

Gondoliers

ACT II

SCENE.--Pavilion in the Court of Barataria. Marco and Giuseppe, magnificently dressed, are seated on two thrones, occupied in cleaning the crown and the sceptre. The Gondoliers are discovered, dressed, some as courtiers, officers of rank, etc., and others as private soldiers and servants of various degrees. All are enjoying themselves without reference to social distinctions--some playing cards, others throwing dice, some reading, others playing cup and ball, "morra", etc.

CHORUS OF MEN with MARCO and GIUSEPPE.

Of happiness the very pith
 In Barataria you may see:
A monarchy that's tempered with
 Republican Equality.
This form of government we find
The beau ideal of its kind--
A despotism strict combined
 With absolute equality!

MARCO and GIUSEPPE.

Two kings, of undue pride bereft,
 Who act in perfect unity,
Whom you can order right and left
 With absolute impunity.
Who put their subjects at their ease
By doing all they can to please!
And thus, to earn their bread-and-cheese,
 Seize every opportunity.

CHORUS. Of happiness the very pith, etc.

MAR. Gentlemen, we are much obliged to you for your expressions of satisfaction and good feeling--I say, we are much obliged to you for your expressions of satisfaction and good feeling.

ALL. We heard you.

MAR. We are delighted, at any time, to fall in with sentiments so charmingly expressed.

ALL. That's all right.

GIU. At the same time there is just one little grievance that we should like to ventilate.

ALL (angrily). What?

GIU. Don't be alarmed--it's not serious. It is arranged that, until it is decided which of us two is the actual King, we are to act as one person.

GIORGIO. Exactly.

GIU. Now, although we act as one person, we are, in point of fact, two persons.

ANNIBALE. Ah, I don't think we can go into that. It is a legal fiction, and legal fictions are solemn things. Situated as we are, we can't recognize two independent responsibilities.

GIU. No; but you can recognize two independent appetites. It's all very well to say we act as one person, but when you supply us with only one ration between us, I should describe it as a legal fiction carried a little too far.

ANNI. It's rather a nice point. I don't like to express an opinion off-hand. Suppose we reserve it for argument before the full Court?

MAR. Yes, but what are we to do in the meantime?

MAR. and GIU. We want our tea.

ANNI. I think we may make an interim order for double rations on their Majesties entering into the usual undertaking to indemnify in the event of an adverse decision?

GIOR. That, I think, will meet the case. But you must work hard--stick to it--nothing like work.

GIU. Oh, certainly. We quite understand that a man who holds the magnificent position of King should do something to justify it. We are called "Your Majesty"; we are allowed to buy ourselves magnificent clothes; our subjects frequently nod to us in the streets; the sentries always return our salutes; and we enjoy the inestimable privilege of heading the subscription lists to all the principal charities. In return for these advantages the least we can do is to make ourselves useful about the Palace.

SONG--GIUSEPPE with CHORUS.

Rising early in the morning,
We proceed to light the fire,
Then our Majesty adorning
In its workaday attire,
We embark without delay
On the duties of the day.

First, we polish off some batches
Of political despatches,
And foreign politicians circumvent;

Then, if business isn't heavy,
We may hold a Royal levee,
Or ratify some Acts of Parliament.
Then we probably review the household troops--
With the usual "Shaloo humps!" and "Shaloo hoops!"
Or receive with ceremonial and state
An interesting Eastern potentate.
After that we generally
Go and dress our private valet--
(It's a rather nervous duty--he's a touchy little man)--
Write some letters literary
For our private secretary--
He is shaky in his spelling, so we help him if we can.
Then, in view of cravings inner,
We go down and order dinner;
Then we polish the Regalia and the Coronation Plate--
Spend an hour in titivating
All our Gentlemen-in-Waiting;
Or we run on little errands for the Ministers of State.

Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a King;
Yet the duties are delightful, and the privileges great;
But the privilege and pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is to run on little errands for the Ministers of State.

CHORUS. Oh, philosophers may sing, etc.

After luncheon (making merry
On a bun and glass of sherry),
If we've nothing in particular to do,
We may make a Proclamation,
Or receive a deputation--
Then we possibly create a Peer or two.
Then we help a fellow-creature on his path
With the Garter or the Thistle or the Bath,
Or we dress and toddle off in semi-state
To a festival, a function, or a fete.
Then we go and stand as sentry
At the Palace (private entry),
Marching hither, marching thither, up and down and to and
fro,
While the warrior on duty
Goes in search of beer and beauty
(And it generally happens that he hasn't far to go).

