woman? "Ecstatic, my arm!" Don't talk to me of flirting! Why you're like a ship blown this way and that by every breath of wind!

GUSTAVE. What! *I'm* blown!

(No. 23 - Song - ANNETTE)

ANNETTE.

A little ship sailed on the breast of the deep
And laughed as she rippled along,
The sun shone on high, and the waves slipping by
Sang in chorus a welcoming song;
But the wind from the West looked sad and depressed,
For that little ship never would stay,
Though he struggled to tell that he loved her so well,
She would laughingly ripple away.

“Oh, dear little ship why be so unkind?
Please listen to what I would say!”

But when he drew near without waiting to hear,
She would turn and sail shyly away.

By night and by day the poor wind struggled hard,
And pursued her both that way and this,
But she quickly would fly with a laugh in her eye,
When he touched her white sails with a kiss.
Then the wind from the West looked sorely depressed,
And said in a petulant tone,
“You are fickle, untrue, I could ne'er marry you,
You must go through the world alone.”

The little ship said, as she hauled to the wind,
“Please don't lay such charges to me.
Had you but one mind, perhaps you will find
That I, too, more constant could be!”

(Dance. Exeunt ANNETTE and GUSTAVE.)

(Enter PIERRE, L., from Inn.)

PIERRE. I wish to be alone and brood over my sorrows. I can't brood in public, and I can't make that stony-hearted Spinifex angel see my latent charms; and I have told her of them so often too! If the wedding festivities do not recall her to a proper sense of connubial bliss, I shall have to send her a valentine! It's a forlorn hope, but I've known it to act occasionally on artistic temperaments! But—

(Enter MISS SPINIFEX from Inn.)

MISS S. Good morning, Pierre.

PIERRE. Good gracious! (*Aside.*) The angel of my dreams!

MISS S. You seem surprised to see me. Am I unwelcome?

PIERRE (*confusedly*). No, no, do come in—I mean—it’s very kind of you to come out. (*Aside*) I’m in such a terrific flutter, she’ll think I’m the village idiot!

MISS S. I can well understand what the feelings of a father must be on such a day as this.

PIERRE. Father again! That bouncing hussy Clarice will ruin me! (*To Miss S.*) I see you are upset.

MISS S. There is always something melancholy about a wedding day, isn’t there?

PIERRE (*eagerly*). Some one else’s wedding day, there is! It makes one horribly envious to contemplate the happiness of a bridal couple. The clanging of the merry church bells, the delicate sweetness of the orange blossoms, the subtle magic of the sweet concession “I will,” the triumphant procession from vestry to *voiture*, the pallid beauty of the wedding cake—Oh, it’s a pathetic sight, and we’ve both seen so many of ’em—

MISS S. Don’t! don’t!

PIERRE (*passionately*). And to think that all this might be ours. Yours and mine—Matilda—let me call you by that sweet name and shrink not! Matilda, look at me! Look long and fixedly at me! Let your soul feast on the charms that have for years ripened and matured for you alone! Think what my experience could make of our wedding day! Wedding bells! I’d have a chime of ’em! The air should ring again with the joyful warbling of birds—I’d see to it myself—and think, think of the sweet solace of having me—*me* to share your fortune—fortunes—forever. Think, Tildy, think!

MISS S. It’s a beautiful picture, but something yet remains to be done before I can listen to you.

PIERRE. I will do anybody—anything to win your affection!

MISS S (*cooly*). I know I’m a romantic little thing, but I should like to be wooed according to the custom of the country.

PIERRE. The edelweiss! I have done it! Ha! ha! I have done it! See here, here it is! (*He produces from his pocket a huge paper edelweiss.*)

MISS S (*amazed*). Wonderful, wonderful! When did you get it?

PIERRE. This morning, between my early glass of goat’s milk and breakfast! It was a terrible climb!

MISS S (*breathlessly*). Tell me about it, I beseech you!

(No. 24 - Duet - PIERRE and MISS SPINIFEX)

PIERRE. This morning I woke with the dawn!

MISS S. Oh, yes!

PIERRE. 'Twas a bleak and tempestuous morn,

MISS S. Distress!

PIERRE. But hope in my spirit was born!

MISS S. No less!

PIERRE. So proudly I leapt from my bed!

I laughed as I gaily arose,

MISS S. Hear, hear!

PIERRE. For I saw I'd a very red nose,

MISS S. That's queer!

