



“Farewell, my son,” the father said,
 “You go across the brine,
Beware the wine when it is red,
And keep a cool and cautious head;
 And you may own a mine.

Your ma and I and uncles four,
 Your spinster sisters nine,
Will daily pray with fervour for
Buckets and tons of golden ore,
 And sovereigns all ashine.”

The young man wiped his dripping eye,
 And squared his shoulders wide,
And blew his nose expansively,
And thus with grace and dignity
 He suitably replied:

“My father old, my mother dear,
 And ye, my sisters nine,
Although I journey far from here,
I wish to make it very clear
 I mean to own a mine!”

The good ship ploughed and ploughed away
Through many a watery ridge;
And young Augustus sat all day,
With smoking-room companions gay,
At whisky and at bridge.



He bridged and whiskied, well content,
Upon the foaming brine,
But when he reached this Continent
He found he hadn't got a cent,
With which to buy a mine.

He battled on through many a jar,
Until he rose to be
A bottle-washer at the bar
Of Hurley's pub, "The Northern Star,"
In Goldengibbittee.



Now, Goldengibbittee is such
A city – so to speak:
However you may keep in touch,
you cannot gamble very much
On seven-and-six a week!

Its batteries thunder night and day,
Its mines keep pace with them,
It is so big and rich and gay
That visitors, arriving, say:—
“The New Jerusalem!”

Its loud scrip-talk from morn till night
All other topics drowns.
Augustus listened with delight,
Then wrote his Pa a message bright:
“Send me a thousand pounds!”

Nor Pa, nor Ma, nor sisters nine,
Nor uncles five and six,
Sent answer to his sprightly line:
But Aunt Matilda did incline
To help him in his fix.

She sent the cash. He wet his eye;
 Then, eager and elate,
He kicked the bottle-business high,
And smote Host Hurley heavily,
 And rushed to speculate.

“The Lonely Digger” mining show
 Belonged to Brown and Jones
And Smith and Robinson and Co.
Its stock was moving very slow:
 Its crops were barren stones.

In fact, to tell the utter truth,
 Its health was delicate,
It may have been robust in youth,
But in its hoary age, forsooth,
 Its calls were desperate.

Gussy and Brown – a loving pair –
 Drank many a night in town,
Until one morn Gus was aware
He was possessed of every share
 That once belonged to Brown.

Bill Jones and Smith and Robinson,
 And White likewise he knew.
And ere a day or two had gone,
By skilful operation,
 They had unloaded, too!

Six nicer men you never saw
 All out upon the grab,
They drank to Mars, the god of war,
And Venus, in her ivory car –
 Meaning a hansom cab.

They drank to our Augustus bold,
They pledged him deep and long;
In loving sentences they told
How he had sought a mine of gold
And bought it for a song.

The yarn flew round — a chronic joke —
The small boys thought it fine:
“There goes the Lonely Digger bloke!”
Or “That there cove wot’s stony broke
Buying a duffer mine!”

He owned the mine, he owned it all,
He drank its health in fizz,
He wrote to Aunt Matilda Small,
But when he got the monthly call
He wished it wasn’t his!

And then — it passes all belief —
When he was in despair,
Joy flushed on his financial grief,
The Lonely Digger struck the reef!
The blanky gold was there!

The mining magnate — the most great
That city now can show —
Is Gustave H.P. Bottlethwayte.
The maddest men within the State
Are Brown, Jones, White and Co.

Nor Pa, nor Ma, nor sisters nine,
Nor uncles five and six,
Received from Gus a single line,
Because their hearts did not incline
To help him in his fix.

But Aunt Matilda far away.

She lives in pomp and state.

She drives abroad with footmen gay,
And policemen holloa "Clear the way!"

And she dines off golden plate.



L'envoi

This is the moral of my chant!

If you for wealth do pine,
Purchase a bottle-washing plant,
Borrow a thousand from your aunt;
You all may own a mine!