He relieves us, if he's able,
Just in time to lay the table,
Then we dine and serve the coffee, and at half-past twelve
or one,
With a pleasure that's emphatic,
We retire to our attic
With the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done!

Oh, philosophers may sing
Of the troubles of a King,
But of pleasures there are many and of worries there are
none;
And the culminating pleasure
That we treasure beyond measure
Is the gratifying feeling that our duty has been done!

CHORUS. Oh, philosophers may sing, etc.

(Exeunt all but Marco and
Giuseppe.)

GIU. Yes, it really is a very pleasant existence. They're
all so singularly kind and considerate. You don't find them
wanting to do this, or wanting to do that, or saying "It's my
turn now." No, they let us have all the fun to ourselves, and
never seem to grudge it.

MAR. It makes one feel quite selfish. It almost seems like
taking advantage of their good nature.

GIU. How nice they were about the double rations.

MAR. Most considerate. Ah! there's only one thing wanting
to make us thoroughly comfortable.

GIU. And that is?

MAR. The dear little wives we left behind us three months
ago.

GIU. Yes, it is dull without female society. We can do
without everything else, but we can't do without that.

MAR. And if we have that in perfection, we have everything.
There is only one recipe for perfect happiness.

SONG--MARCO.

Take a pair of sparkling eyes,
Hidden, ever and anon,
In a merciful eclipse--
Do not heed their mild surprise--
Having passed the Rubicon,

Take a pair of rosy lips;
Take a figure trimly planned--
Such as admiration whets--
(Be particular in this);
Take a tender little hand,
Fringed with dainty fingerettes,
Press it--in parenthesis;--
Ah! Take all these, you lucky man--
Take and keep them, if you can!

Take a pretty little cot--
Quite a miniature affair--
Hung about with trellised vine,
Furnish it upon the spot
With the treasures rich and rare
I've endeavoured to define.
Live to love and love to live--
You will ripen at your ease,
Growing on the sunny side--
Fate has nothing more to give.
You're a dainty man to please
If you are not satisfied.
Ah! Take my counsel, happy man;
Act upon it, if you can!

(Enter Chorus of Contadine, running in, led by Fiametta and Vittoria. They are met by all the Ex-Gondoliers, who welcome them heartily.)

SCENE--CHORUS OF GIRLS, QUARTET, DUET and CHORUS.

Here we are, at the risk of our lives,
From ever so far, and we've brought your wives--
And to that end we've crossed the main,
And don't intend to return again!

FIA. Though obedience is strong,
 Curiosity's stronger--
We waited for long,
 Till we couldn't wait longer.

VIT. It's imprudent, we know,
 But without your society
Existence was slow,
 And we wanted variety--

BOTH. Existence was slow, and we wanted variety.

ALL. So here we are, at the risk of our lives,
From ever so far, and we've brought your wives--
And to that end we've crossed the main,
And don't intend to return again!

(Enter Gianetta and Tessa. They rush to the arms of Marco and Giuseppe.)

GIU. Tessa!

TESS. Giuseppe! {All embrace.}

GIA. Marco!

MAR. Gianetta!

TESSA and GIANETTA.

TESS. After sailing to this island--

GIA. Tossing in a manner frightful,

TESS. We are all once more on dry land--

GIA. And we find the change delightful,

TESS. As at home we've been remaining--

We've not seen you both for ages,

GIA. Tell me, are you fond of reigning?--

How's the food, and what's the wages?

TESS. Does your new employment please ye?--

GIA. How does Royalizing strike you?

TESS. Is it difficult or easy?--

GIA. Do you think your subjects like you?

TESS. I am anxious to elicit,

Is it plain and easy steering?

GIA. Take it altogether, is it

Better fun than gondoliering?

BOTH. We shall both go on requesting

Till you tell us, never doubt it;

Everything is interesting,

Tell us, tell us all about it!

CHORUS. They will both go on requesting, etc.

TESS. Is the populace exacting?

GIA. Do they keep you at a distance?

TESS. All unaided are you acting,

GIA. Or do they provide assistance?

TESS. When you're busy, have you got to

Get up early in the morning?

GIA. If you do what you ought not to,
Do they give the usual warning?
TESS. With a horse do they equip you?
GIA. Lots of trumpeting and drumming?
TESS. Do the Royal tradesmen tip you?
GIA. Ain't the livery becoming!
TESS. Does your human being inner
Feed on everything that nice is?
GIA. Do they give you wine for dinner;
Peaches, sugar-plums, and ices?
BOTH. We shall both go on requesting
Till you tell us, never doubt it;
Everything is interesting,
Tell us, tell us all about it!

