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THE SERVICE EDITION
OF
THE WORKS OF
RUDYARD KIPLING

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

AND OTHER VERSES

BY RUDYARD KIPLING

IN TWO VOLUMES

OSMANIA VOL. 1

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PRELUDE

*I have eaten your bread and salt,
I have drunk your water and wine,
The deaths ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives ye led were mine.*

*Was there aught that I did not share
In vigil or toil or ease,—
One joy or woe that I did not know,
Dear hearts across the seas?*

*I have written the tale of our life
For a sheltered people's mirth,
In jesting guise—but ye are wise,
And ye know what the jest is worth.*

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

GENERAL SUMMARY

WE are very slightly changed
From the semi-apes who ranged
India's prehistoric clay ;
He that drew the longest bow
Ran his brother down, you know,
As we run men down to-day.

'Dowb,' the first of all his race,
Met the Mammoth face to face
On the lake or in the cave :
Stole the steadiest canoe,
Ate the quarry others slew,
Died—and took the finest grave.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

When they scratched the reindeer-bone,
Some one made the sketch his own,
 Filched it from the artist—then,
Even in those early days,
Won a simple Viceroy's praise
 Through the toil of other men.
Ere they hewed the Sphinx's visage
Favouritism governed kissage,
Even as it does in this age.

Who shall doubt the 'secret hid'
Under Cheops' pyramid
Was that the contractor did
 Cheops out of several millions?
Or that Joseph's sudden rise
To Comptroller of Supplies
Was a fraud of monstrous size
 On King Pharaoh's swart Civilians?

GENERAL SUMMARY

Thus, the artless songs I sing
Do not deal with anything
 New or never said before.
As it was in the beginning
Is to-day official sinning,
 And shall be for evermore !

ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Old is the song that I sing—
Old as my unpaid bills—
Old as the chicken that *kitmutgars* bring
Men at dâk-bungalows—old as the Hills.

AHASUERUS JENKINS of the 'Operatic
Own,'

Was dowered with a tenor voice of *super*-Santley
tone.

His views on equitation were, perhaps, a trifle
queer ;

He had no seat worth mentioning, but oh ! he
had an car.

He clubbed his wretched company a dozen times
a day ;

He used to quit his charger in a parabolic way ;

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

His method of saluting was the joy of all beholders,

But Ahasucrus Jenkins had a head upon his shoulders.

He took two months at Simla when the year was at the spring,

And underneath the deodars eternally did sing.
He warbled like a *bul-bul*, but particularly at
Cornelia Agrippina, who was musical and fat.

She controlled a humble husband, who, in turn,
controlled a Dept.

Where Cornelia Agrippina's human singing-birds
were kept

From April to October on a plump retaining-fee,
Supplied, of course, *per mensem*, by the Indian
Treasury.

Cornelia used to sing with him, and Jenkins used
to play ;

ARMY HEADQUARTERS

He praised unblushingly her notes, for he was
false as they ;

So when the winds of April turned the budding
roses brown,

Cornelia told her husband :—‘ Tom, you mustn’t
send him down.’

They haled him from his regiment, which didn’t
much regret him ;

They found for him an office-stool, and on that
stool they set him

To play with maps and catalogues three idle
hours a day,

And draw his plump retaining-fee—which means
his double pay.

Now, ever after dinner, when the coffee-cups are
brought,

Ahasucus waileth o’er the grand pianoforte ;

And, thanks to fair Cornelia, his fame hath waxen
great,

And Ahasucus Jenkins is a Power in the State !

STUDY OF AN ELEVATION, IN
INDIAN INK

This ditty is a string of lies.
But--how the deuce did Gubbins rise ?

POTIPHAR GUBBINS, C.E.,
Stands at the top of the tree ;
And I muse in my bed on the reasons that led
To the hoisting of Potiphar G.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is seven years junior to Me ;
Each bridge that he makes either buckles or breaks,
And his work is as rough as he.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is coarse as a chimpanzee ;

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

And I can't understand why you gave him your
hand,
Lovely Mehitabel Lee.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is dear to the Powers that Be ;
For They bow and They smile in an affable
style,
Which is seldom accorded to Me.

Potiphar Gubbins, C.E.,
Is certain as certain can be
Of a highly paid post which is claimed by a
host
Of seniors—including Me.

Careless and lazy is he,
Greatly inferior to Me.
What is the spell that you manage so well,
Commonplace Potiphar G. ?

STUDY OF AN ELEVATION, IN INDIAN INK

Lovely Mehitabel Lee,
Let me inquire of thee,
Should I have riz to what Potiphar is,
Hadst thou been mated to Me ?

DELILAH

We have another Viceroy now, those days are dead and
done
Of Delilah Aberyswith and depraved Ulysses Gunne.

DELILAH ABERYSWITH was a lady—not
too young—

With a perfect taste in dresses and a badly-bitted
tongue,

With a thirst for information, and a greater thirst
for praise,

And a little house in Simla in the Prehistoric Days.

By reason of her marriage to a gentleman in power,
Delilah was acquainted with the gossip of the hour;
And many little secrets, of a half-official kind,
Were whispered to Delilah, and she bore them
all in mind.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES.

She patronised extensively a man, Ulysses Gunne,
Whose mode of earning money was a low and
shameful one.

He wrote for divers papers which, as everybody
knows,

Is worse than serving in a shop or scaring off the
crows.

He praised her 'queenly beauty' first; and,
later on, he hinted

At the 'vastness of her intellect' with compli-
ment unstinted.

He went with her a-riding, and his love for her
was such

That he lent her all his horses and—she galled
them very much.

One day, THEY brewed a secret of a fine financial
sort;

It related to Appointments, to a Man and a
Report.

DELILAH

'Twas almost worth the keeping,—only seven
people knew it—

And Gunne rose up to seek the truth and patiently
ensue it.

It was a Viceroy's Secret, but—perhaps the wine
was red—

Perhaps an Aged Councillor had lost his aged head—
Perhaps Delilah's eyes were bright—Delilah's
whispers sweet—

The Aged Member told her what 'twere treason
to repeat.

Ulysses went a-riding, and they talked of love
and flowers ;

Ulysses went a-calling, and he called for several
hours ;

Ulysses went a-waltzing, and Delilah helped him
dance—

Ulysses let the waltzes go, and waited for his
chance.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

The summer sun was setting, and the summer air
was still,

The couple went a-walking in the shade of
Summer Hill,

The wasteful sunset faded out in turkis-green and
gold,

Ulysses pleaded softly, and . . . that bad De-
lilah told !

