

Classic Poetry Series

**Thomas Babington
Macaulay
- poems -**

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Thomas Babington Macaulay(25 October 1800 – 28 December 1859)

Thomas Babington Macaulay, 1st Baron Macaulay PC was a British poet, historian and Whig politician. He wrote extensively as an essayist and reviewer, and on British history. He also held political office as Secretary at War between 1839 and 1841 and Paymaster-General between 1846 and 1848.

Early Life

The son and eldest child of Zachary Macaulay, a Scottish Highlander who became a colonial governor and abolitionist, Thomas Macaulay was born in Leicestershire, England. He was noted as a child prodigy. As a toddler, gazing out the window from his cot at the chimneys of a local factory, he is reputed to have put the question to his mother: "Does the smoke from those chimneys come from the fires of hell?" He was educated at a private school in Hertfordshire and at Trinity College, Cambridge. Whilst at Cambridge he wrote much poetry and won several prizes, including the Chancellor's Gold Medal in June 1821. In 1825 he published a prominent essay on Milton in the *Edinburgh Review*. In 1826 he was called to the bar but showed more interest in a political than a legal career. It was once rumoured that Macaulay had fallen for Maria Kinnaird, the wealthy ward of "Conversation" Sharp, but in fact he never married and had no children.

Political Career

In 1830 the Marquess of Lansdowne invited Macaulay to become Member of Parliament for the pocket borough of Calne. His maiden speech was in favor of abolishing the civil disabilities of the Jews. However, Macaulay made his name with a series of speeches in favour of parliamentary reform. After the Great Reform Act of 1832 was passed, he became MP for Leeds. In the Reform, Calne's representation was reduced from two to one; Leeds had never been represented before, but now had two members. Though proud to have helped pass the Reform Bill, Macaulay never ceased to be grateful to his former patron, Lansdowne, who remained a great friend and political ally.

India

Macaulay was Secretary to the Board of Control under Lord Grey from 1832 until 1833. After the passing of the Government of India Act 1833, he was appointed as the first Law Member of the Governor-General's Council. He went to India in

1834. Serving on the Supreme Council of India between 1834 and 1838 he was instrumental in creating the foundations of bilingual colonial India, by convincing the Governor-General to adopt English as the medium of instruction in higher education, from the sixth year of schooling onwards, rather than Sanskrit or Persian then used in the institutions supported by the East India Company. By doing so, Macaulay wanted to "educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother tongue" and thus, by incorporating English, he sought to enrich the Indian languages so "that they could become vehicles for European scientific, historical, and literary expression". His final years in India were devoted to the creation of a Penal Code, as the leading member of the Law Commission.

In the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny of 1857, Macaulay's criminal law proposal was enacted. The Indian Penal Code (1860) was followed by the Criminal Procedure Code, 1872 and the Civil Procedure Code, 1909. The Indian Penal Code was later reproduced in most other British colonies – and to date many of these laws are still in effect in places as far apart as Pakistan, Singapore, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Zimbabwe as well as in India.

The term "Macaulay's Children" is used to refer to people born of Indian ancestry who adopt Western culture as a lifestyle, or display attitudes influenced by colonisers. It is used as a pejorative term, and the connotation is one of disloyalty to one's country and one's heritage. This frame of mind or attitude is also referred to as Macaulayism.

The passage to which the term refers is from his Minute on Indian Education, delivered in 1835. It reads,

“It is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.”

Macaulay's Minute formed the basis for the reforms introduced in the English Education Act of 1835. In 1836, a school named La Martiniere which was founded by Major General Claude Martin had one of its houses named after him.

In independent India, Macaulay's idea of the civilizing mission has been used by

Dalitists, in particular by neoliberalist Chandra Bhan Prasad, as a "creative appropriation for self-empowerment", based on the weltanschauung that Dalit folk are "empowered" by an English education as opposed to that in languages used traditionally (Sanskrit and Persian).