CHORUS. They will both go on requesting, etc.

MAR. This is indeed a most delightful surprise!

TESS. Yes, we thought you'd like it. You see, it was like this. After you left we felt very dull and mopey, and the days crawled by, and you never wrote; so at last I said to Gianetta, "I can't stand this any longer; those two poor Monarchs haven't got any one to mend their stockings or sew on their buttons or patch their clothes--at least, I hope they haven't--let us all pack up a change and go and see how they're getting on." And she said, "Done," and they all said, "Done"; and we asked old Giacopo to lend us his boat, and he said, "Done"; and we've crossed the sea, and, thank goodness, that's done; and here we are, and--and--I've done!

GIA. And now--which of you is King?

TESS. And which of us is Queen?

GIU. That we shan't know until Nurse turns up. But never mind that--the question is, how shall we celebrate the commencement of our honeymoon? Gentlemen, will you allow us to offer you a magnificent banquet?

ALL. We will!

GIU. Thanks very much; and, ladies, what do you say to a dance?

TESS. A banquet and a dance! O, it's too much happiness!

CHORUS and DANCE.

Dance a cachucha, fandango, bolero,
Xeres we'll drink--Manzanilla, Montero--
Wine, when it runs in abundance, enhances
The reckless delight of that wildest of dances!

To the pretty pitter-pitter-patter,
And the clitter-clitter-clitter-clatter--
Clitter--clitter--clatter,
Pitter--pitter--patter,
Patter, patter, patter, patter, we'll dance.
Old Xeres we'll drink--Manzanilla, Montero;
For wine, when it runs in abundance, enhances
The reckless delight of that wildest of dances!

(Cachucha.)

(The dance is interrupted by the unexpected appearance of Don Alhambra, who looks on with astonishment. Marco and Giuseppe appear embarrassed. The others run off, except Drummer Boy, who is driven off by Don Alhambra.)

DON AL. Good evening. Fancy ball?

GIU. No, not exactly. A little friendly dance. That's all. Sorry you're late.

DON AL. But I saw a groom dancing, and a footman!

MAR. Yes. That's the Lord High Footman.

DON AL. And, dear me, a common little drummer boy!

GIU. Oh no! That's the Lord High Drummer Boy.

DON AL. But surely, surely the servants'-hall is the place for these gentry?

GIU. Oh dear no! We have appropriated the servants'-hall. It's the Royal Apartment, and accessible only by tickets obtainable at the Lord Chamberlain's office.

MAR. We really must have some place that we can call our own.

DON AL. (puzzled). I'm afraid I'm not quite equal to the intellectual pressure of the conversation.

GIU. You see, the Monarchy has been re-modelled on Republican principles.

DON AL. What!

GIU. All departments rank equally, and everybody is at the head of his department.

DON AL. I see.

MAR. I'm afraid you're annoyed.

DON AL. No. I won't say that. It's not quite what I expected.

GIU. I'm awfully sorry.

MAR. So am I.

GIU. By the by, can I offer you anything after your voyage? A plate of macaroni and a rusk?

DON AL. (preoccupied). No, no--nothing--nothing.

GIU. Obligated to be careful?

DON AL. Yes--gout. You see, in every Court there are distinctions that must be observed.

GIU. (puzzled). There are, are there?

DON AL. Why, of course. For instance, you wouldn't have a Lord High Chancellor play leapfrog with his own cook.

MAR. Why not?

DON AL. Why not! Because a Lord High Chancellor is a personage of great dignity, who should never, under any circumstances, place himself in the position of being told to tuck in his tuppenny, except by noblemen of his own rank. A Lord High Archbishop, for instance, might tell a Lord High Chancellor to tuck in his tuppenny, but certainly not a cook, gentlemen, certainly not a cook.

GIU. Not even a Lord High Cook?

DON AL. My good friend, that is a rank that is not recognized at the Lord Chamberlain's office. No, no, it won't do. I'll give you an instance in which the experiment was tried.

SONG--DON ALHAMBRA, with MARCO and GIUSEPPE.

DON AL. There lived a King, as I've been told,
In the wonder-working days of old,
When hearts were twice as good as gold,
And twenty times as mellow.
Good-temper triumphed in his face,
And in his heart he found a place
For all the erring human race
And every wretched fellow.
When he had Rhenish wine to drink
It made him very sad to think
That some, at junket or at jink,
Must be content with toddy.

MAR. and GIU. With toddy, must be content with toddy.