Next morn, a startled Empire learnt the all-
important news ;

Next week, the Aged Councillor was shaking in his
shoes ;

Next month, I met Delilah and she did not show
the least

Hesitation in affirming that Ulysses was a 'beast.'

.

We have another Viceroi now, those days are
dead and done—

Of Delilah Aberyswith and most mean Ulysses
Ganne !

A LEGEND OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE

This is the reason why Rustum Beg,
Rajah of Kolazai,
Drinketh the 'simpkin' and brandy peg,
Maketh the money to fly,
Vexeth a Government, tender and kind,
Also—but this is a detail—blind.

RUSTUM BEG of Kolazai—slightly backward
Native State—

Lusted for a C. S. I.—so began to sanitatē.

Built a Gaol and Hospital—nearly built a City
drain—

Till his faithful subjects all thought their ruler
was insanc.

Strange departures made he then—yea, Depart-
ments stranger still :

Half a dozen Englishmen helped the Rajah with
a will,

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Talked of noble aims and high, hinted of a future
fine

For the State of Kolazai, on a strictly Western
line.

Rajah Rustum held his peace ; lowered octroi
dues a half ;

Organised a State Police ; purified the Civil Staff ;

Settled cess and tax afresh in a very liberal way ;

Cut temptations of the flesh—also cut the Bukh-
shi's pay ;

Roused his Secretariat to a fine Mahratta fury,

By a Hookum hinting at supervision of *dasturi* ;

Turned the State of Kolazai very nearly upside-
down ;

When the end of May was nigh waited his achieve-
ment crown.

A LEGEND OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE

Then the Birthday Honours came. Sad to state
and sad to see,
Stood against the Rajah's name nothing more
than *C. I. E.!*

.
Things were lively for a week in the State of
Kolazai,
Even now the people speak of that time regret-
fully.

How he disendowed the Gaol—stopped at once
the City drain ;
Turned to beauty fair and frail—got his senses
back again ;
Doubled taxes, cesses, all ; cleared away each
new-built *thana* ;
Turned the two-lakh Hospital into a superb
Zenana ;

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Heaped upon the Bukhshi Sahib wealth and
honours manifold ;

Clad himself in Eastern garb—squeezed his people
as of old.

Happy, happy Kolazai ! Never more will Rus-
tum Beg

Play to catch his Viceroy's eye. He prefers the
' simpkin ' peg.

THE STORY OF URIAH

‘ Now there were two men in one city ; the one rich,
and the other poor.’

JACK BARRETT went to Quetta
Because they told him to.

He left his wife at Simla

On three-fourths his monthly screw.

Jack Barrett died at Quetta

Ere the next month’s pay he drew.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta,

He didn’t understand

The reason of his transfer

From the pleasant mountain-land.

The season was September,

And it killed him out of hand.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta

And there gave up the ghost,

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Attempting two men's duty
In that very healthy post ;
And Mrs. Barrett mourned for him
Five lively months at most.

Jack Barrett's bones at Quetta
Enjoy profound repose ;
But I shouldn't be astonished
If *now* his spirit knows
The reason of his transfer
From the Himalayan snows.

And, when the Last Great Bugle Call
Adown the Hurnai throbs,
When the last grim joke is entered
In the big black Book of Jobs,
And Quetta graveyards give again
Their victims to the air,
I shouldn't like to be the man
Who sent Jack Barrett there.

THE POST THAT FITTED

Though tangled and twisted the course of true love
This ditty explains,
No tangle's so tangled it cannot improve
If the Lover has brains.

ERE the steamer bore him Eastward, Sleary
was engaged to marry
An attractive girl at Tunbridge, whom he called
'my little Carrie.'
Sleary's pay was very modest; Sleary was the
other way.
Who can cook a two-plate dinner on eight poor
rupees a day?

Long he pondered o'er the question in his scanty
furnished quarters—
Then proposed to Minnie Boffkin, eldest of Judge
Boffkin's daughters.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Certainly an impecunious Subaltern was not a
catch,

But the Boffkins knew that Minnie mightn't
make another match.

So they recognised the business and, to feed and
clothe the bride,

Got him made a Something Something some-
where on the Bombay side.

Anyhow, the billet carried pay enough for him to
marry—

As the artless Sleary put it :—‘ Just the thing for
me and Carrie.’

Did he, therefore, jilt Miss Boffkin—impulse of
a baser mind ?

No ! He started epileptic fits of an appalling
kind.

THE POST THAT FITTED

[Of his *modus operandi* only this much I could gather :—

‘Pears’ shaving sticks will give you little taste and lots of lather.’]

Frequently in public places his affliction used to smite

Slery with distressing vigour—always in the Boffkins’ sight.

Ere a week was over Minnie weepingly returned his ring,

Told him his ‘unhappy weakness’ stopped all thought of marrying.

Slery bore the information with a chastened holy joy,—

Epileptic fits don’t matter in Political employ,—

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Wired three short words to Carrie—took his
ticket, packed his kit—

Bade farewell to Minnie Boffkin in one last, long,
lingering fit.

Four weeks later, Carrie Sleary read—and
laughed until she wept—

Mrs. Boffkin's warning letter on the 'wretched
epilept.'

Year by year, in pious patience, vengeful Mrs.
Boffkin sits

Waiting for the Sleary babies to develop Sleary's
fits.

A CODE OF MORALS

Lest you should think this story true
I merely mention I
Evolved it lately. 'Tis a most
Unmitigated misstatement.

NOW Jones had left his new-wed bride to
keep his house in order,
And hied away to the Hurrum Hills above the
Afghan border,
To sit on a rock with a heliograph ; but ere he
left he taught
His wife the working of the Code that sets the
miles at naught.

And Love had made him very sage, as Nature
made her fair ;
So Cupid and Apollo linked, *per* heliograph, the
pair.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed her
counsel wise—

At e'en, the dying sunset bore her husband's
homilies.

He warned her 'gainst seductive youths in scarlet
clad and gold,

As much as 'gainst the blandishments paternal
of the old ;

But kept his gravest warnings for (hereby the
ditty hangs)

That snowy-haired Lothario, Lieutenant-General
Bangs.