Government Minister

Returning to Britain in 1838, he became MP for Edinburgh. He was made Secretary at War in 1839 by Lord Melbourne and was sworn of the Privy Council the same year. In 1841 Macaulay addressed the issue of copyright law. Macaulay's position, slightly modified, became the basis of copyright law in the English-speaking world for many decades. Macaulay argued that copyright is a monopoly and as such has generally negative effects on society. After the fall of Melbourne's government in 1841 Macaulay devoted more time to literary work, but returned to office as Paymaster-General in 1846 in Lord John Russell's administration.

In the election of 1847 he lost his seat in Edinburgh. He attributed the loss to the anger of religious zealots over his speech in favour of expanding the annual grant to Maynooth College in Ireland, which trained young men for the Catholic priesthood; some observers also attributed his loss to his neglect of local issues. In 1849 he was elected Rector of the University of Glasgow, a position with no administrative duties, often awarded by the students to men of political or literary fame; he also received the freedom of the city. In 1852, the voters of Edinburgh offered to re-elect him to Parliament. He accepted on the express condition that he need not campaign and would not pledge himself to a position on any political issue. Remarkably, he was elected on those terms. However, he seldom attended the House, due to ill health; indeed his weakness after suffering a heart attack caused him to postpone for several months making his speech of thanks to the Edinburgh voters. He resigned his seat in January, 1856. In 1857 he was raised to the peerage as Baron Macaulay, of Rothley in the County of Leicester, but seldom attended the House of Lords.

Literary Works

As a young man he composed the ballads *Ivry* and *The Armada*, which he later included as part of *Lays of Ancient Rome*, a series of very popular ballads about heroic episodes in Roman history which he composed in India and published in 1842. The most famous of them, *Horatius*, concerns the heroism of Horatius Cocles. It contains the oft-quoted lines:

Then out spake brave Horatius,

The Captain of the Gate:

"To every man upon this earth

Death cometh soon or late.

And how can man die better

Than facing fearful odds,

For the ashes of his fathers,

And the temples of his gods?"

During the 1840s he began work on his most famous work, *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, publishing the first two volumes in 1848. At first, he had planned to bring his history down to the reign of George III. After publication of his first two volumes, his hope was to complete his work with the death of Queen Anne in 1714. The third and fourth volumes, bringing the history to the Peace of Ryswick, were published in 1855. However, at his death in 1859, he was working on the fifth volume. This, bringing the History down to the death of William III, was prepared for publication by his sister, Lady Trevelyan, after his death.

Macaulay's political writings are famous for their ringing prose and for its confident, sometimes dogmatic, emphasis on a progressive model of British history, according to which the country threw off superstition, autocracy and confusion to create a balanced constitution and a forward-looking culture combined with freedom of belief and expression. This model of human progress has been called the Whig interpretation of history. This philosophy appears most clearly in the essays Macaulay wrote for the *Edinburgh Review*. But it is also reflected in the History; the most stirring passages in the work are those that describe the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688. Macaulay's approach has been criticised by later historians for its one-sidedness and its complacency. Karl Marx referred to him as a 'systematic falsifier of history'. His tendency to see history as a drama led him to treat figures whose views he opposed as if they were villains, while characters he approved of were presented as heroes. Macaulay goes to considerable length, for example, to absolve his main hero William III of any responsibility for the Glencoe massacre. Winston Churchill devoted a four volume biography of the Duke of Marlborough to rebutting Macaulay's slights of his ancestor, expressing hope 'to fasten the label "Liar" to his genteel coat-tails.'

On the other hand, this outlook, together with his obvious love of his subject matter and of English civilization, helps to place the reader within the age being described in a personal way that no cold neutrality could, and Macaulay's History is generally recognized as one of the masterpieces of historical writing and a magisterial literary triumph only comparable as such to Gibbon and Michelet.

Macaulay sat on the committee to decide on subjects from British history to be painted in the new Palace of Westminster. The need to collect reliable portraits of noted figures in British history for this project led to the foundation of the National Portrait Gallery, which was formally established on 2 December 1856. Macaulay was amongst its founder trustees and is honoured with one of only three busts above the main entrance.