DON AL. He wished all men as rich as he
(And he was rich as rich could be),
So to the top of every tree
Promoted everybody.

MAR. and GIU. Now, that's the kind of King for me.
He wished all men as rich as he,
So to the top of every tree
Promoted everybody!

DON AL. Lord Chancellors were cheap as sprats,
And Bishops in their shovel hats
Were plentiful as tabby cats--
In point of fact, too many.
Ambassadors cropped up like hay,
Prime Ministers and such as they
Grew like asparagus in May,
And Dukes were three a penny.
On every side Field-Marsahls gleamed,
Small beer were Lords-Lieutenant deemed,
With Admirals the ocean teemed
All round his wide dominions.

MAR. and GIU. With Admirals all round his wide dominions.

DON AL. And Party Leaders you might meet
In twos and threes in every street
Maintaining, with no little heat,
Their various opinions.

MAR. and GIU. Now that's a sight you couldn't beat--
Two Party Leaders in each street
Maintaining, with no little heat,
Their various opinions.

DON AL. That King, although no one denies
His heart was of abnormal size,
Yet he'd have acted otherwise
If he had been acuter.
The end is easily foretold,
When every blessed thing you hold
Is made of silver, or of gold,
You long for simple pewter.
When you have nothing else to wear
But cloth of gold and satins rare,
For cloth of gold you cease to care--
Up goes the price of shoddy.

MAR. and GIU. Of shoddy, up goes the price of shoddy.

DON AL. In short, whoever you may be,
To this conclusion you'll agree,
When every one is somebodee,
Then no one's anybody!

MAR. and GIU. Now that's as plain as plain can be,

To this conclusion we agree--

ALL. When every one is somebodee,
Then no one's anybody!

(Gianetta and Tessa enter unobserved. The two girls, impelled by curiosity, remain listening at the back of the stage.)

DON AL. And now I have some important news to communicate. His Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Her Grace the Duchess, and their beautiful daughter Casilda--I say their beautiful daughter Casilda--

GIU. We heard you.

DON AL. Have arrived at Barataria, and may be here at any moment.

MAR. The Duke and Duchess are nothing to us.

DON AL. But the daughter--the beautiful daughter! Aha! Oh, you're a lucky dog, one of you!

GIU. I think you're a very incomprehensible old gentleman.

DON AL. Not a bit--I'll explain. Many years ago when you (whichever you are) were a baby, you (whichever you are) were married to a little girl who has grown up to be the most beautiful young lady in Spain. That beautiful young lady will be here to claim you (whichever you are) in half an hour, and I congratulate that one (whichever it is) with all my heart.

MAR. Married when a baby!

GIU. But we were married three months ago!

DON AL. One of you--only one. The other (whichever it is) is an unintentional bigamist.

GIA. and TESS. (coming forward). Well, upon my word!

DON AL. Eh? Who are these young people?

TESS. Who are we? Why, their wives, of course. We've just arrived.

DON AL. Their wives! Oh dear, this is very unfortunate! Oh dear, this complicates matters! Dear, dear, what will Her Majesty say?

GIA. And do you mean to say that one of these Monarchs was already married?

TESS. And that neither of us will be a Queen?

DON AL. That is the idea I intended to convey. (Tessa and Gianetta begin to cry.)

GIU. (to Tessa). Tessa, my dear, dear child--

TESS. Get away! perhaps it's you!

MAR. (to Gia.). My poor, poor little woman!

GIA. Don't! Who knows whose husband you are?

TESS. And pray, why didn't you tell us all about it before

they left Venice?

DON AL. Because, if I had, no earthly temptation would have induced these gentlemen to leave two such extremely fascinating and utterly irresistible little ladies!

TESS. There's something in that.

DON AL. I may mention that you will not be kept long in suspense, as the old lady who nursed the Royal child is at present in the torture chamber, waiting for me to interview her.

GIU. Poor old girl. Hadn't you better go and put her out of her suspense?

DON AL. Oh no--there's no hurry--she's all right. She has all the illustrated papers. However, I'll go and interrogate her, and, in the meantime, may I suggest the absolute propriety of your regarding yourselves as single young ladies. Good evening!

(Exit Don

Alhambra.)

GIA. Well, here's a pleasant state of things!

MAR. Delightful. One of us is married to two young ladies, and nobody knows which; and the other is married to one young lady whom nobody can identify!

GIA. And one of us is married to one of you, and the other is married to nobody.

TESS. But which of you is married to which of us, and what's to become of the other? (About to cry.)