'Twas General Bangs, with Aide and Staff, that
tittipped on the way,

When they beheld a heliograph tempestuously at
play.

A CODE OF MORALS

They thought of Border risings, and of stations
sacked and burnt—

So stopped to take the message down—and this
is what they learnt—

‘ Dash dot dot, dot, dot dash, dot dash dot ’
twice. The General swore.

‘ Was ever General Officer addressed as “ dear ”
before ?

‘ “ My Love,” i’ faith ! “ My Duck,” Gadzooks !
“ My darling popsy-wop ! ”

‘ Spirit of great Lord Wolseley, *who* is on that
mountain top ? ’

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute ; the gilded
Staff were still,

As, dumb with pent-up mirth, they booked that
message from the hill ;

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

For clear as summer lightning-flare, the husband's
warning ran :—

‘ Don't dance or ride with General Bangs—a most
immoral man.’

[At dawn, across the Hurrum Hills, he flashed her
counsel wise—

But, howsoever Love be blind, the world at large
hath eyes.]

With damnatory dot and dash he heliographed
his wife

Some interesting details of the General's private
life.

The artless Aide-de-camp was mute ; the shining
Staff were still,

And red and ever redder grew the General's
shaven gill.

A CODE OF MORALS

And this is what he said at last (his feelings
matter not) :—

‘ I think we’ve tapped a private line. Hi !
Threes about there ! Trot ! ’

All honour unto Bangs, for ne’er did Jones there-
after know

By word or act official who read off that helio. ;

But the tale is on the Frontier, and from Michni
to *Mooltan*

They know the worthy General as ‘ that most
immoral man.’

PUBLIC WASTE

Walpole talks of 'a man and his price'—

List to a ditty queer—

The sale of a Deputy-Acting-Vice-
Resident-Engineer,

Bought like a bullock, hoof and hide,

By the Little Tin Gods on the Mountain Side.

BY the Laws of the Family Circle 'tis written
in letters of brass

That only a Colonel from Chatham can manage
the Railways of State,

Because of the gold on his breeks, and the sub-
jects wherein he must pass ;

Because in all matters that deal not with Rail-
ways his knowledge is great.

Now Exeter Battleby Tring had laboured from
boyhood to old

On the Lines of the East and the West, eke of
the North and South ;

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Many Lines had he built and surveyed—important the posts which he held ;
And the Lords of the Iron Horse were dumb
when he opened his mouth.

Black as the raven his garb, and his heresies
jettier still—
Hinting that Railways required lifetimes of study
and knowledge—
Never clanked sword by his side—Vauban he
knew not nor drill—
Nor was his name on the list of the men who had
passed through the ‘ College.’

Wherefore the Little Tin Gods harried their
little tin souls,
Seeing he came not from Chatham, jingled no
spurs at his heels,

PUBLIC WASTE

Knowing that, nevertheless, was he first on the
Government rolls
For the billet of 'Railway Instructor to Little
Tin Gods on Wheels.'

Letters not seldom they wrote him, 'having the
honour to state,'
It would be better for all men if he were laid on
the shelf :
Much would accrue to his bank-book, an he
consented to wait
Until the Little Tin Gods built him a berth for
himself.

'Special, well paid, and exempt from the Law of
the Fifty and Five,
Even to Ninety and Nine '—these were the terms
of the pact :

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Thus did the Little Tin Gods (long may Their
Highnesses thrive !)

Silence his mouth with rupees, keeping their
Circle intact ;

Appointing a Colonel from Chatham who man-
aged the Bhamo State Line

(The which was one mile and one furlong—a
guaranteed twenty-inch gauge),

So Exeter Battleby Tring consented his claims
to resign,

And died, on four thousand a month, in the
ninetieth year of his age.

WHAT HAPPENED

HURREE CHUNDER MOOKERJEE, pride
of Bow Bazaar,

Owner of a native press, 'Barrishter-at-Lar,'

Waited on the Government with a claim to wear
Sabres by the bucketful, rifles by the pair.

Then the Indian Government winked a wicked
wink,

Said to Chunder Mookerjee : 'Stick to pen and
ink.

They are safer implements, but, if you insist,
We will let you carry arms wheresoe'er you list.'

Hurree Chunder Mookerjee sought the gunsmith
and

Bought the tubes of Lancaster, Ballard, Dean,
and Bland,

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Bought a shiny bowie-knife, bought a town-made
sword,

Jingled like a carriage-horse when he went
abroad.

But the Indian Government, always keen to
please,

Also gave permission to horrid men like these—
Yar Mahommed Yusufzai, down to kill or steal,
Chimbu Singh from Bikaner, Tantia the Bhil ;

Killar Khan the Marri chief, Jowar Singh the Sikh,
Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat, Abdul Huq Rafiq—
He was a Wahabi ; last, little Boh Illa-oo
Took advantage of the act—took a Snider too.

They were unenlightened men, Ballard knew
them not,

They procured their swords and guns chiefly on
the spot,

WHAT HAPPENED

And the lore of centuries, plus a hundred
 fights,
Made them slow to disregard one another's
 rights.

With a unanimity dear to patriot hearts
All those hairy gentlemen out of foreign
 parts
Said : ' The good old days are back—let us go to
 war ! '
Swaggered down the Grand Trunk Road into
 Bow Bazaar.

Nubbee Baksh Punjabi Jat found a hide-bound
 flail ;
Chimbu Singh from Bikancer oiled his Tonk
 jezail ;
Yar Mahommed Yusufzai spat and grinned with
 glee
As he ground the butcher-knife of the Khyberree.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Jowar Singh the Sikh procured sabre, quoit, and
mace,

Abdul Huq, Wahabi, took the dagger from its
place,

While amid the jungle-grass danced and grinned
and jabbered

Little Boh Hla-oo and cleared the dah-blade from
the scabbard.

What became of Mookerjee ? Soothly, who can
say ?

Yar Mahommed only grins in a nasty way,
Jowar Singh is reticent, Chimbu Singh is mute,
But the belts of all of them simply bulge with
loot.

What became of Ballard's guns ? Afghans black
and grubby

Sell them for their silver weight to the men of
Pubbi ;

WHAT HAPPENED

And the shiny bowie-knife and the town-made
sword are

Hanging in a Marri camp just across the Border.

