

The Ledbury Clergyman

The musical score is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The melody is simple and folk-like. The lyrics are written below the notes. The word 'Chorus' is written above the second staff. The lyrics are: 'In Led-bury Town in He-re-ford-shire, they rucked up a row with the par-son there. This pi-ous gen-tle-man, so they say, was far too fond of go-ing a-stray. So if go-ing a-stray should be your plan, just think of the Led-bury cler-gy-man.'

This pious gentleman did, you know,
A very religious example show.
'stead of learning the folk to preach and pray
He was kissing and cuddling night and day.

This parson he was a roving blade,
He courted the cook and the servant maids,
Gave out his text and winked his eye
"Come kiss me girls and multiply."

Now sooner or late, a tale went round
That a young chickabidee had come to town.
And its features did the truth disclose
Of the Ledbury parson's eyes and nose.

They summoned him up and made him pay
One half a crown a week, they say.
So, clergymen, my warning take
And think of the Ledbury parson's fate.

This parson got in a terrible rage,
He swore to the child he never would pay.
And to cure his sins, he preached and prayed
With Lizzie the cook and Kitty the maid

Then up to the church then toddled the cook
And in her arms this child she took.
And the parson on them glanced his eye
'Oh look at your daddy,' the cook did cry.

Now this parson said 'twas his desire
Him from this sinful world retire,
And join the Mormons he would strive,
And marry one hundred and fifty wives.

Then from the church he got the sack,
They took the surplice off his back.
And they wouldn't allow him to preach nor pray
.Till ten long years had passed away.

Now married men, just mind your eye,
Don't get kissing and cuddling on the sly.
Though single chaps might go astray,
But they'd better get married without delay.

Source: Sung by Charlie Clissold, Morton Valence. Collected by Gwilym Davies 4 April 1977 and subsequently recorded by Mike Yates and Gwilym Davies in Hardwicke in 1980

© Gloucestershire Traditions