GIU. It's quite simple. Observe. Two husbands have managed to acquire three wives. Three wives--two husbands. (Reckoning up.) That's two-thirds of a husband to each wife.

TESS. O Mount Vesuvius, here we are in arithmetic! My good sir, one can't marry a vulgar fraction!

GIU. You've no right to call me a vulgar fraction.

MAR. We are getting rather mixed. The situation is entangled. Let's try and comb it out.

QUARTET--MARCO, GIUSEPPE, GIANETTA, TESSA.

In a contemplative fashion,
And a tranquil frame of mind,
Free from every kind of passion,
Some solution let us find.
Let us grasp the situation,
Solve the complicated plot--
Quiet, calm deliberation
Disentangles every knot.

TESS. I, no doubt, Giuseppe wedded--

THE OTHERS. In a

contemplative

That's, of course, a slice of luck fashion,
etc.

He is rather dunder-headed.
Still distinctly, he's a duck.

GIA. I, a victim, too, of Cupid, THE OTHERS. Let
us grasp the

Marco married - that is clear. situation,
etc.

He's particularly stupid,
Still distinctly, he's a dear.

MAR. To Gianetta I was mated; THE OTHERS. In a
contemplative

I can prove it in a trice: fashion,
etc.

Though her charms are overrated,
Still I own she's rather nice.

GIU. I to Tessa, willy-nilly, THE OTHERS. Let us
grasp the

All at once a victim fell. situation,
etc.

She is what is called a silly,
Still she answers pretty well.

MAR. Now when we were pretty babies
Some one married us, that's clear--

GIA. And if I can catch her
I'll pinch her and scratch her
And send her away with a flea in her ear.

GIU. He whom that young lady married,
To receive her can't refuse.

TESS. If I overtake her
I'll warrant I'll make her
To shake in her aristocratical shoes!

GIA. (to Tess.). If she married your Giuseppe
You and he will have to part--

TESS. (to Gia.). If I have to do it
I'll warrant she'll rue it--

I'll teach her to marry the man of my heart!

TESS. (to Gia.). If she married Messer Marco
You're a spinster, that is plain--

GIA. (to Tess.). No matter--no matter.
If I can get at her
I doubt if her mother will know her again!

ALL. Quiet, calm deliberation
Disentangles every knot!

(Exeunt,
pondering.)

(March. Enter procession of Retainers, heralding approach of
Duke, Duchess, and Casilda. All three are now dressed with the
utmost magnificence.)

CHORUS OF MEN, with DUKE and DUCHESS.

With ducal pomp and ducal pride
(Announce these comers,
O ye kettle-drummers!)
Comes Barataria's high-born bride.
(Ye sounding cymbals clang!)
She comes to claim the Royal hand--
(Proclaim their Graces,
O ye double basses!)
Of the King who rules this goodly land.
(Ye brazen brasses bang!)

DUKE and DUCH. This polite attention touches
Heart of Duke and heart of Duchess
Who resign their pet
With profound regret.
She of beauty was a model
When a tiny tiddle-toddle,
And at twenty-one
She's excelled by none!

CHORUS. With ducal pomp and ducal pride, etc.

DUKE (to his attendants). Be good enough to inform His Majesty
that His Grace the Duke of Plaza-Toro, Limited, has arrived, and

begs--

CAS. Desires--

DUCH. Demands--

DUKE. And demands an audience. (Exeunt attendants.) And now, my child, prepare to receive the husband to whom you were united under such interesting and romantic circumstances.

CAS. But which is it? There are two of them!

DUKE. It is true that at present His Majesty is a double gentleman; but as soon as the circumstances of his marriage are ascertained, he will, ipso facto, boil down to a single gentleman--thus presenting a unique example of an individual who becomes a single man and a married man by the same operation.

DUCH. (severely). I have known instances in which the characteristics of both conditions existed concurrently in the same individual.

DUKE. Ah, he couldn't have been a Plaza-Toro.

DUCH. Oh! couldn't he, though!

CAS. Well, whatever happens, I shall, of course, be a dutiful wife, but I can never love my husband.

DUKE. I don't know. It's extraordinary what unprepossessing people one can love if one gives one's mind to it.

DUCH. I loved your father.

DUKE. My love--that remark is a little hard, I think? Rather cruel, perhaps? Somewhat uncalled-for, I venture to believe?

DUCH. It was very difficult, my dear; but I said to myself, "That man is a Duke, and I will love him." Several of my relations bet me I couldn't, but I did--desperately!

SONG--DUCHESS.

