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BARTHOLDI'S.

Can it be true, Bartholdi's closing down?
 (I mean the Restaurant and not the Shop),
 That well-known, lively rendez-vous in Town,
 Where you could meet your friends and eat your chop.

An institution it has long become
 Since first it open'd, thirty years ago
 And in those days the business used to hum
 From "z'nüni" onwards till 't was "time" to go.

But things have changed and slav'ry is no more,
 In fact, the "slaves" to-day do what they like;
 So luncheon was the only treat in store
 And in return the staff went not on trike.

It was the custom for Bartholdi's place
 To close in August from Bank Holiday
 The Restaurant, for two weeks' rest and grace
 But now, we're told, there's to be no rentrée.

Poor "regulars", where ever will they go
 From now on for their old-establish'd lunch?
 Abundant are the places in Soho,
 But which to choose from all that varied bunch?

None of them has, I know, the atmosphere
 Which hovered over Numbers 4 and 6,
 Where, with a sausage and a glass of beer,
 You felt at home, with friends could freely mix.

A final word of thanks is due to those
 Who minister'd so well to our want;
 Impatiently we kept them on their toes
 And sometimes neither were we too gallant.

There's Helen who, once waited on by serfs,
 Had faced the launching of a thousand ships
 And Irish Katherine with the shapely curves
 (Like Marilyn's) black hair and coral lips.

And now it is farewell, a sad good-bye,
 Without Bartholdi's we shall all feel strange;
 Over spilt milk it is no use to cry,
 For nought is stable in this world of change.

Let's try and bear it — worse things might befall,
 We trust the Shop will flourish and do well;
 Hail! Otto, Gussie, Family and all,
 May health and right Good Fortune with you dwell!

LONDON, August, 1956.

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