

Frederick Locker-Lampson (1821-95)

1 *Unfortunate Miss Bailey*

(An Experiment.)

When he whispers, "O Miss Bailey,  
Thou art brightest of the throng" —  
She makes murmur, softly-gaily —  
"Alfred, I have loved thee long."

Then he drops upon his knees, a 5  
Proof his heart is soft as wax:  
She's — I don't know who, but he's a  
Captain bold from Halifax.

Though so loving, such another 10  
Artless bride was never seen,  
Coachee thinks that she's his mother  
— Till they get to Gretna Green.

There they stand, by him attended,  
Hear the sable smith rehearse 15  
That which links them, when 'tis ended,  
Tight for better — or for worse.

Now her heart rejoices — ugly  
Troubles need disturb her less —  
Now the Happy Pair are snugly  
Seated in the night express. 20

So they go with fond emotion,  
So they journey through the night —  
London is their land of Goshen —  
See, its suburbs are in sight!

Hark! the sound of life is swelling, 25  
Pacing up, and racing down,  
Soon they reach her simple dwelling —  
Burley Street, by Somers Town.

What is there to so astound them?  
She cries "Oh!" for he cries "Hah!" 30  
When five brats emerge, confound them!  
Shouting out, "Mama! — PAPA!"

While at this he wonders blindly,  
Nor their meaning can divine,  
Proud she turns them round, and kindly, 35  
"All of these are mine and thine!"  
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Here he pines, and grows dyspeptic,  
Losing heart he loses pith —  
Hints that Bishop Tait's a sceptic —  
Swears that Moses was a myth. 40

Sees no evidence in Paley —  
Takes to drinking ratifia:  
Shies the muffins at Miss Bailey  
While she's pouring out the tea.

One day, knocking up his quarters, 45  
Poor Miss Bailey found him dead,  
Hanging in his knotted garters,  
Which she knitted ere they wed.

(From *A Selection from the Works of Frederick Locker*.  
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