On the day when I was wedded
To your admirable sire,
I acknowledge that I dreaded
An explosion of his ire.
I was overcome with panic--
For his temper was volcanic,
And I didn't dare revolt,
For I feared a thunderbolt!
I was always very wary,
For his fury was ecstatic--
His refined vocabulary
Most unpleasantly emphatic.
To the thunder
Of this Tartar

I knocked under
Like a martyr;
When intently
He was fuming,
I was gently
Unassuming--
When reviling
Me completely,
I was smiling
Very sweetly:

Giving him the very best, and getting back the very worst--
That is how I tried to tame your great progenitor--at first!

But I found that a reliance
On my threatening appearance,
And a resolute defiance
Of marital interference,
And a gentle intimation
Of my firm determination
To see what I could do
To be wife and husband too
Was the only thing required
For to make his temper supple,
And you couldn't have desired
A more reciprocating couple.
Ever willing
To be wooing,
We were billing--
We were cooing;
When I merely
From him parted,
We were nearly
Broken-hearted--
When in sequel
Reunited,
We were equal-
Ly delighted.

So with double-shotted guns and colours nailed unto the mast,
I tamed your insignificant progenitor--at last!

CAS. My only hope is that when my husband sees what a shady family he has married into he will repudiate the contract altogether.

DUKE. Shady? A nobleman shady, who is blazing in the lustre of unaccustomed pocket-money? A nobleman shady, who can look back upon ninety-five quarterings? It is not every nobleman who is ninety-five quarters in arrear--I mean, who can look back

upon ninety-five of them! And this, just as I have been floated at a premium! Oh fie!

DUCH. Your Majesty is surely unaware that directly your Majesty's father came before the public he was applied for over and over again.

DUKE. My dear, Her Majesty's father was in the habit of being applied for over and over again--and very urgently applied for, too--long before he was registered under the Limited Liability Act.

RECITATIVE--DUKE.

To help unhappy commoners, and add to their enjoyment,
Affords a man of noble rank congenial employment;
Of our attempts we offer you examples illustrative:
The work is light, and, I may add, it's most remunerative.

DUET--DUKE and DUCHESS.

DUKE. Small titles and orders
For Mayors and Recorders
I get--and they're highly delighted--

DUCH. They're highly delighted!

DUKE. M.P.'s baroneted,
Sham Colonels gazetted,
And second-rate Aldermen knighted--

DUCH. Yes, Aldermen knighted.

DUKE. Foundation-stone laying
I find very paying:
It adds a large sum to my makings--

DUCH. Large sums to his makings.

DUKE. At charity dinners
The best of speech-spinners,
I get ten per cent on the takings--

DUCH. One-tenth of the takings.

DUCH. I present any lady
Whose conduct is shady
Or smacking of doubtful propriety--

DUKE. Doubtful propriety.

DUCH. When Virtue would quash her,
I take and whitewash her,
 And launch her in first-rate society--

DUKE. First-rate society!

DUCH. I recommend acres
Of clumsy dressmakers--
 Their fit and their finishing touches--

DUKE. Their finishing touches.

DUCH. A sum in addition
They pay for permission
 To say that they make for the Duchess--

DUKE. They make for the Duchess!

DUKE. Those pressing prevailers,
The ready-made tailors,
 Quote me as their great double-barrel--

DUCH. Their great double-barrel--

DUKE. I allow them to do so,
Though Robinson Crusoe
 Would jib at their wearing apparel--

DUCH. Such wearing apparel!

DUKE. I sit, by selection,
Upon the direction
 Of several Companies bubble--

DUCH. All Companies bubble!

DUKE. As soon as they're floated
I'm freely bank-noted--
 I'm pretty well paid for my trouble--

DUCH. He's paid for his trouble!

DUCH. At middle-class party

I play at ecarte--
And I'm by no means a beginner--

DUKE (significantly). She's not a beginner.

DUCH. To one of my station
The remuneration--
Five guineas a night and my dinner--

DUKE. And wine with her dinner.

DUCH. I write letters blatant
On medicines patent--
And use any other you mustn't--

DUKE. Believe me, you mustn't--

DUCH. And vow my complexion
Derives its perfection
From somebody's soap--which it doesn't--

DUKE. (significantly). It certainly doesn't!

DUKE. We're ready as witness
To any one's fitness
To fill any place or preferment--

DUCH. A place or preferment.

DUCH. We're often in waiting
At junket or feting,
And sometimes attend an interment--

DUKE. We enjoy an interment.