What became of Mookerjee? Ask Mahommed
Yar

Prodding Siva's sacred bull down the Bow Bazaar.
Speak to placid Nubbee Baksh—question land
and sea—

Ask the Indian Congress men—only don't ask
me!

THE MAN WHO COULD WRITE

Shun—shun the Bowl! That fatal, facile drink
Has ruined many geese who dipped their quills in 't;
Bribe, murder, marry, but steer clear of Ink
Save when you write receipts for paid-up bills in 't.
There may be silver in the 'blue-black'—all
I know of is the iron and the gall.

BOANERGES BLITZEN, servant of the
Queen,

Is a dismal failure—is a Might-have-been.
In a luckless moment he discovered men
Rise to high position through a ready pen.

Boanerges Blitzen argued therefore—'I,
With the selfsame weapon, can attain as high.'
Only he did not possess when he made the trial,
Wicked wit of C-lv-n, irony of L—l.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

[Men who spar with Government need, to back
their blows,
Something more than ordinary journalistic prose.]

Never young Civilian's prospects were so bright,
Till an Indian paper found that he could write :
Never young Civilian's prospects were so dark,
When the wretched Blitzen wrote to make his
mark.

Certainly he scored it, bold, and black, and firm,
In that Indian paper—made his seniors squirm,
Quoted office scandals, wrote the tactless truth—
Was there ever known a more misguided youth ?

When the Rag he wrote for praised his plucky game,
Boanerges Blitzen felt that this was Fame :
When the men he wrote of shook their heads and
swore,
Boanerges Blitzen only wrote the more.

THE MAN WHO COULD WRITE

Posed as Young Ithuriel, resolute and grim,
Till he found promotion didn't come to him ;
Till he found that reprimands weekly were his lot,
And his many Districts curiously hot.

Till he found his furlough strangely hard to win,
Boanerges Blitzen didn't care a pin :
Then it seemed to dawn on him something wasn't
right—
Boanerges Blitzen put it down to ' spite.'

Languished in a District desolate and dry ;
Watched the Local Government yearly pass him
by ;
Wondered where the hitch was ; called it most
unfair.

.
That was seven years ago—and he still is there.

PINK DOMINOES

‘ They are fools who kiss and tell ’—
Wisely has the poet sung.
Man may hold all sorts of posts
If he’ll only hold his tongue.

JENNY and Me were engaged, you see,
On the eve of the Fancy Ball ;
So a kiss or two was nothing to you
Or any one else at all.

Jenny would go in a domino—
Pretty and pink but warm ;
While I attended, clad in a splendid
Austrian uniform.

Now we had arranged, through notes exchanged
Early that afternoon,
At Number Four to waltz no more,
But to sit in the dusk and spoon.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

I wish you to see that Jenny and Me
Had barely exchanged our troth ;
So a kiss or two was strictly due
By, from, and between us both.

When Three was over, an eager lover,
I fled to the gloom outside ;
And a Domino came out also
Whom I took for my future bride.

That is to say, in a casual way,
I slipped my arm around her ;
With a kiss or two (which is nothing to you),
And ready to kiss I found her.

She turned her head and the name she said
Was certainly not my own ;
But ere I could speak, with a smothered shriek
She fled and left me alone.

PINK DOMINOES

Then Jenny came, and I saw with shame
She 'd doffed her domino ;
And I had embraced an alien waist—
But I did not tell her so.

Next morn I knew that there were two
Dominoes pink, and one
Had cloaked the spouse of Sir Julian Vouse,
Our big Political gun.

Sir J. was old, and her hair was gold,
And her eye was a blue cerulean ;
And the name she said when she turned her head
Was not in the least like ' Julian.'

Now wasn't it nice, when want of *pice*
Forbade us twain to marry,
That old Sir J., in the kindest way,
Made me his *Secretarry* ?

MUNICIPAL

‘Why is my District death-rate low?’
Said Binks of Hezabad.
‘Wells, drains, and sewage-outfalls are
‘My own peculiar fad.
‘I learnt a lesson once. It ran
‘Thus,’ said that most veracious man :—

IT was an August evening and, in snowy garments clad,

I paid a round of visits in the lines of Hezabad ;
When, presently, my Waler saw, and did not like
at all,

A Commissariat elephant careering down the Mall.

I couldn’t see the driver, and across my mind
it rushed
That that Commissariat elephant had suddenly
gone *musth*.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

I didn't care to meet him, and I couldn't well
get down,
So I let the Waler have it, and we headed for the
town.

The buggy was a new one and, praise Dykes, it
stood the strain,
Till the Waler jumped a bullock just above the
City Drain ;
And the next that I remember was a hurricane
of squeals,
And the creature making toothpicks of my five-
foot patent wheels.

He seemed to want the owner, so I fled, dis-
traught with fear,
To the Main Drain sewage outfall while he snorted
in my car—

MUNICIPAL

Reached the four-foot drain-head safely and, in
darkness and despair,
Felt the brute's proboscis fingering my terror-
stiffened hair.

Heard it trumpet on my shoulder—tried to crawl
a little higher—
Found the Main Drain sewage outfall blocked,
some eight feet up, with mire ;
And, for twenty reeking minutes, Sir, my very
marrow froze,
While the trunk was feeling blindly for a pur-
chase on my toes !

It missed me by a fraction, but my hair was
turning grey
Before they called the drivers up and dragged the
brute away.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

Then I sought the City Elders, and my words
were very plain.

They flushed that four-foot drain-head and—it
never choked again.

You may hold with surface-drainage, and the
sun-for-garbage cure,
Till you 've been a periwinkle shrinking coyly up
a sewer.

I believe in well-flushed culverts. . . .

 This is why the death-rate 's small ;
And, if you don't believe me, get *shikarred* your-
self. That 's all.

THE LAST DEPARTMENT

Twelve hundred million men are spread
About this Earth, and I and You
Wonder, when You and I are dead,
What will those luckless millions do?

‘ **N**ONE whole or clean,’ we cry, ‘ or free from
stain

Of favour.’ Wait awhile, till we attain

The Last Department where nor fraud nor
fools,

Nor grade nor greed, shall trouble us again.

Fear, Favour, or Affection—what are these
To the grim Head who claims our services ?