PIERRE. But I speedily whipped on my clothes,

MISS S. Dear, dear!

PIERRE. And hastened to do what I said.

PIERRE. The air was most frightfully cold

MISS S. Oh, oh!

PIERRE. 'Twas far below zero, I'm told,

MISS S. No, no!

PIERRE. But then with a spirit so bold,

MISS S. Just so!

PIERRE. I'd do any deed that you ask.

At the mountain my troubles began,

MISS S. Quite true!

PIERRE. And though I'm a daredevil man,

MISS S. A who?

PIERRE. I offered some prayers as I ran,

MISS S. A few!

PIERRE. From crevice to crag on my task.

PIERRE. From boulder to rock like a fawn
 MISS S. A fly!
 PIERRE. I sprang on that grey misty morn,
 MISS S. Oh, my!
 PIERRE. Though my trousers were horribly torn,
 MISS S. Fie! fie!
 PIERRE. Still onward and upward I leapt;
 At last I had pounced on my prize,
 MISS S. Hurrah!
 PIERRE. Which now to your startled surprise,
 MISS S. It are!
 PIERRE. I offer with tears in my eyes
 MISS S. Oh, ta!
 PIERRE. And beg you my love to accept.

MISS SPINIFEX

See what marvellous devotion
 Oh, the rapture of the notion
 That I've roused such soft emotion
 In my hardy mountaineer.
 He has passed through his probation,
 Then what need of hesitation!
 Oh, I'm thrilled with agitation
 And my heart is gone, I fear.

(Dance.)

PIERRE. You will not turn from me. Say, Tildy, that you will be mine!

MISS S. I really think that I ought to first send your picture postcard to Papa! I am sure that it would interest him; he's been anxiously waiting news of this sort ever since I first came out.

PIERRE. Poor chap, what a number of years of anxiety he has had.

MISS S. Sir!

PIERRE. Of losing such a treasure!

MISS S. I must run away and get ready. (*Exit into Inn.*)

PIERRE. Tildy! Tildy! (*PIERRE hurries after her.*)

PIERRE

Think what marvellous devotion
 And the rapture of the notion
 That you've roused such soft emotion
 In your hardy mountaineer.
 I have passed through my probation,
 Then what need of hesitation!
 Oh, this awful agitation
 Almost moves me to a tear!

(Enter CONRAD, R.)

CONRAD. What a happy man should Fritz be to-day! Ah, well, he deserves her—a noble, generous foe! a brave loyal gentleman! he deserves her! Now that I am here I do not feel that I could be present at the marriage ceremony. *(Sighs.)* Shall I ever forget, I wonder?

(No. 25 - Ballad - CONRAD)

CONRAD. Is the love dead,
 That once with eager longing
 Flooded my soul
 And swept all else aside?
 Is the joy fled,
 The past with visions thronging?
 Is life a scroll
 Of hopes that lived and died?
 No, 'tis not dead,
 For touch of hers would waken
 All that has been
 In days long past away.
 No, 'tis not fled,
 For e'en though forsaken,
 She *was* my queen,
 And will be so for aye!

(Hearing people coming, CONRAD goes up stage L.U.E. and unseen watches the proceedings. Villagers stream in L.U.E. and L. FRANCOIS and CUSTOM HOUSE MEN from L. During the chorus, CLARICE and PIERRE, the former on her father's arm, enter R. They are followed by bridesmaids. The Wedding Party crosses the stage, CLARICE and PIERRE bowing and smiling, and disappear through the lych gate leading to the church.)

(No. 26 - Bridal Entrance - CHORUS)

CHORUS. With beating heart and downcast eyes
 The maiden goes.
 See on her cheek there softly lies
 The blushing rose.
 By him she loves she soon will stand
 A bride to be;
 No fairer pair in all the land
 Than he and she.

(The Chorus falls in behind the Wedding Party and disappears through the gate. MISS SPINIFEX in wedding attire at the last moment hurriedly enters from the Inn, and running across the stage, follows the others.)

(Enter SERGEANT FREDERICO with SOLDIERS, R.)

