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### **In Partibus**

(for *in partibus infidelium* – in countries of the infidels)

*The 'buses run to Battersea,  
The 'buses run to Bow,  
The 'buses run to Westbourne Grove,  
And Notting Hill also;  
But I am sick of London Town,  
From Shepherd's Bush to Bow.*

I see the smut upon my cuff,  
And feel him on my nose;  
I cannot leave my window wide  
When gentle Zephyr blows,  
Because he brings disgusting things,  
And drops 'em on my 'clo'es'.

The sky, a greasy soup-tureen,  
Shuts down atop my brow.  
Yes, I have sighed for London Town  
And I have got it now:  
And half of it is fog and filth,  
And half is fog and row.

And when I take my nightly prowl,  
'Tis passing good to meet  
The pious Briton lugging home  
His wife and daughter sweet,  
Through four packed miles of seething vice,  
Thrust out upon the street.

Earth holds no horror like to this  
In any land displayed,  
From Suez unto Sandy Hook,  
From Calais to Port Said;  
And 'twas to hide their heathendom  
The beastly fog was made.

I cannot tell when dawn is near,  
Or when the day is done,  
Because I always see the gas  
And never see the sun,  
And now, methinks, I do not care  
A cuss for either one.

But stay, there was an orange, or  
An aged egg its yolk;  
It might have been a Pears' balloon  
Or Barnum's latest joke:  
I took it for the sun and wept  
To watch it through the smoke.

It's Oh to see the morn ablaze  
Above the mango-tope,  
When homeward through the dewy cane  
The little jackals lope,  
And half Bengal heaves into view,  
New-washed – with sunlight soap.

It's Oh for one deep whisky-peg  
When Christmas winds are blowing,  
When all the men you ever knew,  
And all you've ceased from knowing,  
Are 'entered for the Tournament,  
And everything that's going'.

But I consort with long-haired things  
In velvet collar-rolls,  
Who talk about the Aims of Art,  
And 'theories' and 'goals',  
And moo and coo with womenfolk  
About their blessed souls.

But that they call 'psychology'  
Is lack of liver-pill,  
And all that blights their tender souls  
Is eating till they're ill,  
And their chief way of winning goals  
Consists of sitting still.

It's Oh to meet an Army man,  
Set up, and trimmed and taut,  
Who does not spout hashed libraries  
Or think the next man's thought,  
And walks as though he owned himself,  
And hogs his bristles short.

Hear now a voice across the seas  
To kin beyond my ken,  
If ye have ever filled an hour  
With stories from my pen,  
For pity's sake send some one here  
To bring me news of men!

*The 'buses run to Islington,  
To Highgate and Sobo,  
To Hammersmith and Kew  
    therewith,  
And Camberwell also,  
But I can only murmur 'Bus!'<sup>1</sup>  
From Shepherd's Bush to Bow.*

<sup>1</sup> 'Enough!'