I never knew a wife or interest yet
Delay that *pukka* step, miscalled ‘ decease ’ ;

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES

When leave, long overdue, none can deny ;

When idleness of all Eternity

Becomes our furlough, and the marigold
Our thriftless, bullion-minting Treasury

Transferred to the Eternal Settlement,

Each in his strait, wood-scantled office pent,

No longer Brown reverses Smith's appeals,
Or Jones records his Minute of Dissent.

And One, long since a pillar of the Court,

As mud between the beams thereof is wrought ;

And One who wrote on phosphates for the
crops

Is subject-matter of his own Report.

These be the glorious ends whereto we pass—

Let Him who Is, go call on Him who Was ;

And He shall see the *mallee* steals the slab
For currie-grinder, and for goats the grass.

THE LAST DEPARTMENT

A breath of wind, a Border bullet's flight,
A draught of water, or a horse's fright—
The droning of the fat *Sheristadar*
Ceases, the punkah stops, and falls the night

For you or Me. Do those who live decline
The step that offers, or their work resign ?

Trust me, To-day's Most Indispensables,
Five hundred men can take your place or mine.

OTHER VERSES

MY RIVAL

I GO to concert, party, ball—
What profit is in these ?

I sit alone against the wall

And strive to look at ease.

The incense that is mine by right

They burn before Her shrine ;

And that 's because I 'm seventeen

And she is forty-nine.

I cannot check my girlish blush,

My colour comes and goes ;

I redden to my finger-tips,

And sometimes to my nose.

MY RIVAL

But She is white where white should be,
And red where red should shine.
The blush that flies at seventeen
Is fixed at forty-nine.

I wish *I* had her constant check :
I wish that I could sing
All sorts of funny little songs,
Not quite the proper thing.
I 'm very *gauche* and very shy,
Her jokes aren't in my line ;
And, worst of all, I 'm seventeen
While She is forty-nine.

The young men come, the young men go,
Each pink and white and neat,
She 's older than their mothers, but
They grovel at Her feet.

MY RIVAL

They walk beside Her *'rickshaw* wheels—

None ever walk by mine ;

And that 's because I 'm seventeen

And She is forty-nine.

She rides with half a dozen men

(She calls them ' boys ' and ' mashers '),

I trot along the Mall alone ;

My prettiest frocks and sashes

Don't help to fill my programme-card,

And vainly I repine

From ten to two A.M. Ah me !

Would I were forty-nine.

She calls me ' darling,' ' pet,' and ' dear,'

And ' sweet retiring maid.'

I 'm always at the back, I know

She puts me in the shade.

MY RIVAL

She introduces me to men—
‘ Cast ’ lovers, I opine,
For sixty takes to seventeen,
Nineteen to forty-nine.

But even She must older grow
And end Her dancing days,
She can't go on for ever so
At concerts, balls, and plays.
One ray of priceless hope I see
Before my footsteps shine ;
Just think, that She 'll be eighty-one
When I am forty-nine !

TO THE UNKNOWN GODDESS

WILL you conquer my heart with your
beauty, my soul going out from afar?
Shall I fall to your hand as a victim of crafty
and cautious *shikar*?

Have I met you and passed you already, unknow-
ing, unthinking, and blind?
Shall I meet you next season at Simla, O sweetest
and best of your kind?

Does the P. and O. bear you to meward, or, clad
in short frocks in the West,
Are you growing the charms that shall capture
and torture the heart in my breast?

TO THE UNKNOWN GODDESS

Will you stay in the Plains till September—my
passion as warm as the day ?

Will you bring me to book on the Mountains, or
where the thermantidotes play ?

When the light of your eyes shall make pallid the
mean lesser lights I pursue,

And the charm of your presence shall lure me
from love of the gay ' thirteen-two ' ;

When the peg and the pigskin shall please not ;
when I buy me Calcutta-built clothes ;

When I quit the Delight of Wild Asses ; for-
swearing the swearing of oaths ;

As a deer to the hand of the hunter when I turn
'mid the gibes of my friends ;

When the days of my freedom are numbered,
and the life of the bachelor ends.

TO THE UNKNOWN GODDESS

Ah, Goddess ! child, spinster, or widow—as of
old on Mars Hill when they raised
To the God that they knew not an altar—so I, a
young Pagan, have praised

The Goddess I know not nor worship ; yet, if
half that men tell me be true,
You will come in the future, and therefore these
verses are written to you.

THE RUPAIYAT OF OMAR KALVIN

[Allowing for the difference 'twixt prose and rhymed exaggeration, this ought to reproduce the sense of what Sir A—— told the nation some time ago, when the Government struck from our incomes two per cent.]

NOW the New Year, reviving last Year's Debt,
The Thoughtful Fisher casteth wide his
Net ;

So I with begging Dish and ready Tongue
Assail all Men for all that I can get.

Imports indeed are gone with all their Dues—
Lo ! Salt a Lever that I dare not use,
Nor may I ask the Tillers in Bengal—
Surely my Kith and Kin will not refuse

THE RUPAIYAT OF OMAR KAL'VIN

Pay—and I promise by the Dust of Spring,
Retrenchment. If my promises can bring
Comfort, Ye have Them now a thousand-fold—
By Allah ! I will promise *Anything* !

Indeed, indeed, Retrenchment oft before
I swore—but did I mean it when I swore ?
And then, and then, We wandered to the Hills,
And so the Little Less became Much More.

Whether at Boileaugunge or Babylon,
I know not how the wretched Thing is done,
The Items of Receipt grow surely small ;
The Items of Expense mount one by one.

I cannot help it. What have I to do
With One and Five, or Four, or Three, or Two ?
Let Scribes spit Blood and Sulphur as they
please,
Or Statesmen call me foolish—Heed not you.

THE RUPAIYAT OF OMAR KAL'VIN

Behold, I promise—Anything You will.

Behold, I greet you with an empty Till—

Ah ! Fellow-Sinners, of your Charity
Seek not the Reason of the Dearth but fill.

For if I sinned and fell, where lies the Gain
Of Knowledge ? Would it ease you of your Pain
To know the tangled Threads of Revenue,
I ravel deeper in a hopeless Skcin ?

' Who hath not Prudence '—what was it I said,
Of Her who paints Her Eyes and tires Her Head,
And jibes and mocks the People in the Street,
And fawns upon them for Her thriftless Bread ?

