

## **Berlin Irving**

# **"Opera Burlesque"**

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[Full title: "Opera Burlesque (on the Sextette from Lucia di Lammermoor)".]

Let's sing

-Let us sing, let us sing

Some Ragtime Op'ra

-Ragtime Op'ra

Let's sing

-Let us sing, let us sing

Some op'ra grand

-We understand

About a man

-Let us sing about a man

Called Ephraam

-Ephraam, Ephraam

Who heard

-Who heard

The Sextette from Lucia, so beautiful

-Beautiful!

Ev'ry night you'd see him sitting in the gallery

-At the op'ra house, quiet as a mouse

He loved to hear Caruso sing his part so tenderly

-When he struck a high one, to the sky one

Ephraam would begin to holler

-"That note alone is worth a dollar!"

Take it!

-Take it!

Make it

-Make it!

Jump to the top of the house and shake it soon

-Very soon, very soon

This op'ra darkey

-Op'ra darkey

He bought

-Yes, he bought, yes, he bought

That score, you bet!

-That sweet sextette!

He hunted then

-He went out and hunted then

For colored men

-Colored men, colored men  
Who could  
-Who could  
Sing that sextette he heard so beautiful  
-Beautiful  
Soon he found some coons who understood the  
harmony  
-And they said: "We'll do it! Go right to it!"  
So he gave them parts and said: "The hard one is for  
me!"  
-Then they started tuning up their voices  
Ephraim at the old piano  
-Struck at a chord in a fancy manner  
Swaying  
-Swaying  
Saying  
-Saying  
"Start in to sing, never mind my playing," so  
-They began, they began  
To sing the sextette  
-Sing the sextette  
And say  
-Let us say, let us say  
It was a bird  
-When Ephr'am heard  
He shouted, "Stop!"  
-But the singers wouldn't stop  
They'd rather drop  
-Rather drop, rather drop  
Than stop  
-Than stop  
That Sextette from Lucia, so beautiful  
-Beautiful!  
Ephraim cried out, "You all are singing out of tune!"  
-But they kept on goin', blowin', showin'  
How they could sing that Ragtime Op'ra  
-Ephraim began to shout  
"Stop!"  
-"No!"  
"Stop!"  
-"No!"  
"Stop!"  
-"No!"  
"Stop!"  
-"Keep it up, keep it up! Hon'!"  
"Where's my gun, where's my gun?"  
-"We have only begun"  
"Better run, better run"  
-"Let us sing it for fun"  
"You're off the key!"  
-"Let it be, let it be"

"Try and sing it right for me  
-"Let's sing that melody"  
"Off the key, off the key!"  
-"It's as sweet as can be, like pickin' cotton"  
"Rotten!"  
-"No!"  
"Yes!"  
-"No!"  
"Yes!"  
-"No!"  
"Yes!"  
-"No!"  
"Yes!"  
-"No!"  
"Yes, stop, I say!"  
-"Let us sing, let us sing"  
"I'd be willing to pay"  
-"Let us sing, let us sing"  
"If you stop right away"  
-"Let us sing, let us sing"  
"You'd better stop!"  
-"Keep it up!"  
"Please stop!"  
-"Keep it up!"  
"Please stop!"  
-"Keep it up!"  
"You'll stop! Don't you intend to ever stop? " -"We don't  
intend to ever stop!" "Please stop!" -"Keep it up, keep it  
up, keep it up, keep it up!"

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