(No. 27 - Soldiers' Chorus - SOLDIERS)

SOLDIERS. We're the humbler sort
 Of men who are taught
 To guard their country's weal;
 But you may be sure,
 Although we are poor,
 That pride is what we feel.
 It is clearly plain
 So we won't explain,
 Though a private you may be,
 To fight and fall
 At your country's call
 Is a gorgeous destiny.
Rum-a-tum-tum-tum-tum-tum,
A-rum-a-tum-tum-tum-tum,
 To fight and fall
 At your country's call
 Is a gorgeous destiny!
 It's a private's creed
 When officers lead,
 To follow with a cheer;
 For who would stay
 When he's shown the way,
 By men who show no fear!
 So we forward go,
 And the enemy know
 There are none so true and brave,
 As the privates who
 Will dare and will do
 Their country's fame to save!
Rum-a-tum-tum-tum-tum-tum,
A-rum-a-tum-tum-tum-tum,
 As the privates who
 Will dare and will do
 Their country's fame to save!

(CONRAD *comes down.*)

CONRAD. Hallo, Frederico! (SERGEANT *and* CONRAD *shake hands warmly.*) I'm very glad to see you again; but what brings you to this part of the world?

SERGEANT. Oh, the old business. I've come to carry off the men who are ordered to the front. As you know, I daresay, E-Division has been called upon.

CONRAD. Yes, thank goodness, mine is D, so I've escaped. Are you taking many from here?

SERGEANT (*taking papers from pocket*). Although we had half a dozen from the last village, I fancy there is only one from this. (*Looking at paper.*) Yes, one.

CONRAD. Ah, well, the girls will be spared aching hearts away. Who's the unhappy recruit?

SERGEANT. His name is Fritz Tinelli.

CONRAD (*horrified*). Fritz Tinelli!

SERGEANT. You seem startled. Is he a friend of yours?

CONRAD (*breathlessly*). But, Sergeant, you don't know what you're doing. This is Fritz Tinelli's wedding day! He's in the church being married at this moment! You can't take him!

SERGEANT (*shrugging his shoulders*). His wedding day—in the church yonder! My dear fellow, it's a tragic situation, I'll allow, but one's country, you know!

CONRAD (*aside*). Fritz ordered to the front! He may never come back! Fritz, the man who saved my life! Oh, it can't be!

SERGEANT. This news seems to have upset you, old man—pull yourself together. I suppose that the wedding party will return in a minute. (*Linking his arm in CONRAD'S.*) Gad, it's quite a romantic situation! and (*stroking his moustache*) Sergeant Frederico of the Mountain Goat Battery is in it as usual! (*To soldiers.*) Attention! Stand at ease! (*To CONRAD.*) 'Pon my word, I'm beginning to wish that this business was over—the sight of tears unmans me—on my soul, it unmans me!

CONRAD (*passionately*). Sergeant, tell me, I beg of you, is there no escape for him? (*An idea suddenly striking him, he draws SERGEANT aside and whispers.*) I will make it worth your while to forget him.

SERGEANT (*twirling his moustache*). Would you bribe me, Conrad? Me, Frederico, the pride of the recruiting Sergeants—Odds life, this is an outrage, and from an old friend, too! (*Walks angrily away.*)

CONRAD (*following him*). No, no, forgive me; I was wrong; I ask your pardon!

SERGEANT. The country cannot spare soldiers at such a time as this. But there come the bride and bridegroom. Company, attention! Shoulder arms! (*Goes L.*)

CONRAD. I cannot stand by and witness her distress. (*Exits L.*)

(*The Soldiers stand to attention as the wedding party approach from the church.*)

CLARICE *on* FRITZ'S arm, *followed by* PIERRE, MISS SPINIFEX, ANNETTE *and* GUSTAVE, FRANCOIS, CUSTOM HOUSE MEN *and* VILLAGERS *enter from the lych gate.*)

(No. 28 - *Bridal March*)

ALL. Now the deed is done,
 Single days are o'er,
 Man and maid are one,
 One for evermore.
 May the roses glow
 Ever on their way
 May they, as they go,
 Bless their wedding day.

SERGEANT (*approaching*). I am sorry to interrupt this delightful ceremony, but I fear that I am obliged to ask you to stop and listen to me for a moment. (*General excitement and whisperings.*)

CLARICE (*anxiously*). Sergeant Frederico! and look, Fritz, what are all these soldiers? I'm afraid—what can it mean?

FRITZ (*soothingly*). Nothing at all, darling, that can concern us. (*To SERGEANT.*) Can't we postpone this business, whatever it might be?

SERGEANT. I regret to say that is impossible.

FRITZ (*impatiently*). Well, man, what is it? We're keeping everybody waiting.

