

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## The Batchelor's Delight

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being

A Pleasant new Song, shewing the happiness of a  
Single Life and the miseries that do commonly attend  
Matrimony

The world's a blister sweld with care,  
much like unto a bubble,  
Wherein poor men tormented are  
with women and with trouble,  
And every one that takes a wife  
Adds [toil and] sorrow to his life,  
and makes his burden double.

Whilst Adam was a Batchelor,  
in Eden he did tarry;  
It is an Eden upon earth  
to live and never marry:  
Oh then what cause have we to grieve,  
To think upon our mother Eve;  
Who made us all miscarry!

Sampson, they say, was a champion stout  
that fill'd the world with wonder;  
The proud Philistians he did rout,  
his blows did sound like thunder:  
But when he did court the false Dallila,  
The wicked whore did him betray,  
and so he was brought under.

Job was a man that open lay  
unto the spight of the Devil,  
Who took his goods and sons away,  
but could we count him civil  
Because he left her still his nurse?  
Oh no! he left her for a curse:  
she was his greatest evil!

A woman once was hang'd on a tree,  
and some the rope were cutting,  
Diogenes this sight did see,  
and spoke unto them strutting:

"Would every tree such fruit would bear!"  
If so, fond fools those young men are  
that e're would go a-nutting!

A thief once rode up Holborn-Hill,  
towards Oliver Cromwell's pallace;  
A maid that bore him some good will  
had begged him from the gallows:  
"Oh no" (quoth he) "I'll go to the gibb,  
And not be a slave to my own rib,  
drive on the cart, good fellows!"

Marriage is honourable indeed,  
but tell what's house-keeping?  
It makes the good man's pockets bleed,  
his purse is alwaies weeping:  
Nay more, hee's alwaies full of care,  
Whilst he that is a Batchelor  
Is fast and soundly sleeping.

A froward woman takes delight  
to see her husband vexed;  
Both morning, evening, noon and night,  
the poor man is perplexed:  
She brawls and scoulds, she frowns and pouts,  
And, to her speeches, scoffs and flouts  
are ever more annexed.

Though he hath been at work all day,  
as hard as he is able,  
Yet when he comes home, without delay  
she bids him rock the cradle;  
And if he doth the same refuse,  
The durty quean will him abuse,  
and beat him with the ladle.

He cannot quietly rest in bed,  
but, every little season,  
The childe doth cry and must be fed,  
and then, she saith, 'tis reason  
That he should do't, and let her sleep;  
The poor man he must silence keep,  
for talking would be treason.

Then certainly a batchelor's life  
is a most precious treasure;  
He that doth suddenly marry a wife  
will surely repent it at leisure;  
For when he hath been snub'd and curb'd,

And almost all the night disturb'd,  
yet must rise at her pleasure.

"Robin (quoth she) "'tis time to rise,"  
and thumps him on the shoulder,  
"The hogs want swilling in the sties!"  
at length she speaketh bolder--  
Calling him fool and logger-head,  
And with her feet quite out of the bed  
she thrusts the poor house-holder.

And therefore he that weds a mate  
is like a horse in a tether;  
Marriage and hanging go by fate,  
and therefore chuse you whether;  
For the three destinies have spun  
Knots for Hymen and for Dun,\*  
then let them go together.

Man is a little world of himself,  
and therefore wanteth nothing;  
He needs not care for worldly pelf,  
so he have food and cloathing;  
And marriage is a fickle thing,  
Which sometime doth in love begin,  
and often ends in loathing.

And therefore I will single live,  
in spite of lust and passion;  
Pure virgins good examples give,  
and worth our imitation.  
For before matrimony arose,  
The mode of wearing yellow hose\*\*  
and horns were out of fashion.

And lastly, to conclude my song,  
vain joy is but a bubble'  
A double heart, and a double tongue,  
hath fill'd the world with trouble;  
And therefore to avoid all strife,  
'Tis best to lead a single life,  
we will have nothing double.

Finis

\*Dun, the hangman

\*\*probably the typical dress of the bachelor (see MacColl, Broadside Ballads)[ajs]

To the tune of, The King's delight; or, The young man's advice to his fellow batchelors.

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AJS  
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