Accursed is She of Eve's daughters—She
Hath cast off Prudence, and Her End shall be
Destruction. . . . Brethren, of your Bounty
grant

Some portion of your daily Bread to *Me*.

PAGETT, M.P.

The toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each tooth-point goes ;
The butterfly upon the road
Preaches contentment to that toad.

PAGETT, M.P., was a liar, and a fluent liar
therewith,—

He spoke of the heat of India as ‘ the Asian Solar
Myth ’ ;

Came on a four months’ visit, to ‘ study the East ’
in November,

And I got him to sign an agreement vowing to
stay till September.

March came in with the *köil*. Pagett was cool
and gay,

Called me a ‘ bloated Brahmin,’ talked of my
‘ princely pay.’

PAGETT, M.P.

March went out with the roses. 'Where is your heat?' said he.

'Coming,' said I to Pagett. 'Skittles!' said Pagett, M.P.

April began with the punkah, coolies, and prickly-heat,—

Pagett was dear to mosquitoes, sandflies found him a treat.

He grew speckled and lumpy—hammered, I grieve to say,

Aryan brothers who fanned him, in an illiberal way.

May set in with a dust-storm,—Pagett went down with the sun.

All the delights of the season tickled him one by one.

PAGETT, M. P.

Imprimis—ten days' 'liver'—due to his drinking
beer ;

Later, a dose of fever—slight, but he called it
severe.

Dysent'ry touched him in June, after the *Chota*
Bursat—

Lowered his portly person—made him yearn to
depart.

He didn't call me a 'Brahmin,' or 'bloated,' or
'overpaid,'

But seemed to think it a wonder that any one ever
stayed.

July was a trifle unhealthy,—Pagett was ill with
fear,

Called it the 'Cholera Morbus,' hinted that life
was dear.

PAGETT, M.P.

He babbled of 'Eastern exile,' and mentioned his
home with tears ;
But I hadn't seen *my* children for close upon
seven years.

We reached a hundred and twenty once in the
Court at noon,
[I've mentioned Pagett was portly] Pagett went
off in a swoon.
That was an end to the business ; Pagett, the
perjured, fled
With a practical, working knowledge of 'Solar
Myths ' in his head.

And I laughed as I drove from the station, but
the mirth died out on my lips
As I thought of the fools like Pagett who write of
their 'Eastern trips,'

PAGETT, M.P.

And the sneers of the travelled idiots who duly
misgovern the land,

And I prayed to the Lord to deliver another one
into my hand.

LA NUIT BLANCHE

A much-discerning Public hold
The Singer generally sings
Of personal and private things,
And prints and sells his past for gold.

Whatever I may here disclaim,
The very clever folk I sing to
Will most indubitably cling to
Their pet delusion, just the same.

I HAD seen, as dawn was breaking
And I staggered to my rest,
Tara Devi softly shaking
From the Cart Road to the crest.
I had seen the spurs of Jakko
Heave and quiver, swell and sink.
Was it Earthquake or tobacco,
Day of Doom or Night of Drink ?

LA NUIT BLANCHE

In the full, fresh, fragrant morning
I observed a camel crawl,
Laws of gravitation scorning,
On the ceiling and the wall ;
Then I watched a fender walking,
And I heard grey leeches sing,
And a red-hot monkey talking
Did not seem the proper thing.

Then a Creature, skinned and crimson,
Ran about the floor and cried,
And they said I had the ' jims ' on,
And they dosed me with bromide,
And they locked me in my bedroom—
Me and one wee Blood Red Mouse—
Though I said :—' To give my head room
' You had best unroof the house.'

But my words were all unheeded,
Though I told the grave M.D.

LA NUIT BLANCHE

That the treatment really needed
Was a dip in open sea
That was lapping just below me,
Smooth as silver, white as snow,
And it took three men to throw me
When I found I could not go.

Half the night I watched the Heavens
Fizz like '81 champagne—
Fly to sixes and to sevens,
Wheel and thunder back again ;
And when all was peace and order
Save one planet nailed askew,
Much I wept because my warder
Would not let me set it true.

After frenzied hours of waiting,
When the Earth and Skies were dumb,
Pealed an awful voice dictating
An interminable sum,

LA NUIT BLANCHE

Changing to a tangled story—

‘ What she said you said I said—’

Till the Moon arose in glory,

And I found her . . . in my head ;

Then a Face came, blind and weeping,

And It couldn't wipe Its eyes,

And It muttered I was keeping

Back the moonlight from the skies ;

So I patted It for pity,

But It whistled shrill with wrath,

And a huge, black Devil City

Poured its peoples on my path.

So I fled with steps uncertain

On a thousand-year long race,

But the bellying of the curtain

Kept me always in one place ;

LA NUIT BLANCHE

While the tumult rose and maddened
To the roar of Earth on fire,
Ere it ebbed and sank and saddened
To a whisper tense as wire.

In intolerable stillness
Rose one little, little star,
And it chuckled at my illness,
And it mocked me from afar ;
And its brethren came and eyed me,
Called the Universe to aid,
Till I lay, with naught to hide me,
'Neath the Scorn of All Things Made.

Dun and saffron, robed and splendid
Broke the solemn, pitying Day,
And I knew my pains were ended,
And I turned and tried to pray ;

LA NUIT BLANCHE

But my speech was shattered wholly,
And I wept as children weep,
Till the dawn-wind, softly, slowly,
Brought to burning eyelids sleep.

THE LOVERS' LITANY

EYES of grey—a sodden quay,
Driving rain and falling tears,
As the steamer veers to sea
In a parting storm of cheers.

Sing, for Faith and Hope are high—
None so true as you and I—
Sing the Lovers' Litany :—
' Love like ours can never die ! '

Eyes of black—a throbbing keel,
Milky foam to left and right ;
Whispered converse near the wheel
In the brilliant tropic night.

THE LOVERS' LITANY

Cross that rules the Southern Sky !
Stars that sweep, and wheel, and fly,
Hear the Lovers' Litany :—
' *Love like ours can never die !* '

Eyes of brown—a dusty plain
Split and parched with heat of June.
Flying hoof and tightened rein,
Hear that beat the old, old tune.
Side by side the horses fly,
Frame we now the old reply
Of the Lovers' Litany :—
' *Love like ours can never die !* '

Eyes of blue—the Simla Hills
Silvered with the moonlight hoar ;
Pleading of the waltz that thrills,
Dies and echoes round Benmore.

