No.13. Oh, why am I moody and sad? Song

Sir Despard and Chorus





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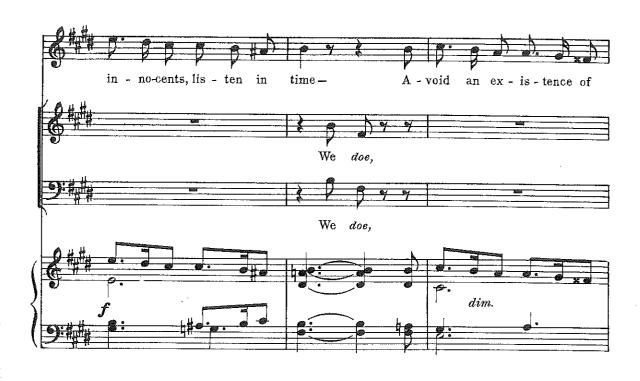




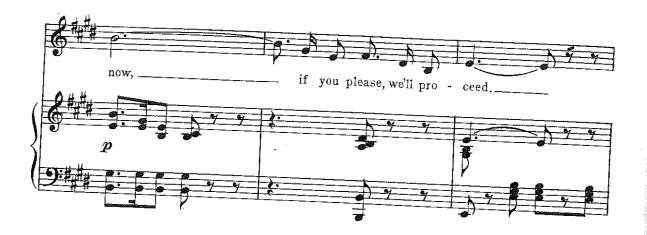










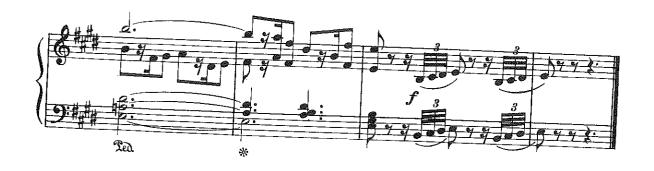


(He goes from side to side of the stage. As he stamps on the



chords, the chorus shrinks and runs off, L. and R., the Girls shricking.)





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Despard: (C.) Poor children, how they loathe me—me whose hands are certainly steeped in infamy, but whose heart is as the heart of a little child. But what is a poor baronet to do, when a whole picture gallery of ancestors step down from their frames and threaten him with an excruciating death if he hesitate to commit his daily crime? But ha! ha! I am even with them! (mysteriously) I get my crime over the first thing in the morning, and then, ha! ha! for the rest of the day I do good! I do good—I do good! (melodramatically) Two days since, I stole a child and built an orphan asylum. Yesterday I robbed a bank and endowed a bishopric. Today I carry off Rose Maybud and atone with a cathedra!! This is what it is to be the sport and toy of a Picture Gallery! But I will be bitterly revenged upon them! I will give them all to the Nation, and nobody shall ever look upon their faces again!

(Enter Richard, R.)

Richard: Ax your honour's pardon, but -

Despard: Ha! observed! And by a mariner! What would you with me, fellow?

Richard: Your honour, I'm a poor man-o'-war's man becalmed in the doldrums-

Despard: I don't know them.

Richard: And I make so bold to ax your honour's advice. Does your honour know what it is to have a heart?

Despard: My honour knows what it is to have a complete apparatus for conducting the circulation of the blood through the veins and arteries of the human body.

Richard: Aye, but has your honour a heart that ups and looks you in the face, and gives you quarter-deck orders that it's life and death to disobey?

Despard: I have not a heart of that description, but I have a Picture Gallery that presumes to take that liberty.

Richard: Well, your honour, it's like this- your honour had an elder brother-

Despard: It had.

Richard: Who should have inherited your title and, with it, its cuss.

Despard: Aye, but he died. Oh, Ruthven!

Richard: He didn't.

Despard: He did not?

Richard He didn't. On the contrary, he lives in this here very village, under the name of Robin Oakapple, and he's a going to marry Rose Maybud this very day.

Despard: Ruthven alive, and going to marry Rose Maybud? Can this be possible?

Richard: Now the question I was going to ask your honour is-ought I to tell your honour this?

Despard: I don't know. It's a delicate point. I think you ought. Mind, I'm not sure, but I think so.

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Richard: That's what my heart says. It says, "Dick," it says (it calls me Dick acos it's entitled to take that liberty), "that there young gal would recoil from him if she knowed what he really were. Ought you to stand off and on, and let this young gal take this false step and never fire a shot across her bows to bring her to? No," it says, "you did not ought." And I won't ought, accordin'.

Despard: Then you really feel yourself at liberty to tell me that my elder brother lives—that I may charge him with his cruel deceit, and transfer to his shoulders the hideous thraldom under which I have laboured for so many years! Free-free at last! Free to live a blameless life, and to die beloved and regretted by all who knew me!



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Robin:

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Robin:

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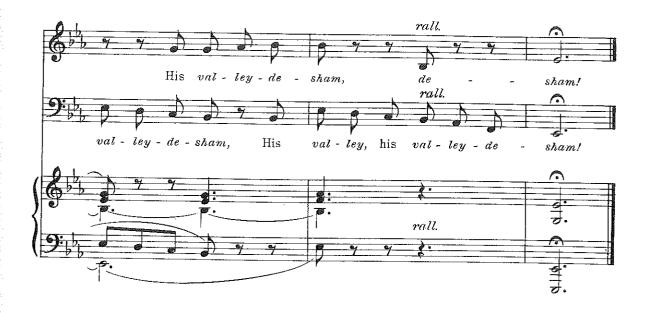
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Robin: This is a painful state of things, old Adam!

Adam: Painful, indeed! Ah, my poor master, when I swore that, come what would, I would serve you in all things for ever, I little thought to what a pass it would bring me! The confidential adviser to the greatest villain unhung! Now, sir, to business. What crime do you propose to commit today?

Robin: How should I know? As my confidential adviser, it's your duty to suggest something.

Adam: Sir, I loathe the life you are leading, but a good old man's oath is paramount, and I obey. Richard Dauntless is here with pretty Rose Maybud, to ask your consent to their marriage. Poison their beer.

Robin: No-not that- I know I'm a bad Bart,, but I'm not as bad a Bart, as all that.

Adam: Well, there you are, you see! It's no use my making suggestions if you don't adopt them.

Robin: (melodramatically) How would it be, do you think, were I to lure him here with cunning wile- bind him with good stout rope to yonder post- and then, by making hideous faces at him, curdle the heart-blood in his arteries, and freeze the very marrow in his bones? How say you, Adam, is not the scheme well planned?

Adam: It would be simply rude- nothing more. But soft- they come!

(Adam and Robin retire up L. and off, as Richard and Rose enter, preceded by Chorus of Bridesmaids, R. U. E.)







(Enter Robin, R. U. E.)

Robin: Soho! pretty one - in my power at last, eh? Know ye not that I have those within my call who, at my lightest bidding, would immure ye in an uncomfortable dungeon? (calling) What ho! within there!

Richard: Hold-we are prepared for this! (producing a Union Jack) Here is a flag that none dare defy (All kneel), and while this glorious rag floats above Rose Maybud's head, the man does not live who would dare to lay unlicensed hand upon her! (All rise.)

Robin: Foiled - and by a Union Jack! But a time will come, and then-

Nay, let me plead with him. (to Robin) Sir Ruthven, have pity. In my book of etiquette the case of a maiden about to be wedded to one who unexpectedly turns out to be a baronet with a curse on him is not considered. Time was when you loved me madly. Prove that this was no selfish love by according your consent to my marriage with one who, if he be not you yourself, is the next best thing — your dearest friend!

Rose: