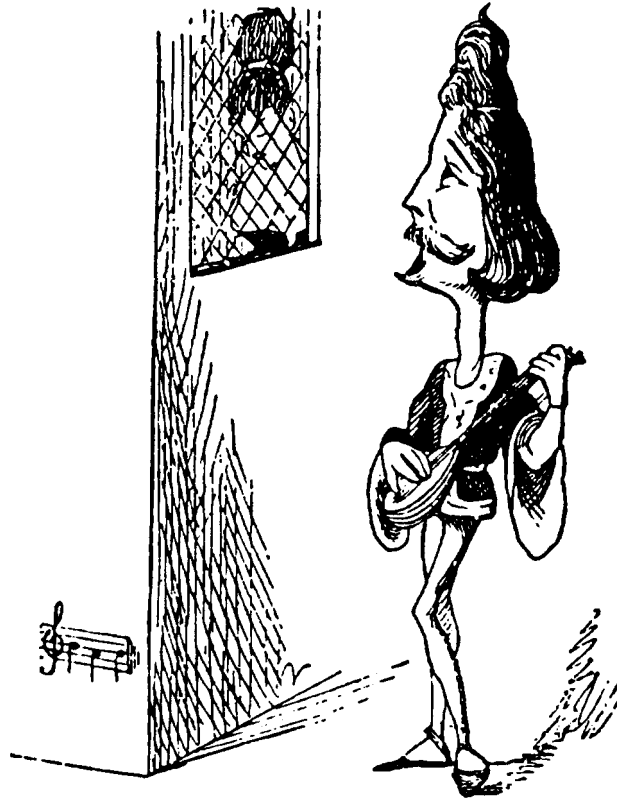


THE BANDOLINE PLAYER

by W. S. Gilbert

A troubadour, young, brave, and tall,
One morning might be seen,
A singing under Colter's Hall
Upon the village green.



He went through all the usual forms,
And rolled his eyes of blue,
As dying ducks in thunderstorms
Are often said to do.

For Colter had a daughter, she
Was barely twenty-two.
Why sang that minstrel party ? He
Adored her—so would you.

He played upon a what's-its-name—
You know the thing I mean—
The *Pall Mall* critics call the same
A “dainty bandoline.”

And Colter's daughter, wrapt in joy
(A sweet romantic maid),
She smiled upon that guileless boy
As gracefully he played.

“Oh, person in the crimson legs,”
She modestly exclaimed,
“A bashful maiden coyly begs
You'll tell her how you're named.

“For, oh, you feed a tender flame
In playing on the green,
And, oh, she loves what critics name
The dainty bandoline !”

That troubadour he tore his hair
And sent a sigh above,
To think his bandoline should share
That maiden's wealth of love.

He hied him to his village shed,
Wept village tears in quarts,
Then laid him on his village bed,
And thought these village thoughts:

“I must be worshiped all in all,
For what I've always been—
And not for what the critics call
My dainty bandoline.

“To which of us her loving may
Be due, I'll thus detect—
Upon the fiddle I can play
With singular effect.

“To-morrow, with its graceful aid,
Her moments I'll beguile,
That maiden I will serenade
In Joachim's finest style.”

And so he did, that gallant boy,
But never came the maid;
He, hoping she was only coy,
Still sang to her and played.

Beethoven, Gluck, Puccini, Spohr,
He gave her for a while,
And other masters even more
“Dot-touch-and-go” in style.

For hours that patient boy he played
At Father Colter’s farm—
Behind his noble shoulder-blade,
And underneath his arm:

Below his leg—behind his back
He played till he was red—
Between his knees, with dainty knack,
And then above his head.

With musico-gymnastic tricks
He warbled forth her name:
From half-past nine till half-past six,
But, ah! no maiden came.

(For Mary had been sent away
To Weston-super-Mare—
A fact of which that minstrel gay
Was wholly unaware.)

But Father Colter rose at nine,
His wrath it also rised,
For fiddle, voice, and bandoline
He equally despised.

“I have,” said he, “some bellows *here*—
A fine young noddle *there*—
It would but be politeness mere
To introduce the pair!”

No sooner was it said than done,
And as above I’ve shown,
Upon the sconce he fetched him one—
One for himself alone!

“Ah, Mary,” said the simple lad,
“I know thy gentle touch,
Upon my word, this is too bad,
I feel it very much.

“That you don’t care for me at all
Is easy to be seen—
You love what *Pall Mall* critics call
My dainty bandoline!”

(But Mary had been sent away
To Weston-super-Mare-
A fact of which that minstrel gay
Was wholly unaware.)