BOTH. In short, if you'd kindle
The spark of a swindle,
Lure simpletons into your clutches--
Yes; into your clutches.
Or hoodwink a debtor,
You cannot do better

DUCH. Than trot out a Duke or a Duchess--

DUKE. A Duke or a Duchess!

(Enter Marco and Giuseppe.)

DUKE. Ah! Their Majesties. Your Majesty! (Bows with great ceremony.)

MAR. The Duke of Plaza-Toro, I believe?

DUKE. The same. (Marco and Giuseppe offer to shake hands with him. The Duke bows ceremoniously. They endeavour to imitate him.) Allow me to present--

GIU. The young lady one of us married?

(Marco and Giuseppe offer to shake hands with her. Casilda curtsies formally. They endeavour to imitate her.)

CAS. Gentlemen, I am the most obedient servant of one of you. (Aside.) Oh, Luiz!

DUKE. I am now about to address myself to the gentleman whom my daughter married; the other may allow his attention to wander if he likes, for what I am about to say does not concern him. Sir, you will find in this young lady a combination of excellences which you would search for in vain in any young lady who had not the good fortune to be my daughter. There is some little doubt as to which of you is the gentleman I am addressing, and which is the gentleman who is allowing his attention to wander; but when that doubt is solved, I shall say (still addressing the attentive gentleman), "Take her, and may she make you happier than her mother has made me."

DUCH. Sir!

DUKE. If possible. And now there is a little matter to which I think I am entitled to take exception. I come here in state with Her Grace the Duchess and Her Majesty my daughter, and what do I find? Do I find, for instance, a guard of honour to receive me? No!

MAR. and GIU. No.

DUKE. The town illuminated? No!

MAR. and GIU. No.

DUKE. Refreshment provided? No!

MAR. and GIU. No.

DUKE. A Royal salute fired? No!

MAR. and GIU. No.

DUKE. Triumphal arches erected? No!

MAR. and GIU. No.

DUKE. The bells set ringing?

MAR. and GIU. No.

DUKE. Yes--one--the Visitors', and I rang it myself. It is not enough! It is not enough!

GIU. Upon my honour, I'm very sorry; but you see, I was

brought up in a gondola, and my ideas of politeness are confined to taking off my cap to my passengers when they tip me.

DUCH. That's all very well in its way, but it is not enough.

GIU. I'll take off anything else in reason.

DUKE. But a Royal Salute to my daughter--it costs so little.

CAS. Papa, I don't want a salute.

GIU. My dear sir, as soon as we know which of us is entitled to take that liberty she shall have as many salutes as she likes.

MAR. As for guards of honour and triumphal arches, you don't know our people--they wouldn't stand it.

GIU. They are very off-hand with us--very off-hand indeed.

DUKE. Oh, but you mustn't allow that--you must keep them in proper discipline, you must impress your Court with your importance. You want deportment--carriage--

GIU. We've got a carriage.

DUKE. Manner--dignity. There must be a good deal of this sort of thing--(business)--and a little of this sort of thing--(business)--and possibly just a Soupcon of this sort of thing!--(business)--and so on. Oh, it's very useful, and most effective. Just attend to me. You are a King--I am a subject. Very good--

(Gavotte.)

DUKE, DUCHESS, CASILDA, MARCO, GIUSEPPE.

DUKE. I am a courtier grave and serious
Who is about to kiss your hand:
Try to combine a pose imperious
With a demeanour nobly bland.

MAR. and Let us combine a pose imperious
GIU. With a demeanour nobly bland.

(Marco and Giuseppe endeavour to carry out his instructions.)

DUKE. That's, if anything, too unbending--
Too aggressively stiff and grand;

(They suddenly modify their attitudes.)

Now to the other extreme you're tending--
Don't be so deucedly condescending!

DUCH. and Now to the other extreme you're tending--
CAS. Don't be so dreadfully condescending!

MAR. and Oh, hard to please some noblemen seem!
GIU. At first, if anything, too unbending;
Off we go to the other extreme--
Too confoundedly condescending!

DUKE. Now a gavotte perform sedately--
Offer your hand with conscious pride;
Take an attitude not too stately,
Still sufficiently dignified.

MAR. and Now for an attitude not too stately,
GIU. Still sufficiently dignified.

(They endeavour to carry out his instructions.)

DUKE (beating Oncely, twicely--oncely, twicely--
time). Bow impressively ere you glide.
(They
do so.)

Capital both, capital
both--you've caught it nicely!
That is the style of thing precisely!

DUCH. and Capital both, capital both--they've
caught it nicely!
CAS. That is the style of thing precisely!