THE LOVERS' LITANY

'Mabel,' 'Officers,' 'Good-bye,'
Glamour, wine, and witchery—
On my soul's sincerity,
'Love like ours can never die!'

Maidens, of your charity,
Pity my most luckless state.
Four times Cupid's debtor I—
Bankrupt in quadruplicate.
Yet, despite this evil case,
An a maiden showed me grace,
Four-and-forty times would I
Sing the Lovers' Litany :—
'Love like ours can never die!'

A BALLAD OF BURIAL

'Saint Praxed's ever was the Church for peace.'

I F down here I chance to die,
Solemnly I beg you take
All that is left of 'I'
To the Hills for old sake's sake.
Pack me very thoroughly
In the ice that used to slake
Pegs I drank when I was dry—
This observe for old sake's sake.

To the railway station hie,
There a single ticket take
For Umballa—goods-train—I
Shall not mind delay or shake.

A BALLAD OF BURIAL

I shall rest contentedly
 Spite of clamour coolies make ;
Thus in state and dignity
 Send me up for old sake's sake.

Next the sleepy Babu wake,
 Book a Kalka van ' for four.'
Few, I think, will care to make
 Journeys with me any more
As they used to do of yore.
 I shall need a ' special ' break—
Thing I never took before—
 Get me one for old sake's sake.

After that—arrangements make,
 No hotel will take me in,
And a bullock's back would break
 'Neath the teak and leaden skin.

A BALLAD OF BURIAL

Tonga ropes are frail and thin,
Or, did I a back-seat take,
In a tonga I might spin,—
Do your best for old sake's sake.

After that—your work is done.
Recollect a Padre must
Mourn the dear departed one—
Throw the ashes and the dust.
Don't go down at once. I trust
You will find excuse to 'snake
Three days' casual on the bust,—
Get your fun for old sake's sake.

I could never stand the Plains.
Think of blazing June and May,
Think of those September rains
Yearly till the Judgment Day !

A BALLAD OF BURIAL

I should never rest in peace,
I should sweat and lie awake.
Rail me then, on my decease,
To the Hills for old sake's sake !

THE OVERLAND MAIL

Foot-service to the Hills.

I N the name of the Empress of India, make way,
O Lords of the Jungle, wherever you roam,
The woods are astir at the close of the day—

We exiles are waiting for letters from Home.
Let the robber retreat—let the tiger turn tail—
In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail !

With a jingle of bells as the dusk gathers in,
He turns to the footpath that heads up the hill—
The bags on his back and a cloth round his chin,
And, tucked in his waistbelt, the Post Office
bill ;—

‘ Despatched on this date, as received by the rail,
‘ *Per* runner, two bags of the Overland Mail.’

THE OVERLAND MAIL

Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or
swim.

Has the rain wrecked the road? He must
climb by the cliff.

Does the tempest cry 'halt'? What are
tempests to him?

The service admits not a 'but' or an 'if.'

While the breath's in his mouth, he must bear
without fail,

In the Name of the Empress, the Overland Mail.

From aloe to rose-oak, from rose-oak to fir,

From level to upland, from upland to crest,

From rice-field to rock-ridge, from rock-ridge to
spur,

Fly the soft-sandalled feet, strains the brawny,
brown chest.

From rail to ravine—to the peak from the vale—

Up, up through the night goes the Overland
Mail.

THE OVERLAND MAIL

There 's a speck on the hillside, a dot on the
road—

A jingle of bells on the footpath below—

There 's a scuffle above in the monkey's abode—

The world is awake and the clouds are aglow.

For the great Sun himself must attend to the
hail :—

‘ In the Name of the Empress, the Overland
Mail ! ’

DIVIDED DESTINIES

I T was an artless *Bandar*, and he danced upon
a pine,

And much I wondered how he lived, and where
the beast might dine,

And many many other things, till, o'er my
morning smoke,

I slept the sleep of idleness and dreamt that
Bandar spoke.

He said :—‘ O man of many clothes ! Sad
crawler on the Hills !

• Observe, I know not Ranken’s shop, nor
Ranken’s monthly bills !

DIVIDED DESTINIES

‘ I take no heed to trousers or the coats that you
call dress ;

‘ Nor am I plagued with little cards for little
drinks at Mess.

‘ I steal the bunnia’s grain at morn, at noon and
eventide

‘ (For he is fat and I am spare), I roam the
mountain-side,

‘ I follow no man’s carriage, and no, never in my
life

‘ Have I flirted at Peliti’s with another *Bandar’s*
wife.

‘ O man of futile fopperies — unnecessary
wraps ;

‘ I own no ponies in the hills, I drive no tall-
wheeled traps.

DIVIDED DESTINIES

‘ I buy me not twelve-button gloves, “ short-sixes ” eke, or rings,

‘ Nor do I waste at Hamilton’s my wealth on
“ pretty things.”

‘ I quarrel with my wife at home, we never fight
abroad ;

‘ But Mrs. B. has grasped the fact I am her only
lord.

‘ I never heard of fever—dumps nor debts de-
press my soul ;

‘ And I pity and despise you ! ’ Here he pouched
my breakfast-roll.

His hide was very mangy and his face was very
red,

And ever and anon he scratched with energy his
head.

DIVIDED DESTINIES

His manners were not always nice, but how my
spirit cried

To be an artless *Bandar* loose upon the mountain-
side !

So I answered :—‘ Gentle *Bandar*, an inscrut-
able Decree,

‘ Makes thee a gleesome fleasome Thou, and me a
wretched Me.

‘ Go ! Depart in peace, my brother, to thy home
amid the pine ;

‘ Yet forget not once a mortal wished to change
his lot with thine.’

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

ARGUMENT.—The Indian Government being minded to discover the economic condition of their lands, sent a Committee to inquire into it; and saw that it was good.

SCENE.—*The wooded heights of Simla. The Incarnation of the Government of India in the raiment of the Angel of Plenty sings, to piano-forte accompaniment :—*

‘ **H**OW sweet is the shepherd’s sweet life !
From the dawn to the even he strays—
He shall follow his sheep all the day
And his tongue shall be fillèd with praise.

(adagio dim.) Fillèd with praise ! ’

(largendo con sp.) Now this is the position,
Go make an inquisition
Into their real condition
As swiftly as ye may.