SERGEANT (*producing roll from his pocket, and speaking in a louder voice*). My friends, perhaps you are not aware that war has been declared!

ALL. War declared! (*General excitement.*)

SERGEANT. Yes, when I was here a month ago, I warned you that it was coming and now it *has* come! Various divisions of reserves have orders to proceed at once to the front, and amongst them E-Division.

FRITZ (*in a hoarse whisper*). E-Division!

CLARICE (*clutching his arm*). Fritz, what's the matter?

FRITZ (*with an effort*). Nothing, darling, nothing.

SERGEANT. I have been given the name of only one man in this village who belongs to that Division, and I am here now to carry him off to headquarters, before leaving for the front.

ALL (*clamorously*). Who is it! Who is it!

SERGEANT. Fritz Tinelli.

ALL. Fritz Tinelli!

CLARICE (*with a shriek*). Fritz! (*Falls forward into his arms. General consternation.*)

PIERRE (*hurrying up*). Dear, dear, this is terrible! Fritz called off to the war! He can't go, Sergeant! I must protest! You can't tear a man away from his bride fourteen minutes and a half after he has married her!

SERGEANT. There is no alternative, unless he can get a substitute. (*With a grin.*) Perhaps you would like to take his place?

PIERRE. Don't be absurd! (*Walks hurriedly back to MISS SPINIFEX.*)

(No. 29 - Ensemble - FRITZ and CLARICE with PRINCIPALS and CHORUS)

FRITZ. Now I must leave thee, beloved,
 Now for a space we must part,
 Sad though the fate that befalls us,
 Let not despair fill thine heart;
 Though clouds may darken the heavens,
 Through them the sunrays will shine,
 Soon will I come back to claim thee,
 And hold thee for ever mine.

CLARICE. Here on life's threshold, dear,
 When all seemed fair,
 Rapture gives place to grief,
 Joy to despair.
 I would all dangers brave
 Close at thy side,
 Let me remain with thee,
 Whate'er betide.

CHORUS. She could all dangers brave,
 Close at thy side,
 Let her remain with thee,
 Whate'er betide.

FRITZ. Dear, though my heart is a-breaking,
 Duty now calls me away;
 E'en though my bride I'm forsaking,
 Dear, do not ask me to stay.

CLARICE. Dear, though my heart is a-breaking,
 Duty now calls thee away;
 E'en though thy bride you're forsaking,
 I must not ask thee to stay.

Other PRINCIPALS and CHORUS.
 E'en though their hearts are a-breaking,
 Duty now calls him away;
 E'en though his bride he's forsaking,
 She must not ask him to stay!

(Enter CONRAD, L.)

FRITZ (to CLARICE). Dearest, I must leave you, but take courage, the war will not last long, and then I will come back to you.

CLARICE (sobbing). Fritz, I cannot bear it—is there no one who can help us?

CONRAD (coming forward). Yes, I will help you!

FRITZ and CLARICE. Conrad!

CONRAD. Sergeant, I understand that if Fritz Tinelli can find a substitute, he will be exempted from service?

SERGEANT. Certainly, Conrad, that is so.

CONRAD. Then I will be his substitute! (*General excitement.*)

FRITZ (starting forward). Conrad, I can't let you go.

CONRAD (grasping his hands and smiling sadly). All right, old man, don't worry about me—I shan't be missed if anything happens, and remember, you saved my life!

(CLARICE sinks on her knees and kisses CONRAD'S hand.)

SERGEANT. Well, Conrad, have you fully made up your mind to take this man's place?

CONRAD. I have!

SERGEANT (shrugging his shoulders). Very well, then, come along, time is slipping by. (CONRAD steps forward and takes his place in the ranks as a gun is handed to him.)

SERGEANT (to soldiers). Attention! Eyes right! Dress!

MISS S. Really, this is most affecting—Pierre, my betrothed, catch me! (*Falls into his arms.*)

PIERRE. My little girl—at last!

SERGEANT. Attention!

(No. 30 - *Finale* - PRINCIPALS and CHORUS)

To arms! to arms! my comrades!

On this we all agree,

To fight and fall

At our country's call

Is a gorgeous destiny!

Rum-a-tum-tum-tum-tum-tum,

A-rum-a-tum-tum-tum-tum,

To fight and fall

At your country's call

Is a gorgeous destiny!