MAR. and Oh, sweet to earn a nobleman's praise!
GIU. Capital both, capital both--we've caught it
nicely!

Supposing he's right in what he says,
This is the style of
thing precisely!

(Gavotte. At the end exeunt Duke and Duchess, leaving Casilda
with Marco and Giuseppe.)

GIU. (to Marco). The old birds have gone away and left the
young chickens together. That's called tact.

MAR. It's very awkward. We really ought to tell her how we
are situated. It's not fair to the girl.

GIU. Then why don't you do it?

MAR. I'd rather not--you.

GIU. I don't know how to begin. (To Casilda.)

Er--Madam--I--we, that is, several of us--

CAS. Gentlemen, I am bound to listen to you; but it is right to tell you that, not knowing I was married in infancy, I am over head and ears in love with somebody else.

GIU. Our case exactly! We are over head and ears in love with somebody else! (Enter Gianetta and Tessa.) In point of fact, with our wives!

CAS. Your wives! Then you are married?

TESS. It's not our fault.

GIA. We knew nothing about it.

BOTH. We are sisters in misfortune.

CAS. My good girls, I don't blame you. Only before we go any further we must really arrive at some satisfactory arrangement, or we shall get hopelessly complicated.

QUINTET AND FINALE.

MARCO, GIUSEPPE, CASILDA, GIANETTA, TESSA.

ALL. Here is a case unprecedented!
Here are a King and Queen ill-starred!
Ever since marriage was first invented
Never was known a case so hard!

MAR. and I may be said to have been bisected,
GIU. By a profound catastrophe!

CAS., GIA., Through a calamity unexpected
TESS. I am divisible into three!

ALL. O moralists all,
How can you call
Marriage a state of unitee,
When excellent husbands are bisected,
And wives divisible into three?
O moralists all,
How can you call
Marriage a state of union true?

CAS., GIA., One-third of myself is married to half of
ye
TESS. or you,

MAR. and When half of myself has married one-third of ye

GIU. or you?

(Enter Don Alhambra, followed by Duke, Duchess, and all the Chorus.)

FINALE.

RECITATIVE--DON ALHAMBRA.

Now let the loyal lieges gather round--
The Prince's foster-mother has been found!
She will declare, to silver clarion's sound,
The rightful King--let him forthwith be crowned!

CHORUS. She will declare, etc.

(Don Alhambra brings forward Inez, the Prince's foster-mother.)

TESS. Speak, woman, speak--

DUKE. We're all attention!

GIA. The news we seek-

DUCH. This moment mention.

CAS. To us they bring--

DON AL. His foster-mother.

MAR. Is he the King?

GIU. Or this my brother?

ALL. Speak, woman, speak, etc.

RECITATIVE--INEZ.

The Royal Prince was by the King entrusted
To my fond care, ere I grew old and crusted;
When traitors came to steal his son reputed,
My own small boy I deftly substituted!
The villains fell into the trap completely--
I hid the Prince away--still sleeping sweetly:
I called him "son" with pardonable slyness--
His name, Luiz! Behold his Royal Highness!

(Sensation. Luiz ascends the throne, crowned and robed as King.)

CAS. (rushing to his arms). Luiz!

LUIZ. Casilda! (Embrace.)

ALL. Is this indeed the King?

Oh, wondrous revelation!
Oh, unexpected thing!
Unlooked-for situation!

MAR., GIA., This statement we receive
GIU., TESS. With sentiments conflicting;
Our hearts rejoice and grieve,
Each other contradicting;
To those whom we adore
We can be reunited--
On one point rather sore,
But, on the whole, delighted!

LUIZ. When others claimed thy dainty hand,
I waited--waited--waited,

DUKE. As prudence (so I understand)
Dictated--tated--tated.

CAS. By virtue of our early vow
Recorded--corded--corded,

DUCH. Your pure and patient love is now
Rewarded--warded--warded.

ALL. Then hail, O King of a Golden Land,
And the high-born bride who claims his hand!
The past is dead, and you gain your own,
A royal crown and a golden throne!

(All kneel: Luiz crowns Casilda.)

ALL. Once more gondolieri,
Both skilful and wary,
Free from this quandary
Contented are we. Ah!
From Royalty flying,
Our gondolas plying,
And merrily crying
Our "preme," "stali!" Ah!

So good-bye, cachucha, fandango, bolero--
We'll dance a farewell to that measure--
Old Xeres, adieu--Manzanilla--Montero--
We leave you with feelings of pleasure!

CURTAIN