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

(p) Ay, paint our swarthy billions
The richest of vermilions
Ere two well-led cotillions
Have danced themselves away.

TURKISH PATROL, *as able and intelligent Investigators wind down the Himalayas* :—

What is the state of the Nation? What is its
occupation?

Hi! get along, get along, get along—lend us the
information!

(dim.) Census the *byle* and the *yabu*—capture a
first-class Babu,

Set him to cut Gazetteers—Gazetteers . . .

(ff) What is the state of the Nation, etc. etc.

INTERLUDE, *from Nowhere in Particular, to
stringed and Oriental instruments.*

Our cattle reel beneath the yoke they bear—
The earth is iron and the skies are brass—

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

And faint with fervour of the flaming air
The languid hours pass.

The well is dry beneath the village tree—
The young wheat withers ere it reach a
span,
And belts of blinding sand show cruelly
Where once the river ran.

Pray, brothers, pray, but to no earthly King—
Lift up your hands above the blighted grain,
Look westward—if they please, the Gods shall
bring
Their mercy with the rain.

Look westward—bears the blue no brown cloud-
bank ?
Nay, it is written—wherefore should we fly ?
On our own field and by our cattle's flank
Lie down, lie down to die !

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

SEMI-CHORUS.

By the plumed heads of Kings

Waving high,

Where the tall corn springs

O'er the dead.

If they rust or rot we die,

If they ripen we are fed.

Very mighty is the power of our Kings !

*Triumphal return to Simla of the Investigators,
attired after the manner of Dionysus, leading
a pet tiger-cub in wreaths of rhubarb leaves,
symbolical of India under medical treatment.
They sing :—*

We have seen, we have written—behold it, the
proof of our manifold toil !

In their hosts they assembled and told it—the tale
of the Sons of the Soil.

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

We have said of the Sickness—‘ Where is it ? ’
—and of Death—‘ It is far from our ken,’—
We have paid a particular visit to the affluent
children of men.
We have trodden the mart and the well-curb—
we have stooped to the bield and the byre ;
And the King may the forces of Hell curb for the
People have all they desire !

Castanets and step-dance :—

Oh, the *dom* and the *mag* and the *thakur* and the
thag,
And the *nat* and the *brinjaree*,
And the *bunnia* and the *ryot* are as happy and as
quiet
And as plump as they can be !
Yes, the *jain* and the *jat* in his stucco-fronted
hut,
And the bounding *bazugar*,

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

By the favour of the King, are as fat as any-
thing,

They are—they are—they are !

RECITATIVE, *Government of India, with white
satin wings and electro-plated harp* :—

How beautiful upon the mountains—in peace
reclining,

Thus to be assured that our people are unani-
mously dining.

And though there are places not so blessed as
others in natural advantages, which, after
all, was only to be expected,

Proud and glad are we to congratulate you upon
the work you have thus ably effected.

(*Cres.*) How beautiful upon the mountains !

HIRED BAND, *brasses only, full chorus* :—

God bless the Squire

And all his rich relations

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

Who teach us poor people

We eat our proper rations—

We eat our proper rations,

In spite of inundations,

Malarial exhalations,

And casual starvations,

We have, we have, they say we have—

We *have* our proper rations !

CHORUS OF THE CRYSTALLISED FACTS.

Before the beginning of years

There came to the rule of the State

Men with a pair of shears,

Men with an Estimate—

Strachey with Muir for leaven,

Lytton with locks that fell,

Ripon fooling with Heaven,

And Temple riding like II—II !

And the bigots took in hand

Cess and the falling of rain,

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

And the measure of sifted sand
The dealer puts in the grain—
Imports by land and sea,
To uttermost decimal worth,
And registration—free—
In the houses of death and of birth
And fashioned with pens and paper,
And fashioned in black and white,
With Life for a flickering taper
And Death for a blazing light—
With the Armed and the Civil Power,
That his strength might endure for a span,
From Adam's Bridge to Peshawur,
The Much Administered Man.

In the towns of the North and the East,
They gathered as unto rule,
They bade him starve the priest
And send his children to school.

THE MASQUE OF PLENTY

Railways and roads they wrought,
For the needs of the soil within ;
A time to squabble in court,
A time to bear and to grin.
And gave him peace in his ways,
Jails—and Police to fight,
Justice at length of days,
And Right—and Might in the Right.
His speech is of mortgaged bedding,
On his kine he borrows yet,
At his heart is his daughter's wedding
In his eye foreknowledge of debt.
He eats and hath indigestion,
He toils and he may not stop ;
His life is a long-drawn question
Between a crop and a crop.

THE MARE'S NEST

JANE AUSTEN BEECHER STOWE DE
ROUSE

Was good beyond all earthly need ;
But, on the other hand, her spouse
Was very, very bad indeed.
He smoked cigars, called churches slow,
And raced—but this she did not know.

For Belial Machiavelli kept
The little fact a secret, and,
Though o'er his minor sins she wept,
Jane Austen did not understand
That Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Absorbed one-half her husband's pay.

THE MARE'S NEST

She was so good she made him worse
 (Some women are like this, I think) ;
He taught her parrot how to curse,
 Her Assam monkey how to drink.
He vexed her righteous soul until
She went up, and he went down hill.

Then came the crisis, strange to say,
 Which turned a good wife to a better.
A telegraphic peon, one day,
 Brought her—now, had it been a letter
For Belial Machiavelli, I
Know Jane would just have let it lie.

But 'twas a telegram instead,
 Marked 'urgent,' and her duty plain
To open it. Jane Austen read :—
 'Your Lilly's got a cough again.
'Can't understand why she is kept
'At your expense.' Jane Austen wept.

THE MARE'S NEST

It was a misdirected wire,
Her husband was at Shaitanpore.
She spread her anger, hot as fire,
Through six thin foreign sheets or more,
Sent off that letter, wrote another
To her solicitor—and mother.

Then Belial Machiavelli saw
Her error and, I trust, his own,
Wired to the minion of the Law,
And travelled wifeward—not alone.
For Lilly—thirteen-two and bay—
Came in a horse-box all the way.

There was a scene—a weep or two—
With many kisses. Austen Jane
Rode Lilly all the season through,
And never opened wires again.
She races now with Belial. This
Is very sad, but so it is.

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