Modern Major-General

Lyrics by W.S. Gilbert

I am the very model of a modern Major-General, I've information vegetable, animal, and mineral, I

know the kings of England, and I quote the fights historical, From Marathon to Waterloo, in

order categorical; I'm very well acquainted, too, with matters mathematical, I

understand equations, both the simple and quadratic, About binomial theorem I'm

teeming with a lot o' news, With many cheerful facts about the
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The square of the hypotenuse. I'm very good at integral and differential calculus; I know the scientific names of beings animal-curious. In short, in matters vegetable, animal, and mineral, I am the very model of a modern Major-General.

I know our mythic history, King Arthur's and Sir Caradoc's; I answer hard acrostics, I've a pretty taste for paradox, I quote in elegiacs all the crimes of Heligoabalus, In conics I can floor peculiarities parabolous; I can tell undoubted Ra-pha-els from Gerard Dows and Zoffanies, I know the croaking chorus from The
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Frogs of A-ris-to-pha-nes! Then I can hum a fugue of which I've heard the mu-sic's din a-fore,

And whi-stle all the airs from that in-fer-nal non-sense Pi-na-fore.

Then I can write a wash-ing bill in Ba-by-lon-ic cun-ei-form, And tell you ev'-ry de-tail of Ca-ract-a-cus's un-i-form. In short, in mat-ters ve-ge-ta-ble, a-ni-mal, and mi-ne-ral, I am the ve-ry mo-del of a mo-dern Ma-jor-Ge-ne-ral.

In fact, when I know what is meant by "ma-me-lon" and "ra-ve-lin", When I can tell at sight a Mau-ser ri-fle from a Ja-ve-lin, When such af-fairs as sor-ties and sur-pris-es I'm more wa-ry at, And
when I know pre-cise-ly what is meant by "com-mis-sar-i-at", When I have learnt what progress has been made in mo dern gun ne ry, When I know more of tac tics than a no vice in a nun ne ry – In short, when I've a smat ter ing of el e men tal stra te gy – You'll say a bet ter Maj or Ge ne ral has ne ver sat a gee!

For my mi li ta ry know ledge, though I'm plucky and ad ven tu ry, Has only been brought down to the be gin ning of the cen tu ry; But still, in mat ters ve ge ta ble,

a ni mal, and mi ne ral, I am the very mo del of a mo dern Maj or Ge ne ral.