(*Amidst general excitement soldiers march off.*)

CURTAIN - END OF ACT 3

ACT 1

It is Market day and the villagers go about their daily business. Today is the 20th birthday of CLARICE. CLARICE is the daughter of PIERRE, the manager of the Custom House, and she has received a gold locket from CONRAD, one of her suitors. CLARICE invites the villagers to PIERRE'S chalet tonight for a dinner and dance. CLARICE is delighted to see CONRAD, and he is delighted to see that she wears the locket. He confronts her about FRITZ, a rugged mountaineer who has also shown a romantic interest in CLARICE. When pressed for an answer, she is unable to decide which of her suitors she prefers.

The diligence is expected any moment with the passengers, and PIERRE informs the passengers that his men must search their luggage for contraband. While his men ransack the passengers' belongings, PIERRE'S eye falls upon MISS SPINIFEX, an English lady on holiday. He offers to personally search her parcels, in the process discovering that she is a wealthy spinster.

FRITZ and CONRAD meet face to face and argue over who would be a better husband for CLARICE. PIERRE is delighted to see two men proposing for his daughter. ANNETTE reminds the men of a local legend: No girl in the village has to listen to a man's suit until he has shown his pluck by climbing the highest peak yonder, and retrieving a sprig of edelweiss, and bringing it back as a token of his love. The men decide to have a race up the mountain to see who can retrieve the flower first. FRITZ, being more experienced, gives CONRAD a six-hour head start. But PIERRE begs them to not go, for a storm is approaching. The first act ends with FRITZ and CONRAD openly defying PIERRE'S warning.

ACT 2

The second act scene is the interior of PIERRE'S chalet. Pierre introduces MISS SPINIFEX to his guests, but when she meets GUSTAVE, one of his subordinates, he becomes jealous. ANNETTE has a slight romantic interests in GUSTAVE, and she is also jealous. To exact revenge, ANNETTE and PIERRE agree to flirt with one another.

CLARICE begins to regret sending her men on such a dangerous mission, and she takes off CONRAD'S locket and sets it on the chimney piece. FRITZ comes in, disguised as an organ grinder seeking shelter from the storm. He offers to read her fortune, and her fortune is that she has two suitors but prefers FRITZ. She declines to confirm this reading, and leaves her guest alone. FRITZ spies and takes up the locket, and PIERRE takes him for a thief. FRITZ drops his disguise and PIERRE orders FRITZ to return to the mountain, find CONRAD and bring him back alive for CLARICE'S sake. FRITZ sets out at once.

A new guest arrives the chalet, SERGEANT FREDERICO. After introducing himself, he states the reason for his visit. There is a rumour of immediate war with the neighbouring power, and he is hastening to the front. There will shortly be a calling up of the reserves, and he came to give the people warning. When all have gone to bed, CLARICE admits to the silent snow that she loves FRITZ and wishes he would come back. She falls asleep before the fireplace and dreams that she sees FRITZ rescue CONRAD. CLARICE suddenly wakes to learn that CONRAD is safe and sound, tucked up in bed. FRITZ has returned without the edelweiss, but he brought back CONRAD, and wishes CLARICE a happy life with CONRAD. She throws away the locket in disgust, and begs FRITZ' forgiveness as the second act closes.

ACT 3

The scene of the third act is the Alpine village. It is several weeks later and the wedding day of FRITZ and CLARICE. CONRAD, in gratitude for his rescue, has retired from the contest for CLARICE.

ANNETTE has thought of a plan to get GUSTAVE to marry her. She says a man ought to be able to prove himself an abandoned villain, and GUSTAVE should marry someone he doesn't like. His first choice for a girl he doesn't like is ANNETTE, and so they become engaged.

PIERRE has a surprise for MISS SPINIFEX, and he presents a huge paper edelweiss, which he claims to have acquired that morning, between his early glass of goat's milk and breakfast. She is delighted at his bravery and gets ready to marry him at once.

SERGEANT FREDERICO marches in with his regiment. War has been declared and he has come to collect the men summoned for active duty. There is only one man in that village who has been summoned: FRITZ. CONRAD tries to bribe the SERGEANT into forgetting FRITZ, but the SERGEANT won't hear any part of it.

FRITZ and CLARICE return from their wedding, and the SERGEANT delivers the unhappy news. FRITZ bids farewell to his friends and bride, but CONRAD offers himself as a substitute in the marching line, his sacrifice ensuring the happiness of the newlyweds. A gun is handed to CONRAD and he prepares to march away to war and "a gorgeous destiny" as the opera closes.