During later years his health made work increasingly difficult for him. He died in December 1859, aged 59, leaving his major work, *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second* incomplete. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. As he had no children, his peerage became extinct on his death.

Macaulay's nephew, Sir George Trevelyan, Bt, wrote a best-selling "Life and Letters" of his famous uncle, which is still the best complete life of Macaulay. His great-nephew was the Cambridge historian G. M. Trevelyan.

Legacy as a Historian

The Liberal historian Lord Acton read Macaulay's History of England four times and later described himself as "a raw English schoolboy, primed to the brim with Whig politics" but "not Whiggism only, but Macaulay in particular that I was so full of". However after coming under German influence Acton would later find fault in Macaulay. In 1880 Acton classed Macaulay (with Burke and Gladstone) as one "of the three greatest Liberals". In 1883 he advised Mary Gladstone "that the Essays are really flashy and superficial. He was not above par in literary criticism; his Indian articles will not hold water; and his two most famous reviews, on Bacon and Ranke, show his incompetence. The essays are only pleasant reading, and a key to half the prejudices of our age. It is the History (with one or two speeches) that is wonderful. He knew nothing respectably before the seventeenth century, he knew nothing of foreign history, of religion, philosophy, science, or art. His account of debates has been thrown into the shade by Ranke, his account of diplomatic affairs, by Klopp. He is, I am persuaded, grossly, basely unfair. Read him therefore to find out how it comes that the most unsympathetic of critics can think him very nearly the greatest of English writers". In 1885 Acton asserted that: "We must never judge the quality of a teaching by the quality of the Teacher, or allow the spots to shut out the

sun. It would be unjust, and it would deprive us of nearly all that is great and good in this world. Let me remind you of Macaulay. He remains to me one of the greatest of all writers and masters, although I think him utterly base, contemptible and odious for certain reasons which you know". In 1888 he wrote that Macaulay "had done more than any writer in the literature of the world for the propagation of the Liberal faith, and he was not only the greatest, but the most representative, Englishman then [1856] living".

Herbert Butterfield's *The Whig Interpretation of History* (1931) attacked Whig history. The Dutch historian Pieter Geyl, writing in 1955, considered Macaulay's *Essays* as "exclusively and intolerantly English".

George Richard Potter, Professor and Head of the Department of History at the University of Sheffield from 1931 to 1965, claimed "In an age of long letters...Macaulay's hold their own with the best". However Potter also claimed: "For all his linguistic abilities he seems never to have tried to enter into sympathetic mental contact with the classical world or with the Europe of his day. It was an insularity that was impregnable...If his outlook was insular, however, it was surely British rather than English". He said this about Macaulay's determination to inspect physically the places mentioned in his *History*: "Much of the success of the famous third chapter of the *History* which may be said to have introduced the study of social history, and even...local history, was due to the intense local knowledge acquired on the spot. As a result it is a superb, living picture of Great Britain in the latter half of the seventeenth century...No description of the relief of Londonderry in a major history of England existed before 1850; after his visit there and the narrative written round it no other account has been needed...Scotland came fully into its own and from then until now it has been a commonplace that English history is incomprehensible without Scotland". Potter noted that Macaulay has had many critics, some of whom put forward some salient points about the deficiency of Macaulay's *History* but added: "The severity and the minuteness of the criticism to which the *History* of England has been subjected is a measure of its permanent value. It is worth very ounce of powder and shot that is fired again it". Potter concluded that "in the long roll of English historical writing from Clarendon to Trevelyan only Gibbon has surpassed him in security of reputation and certainty of immortality".

In 1972 J. R. Western wrote that: "Despite its age and blemishes, Macaulay's *History* of England has still to be superseded by a full-scale modern history of the period". In 1974 J. P. Kenyon stated that: "As is often the case, Macaulay had it exactly right".

W. A. Speck wrote in 1980 that Macaulay's *History* of England "still commands

respect is that it was based upon a prodigious amount of research". Speck claims that "Macaulay's reputation as an historian has never fully recovered from the condemnation it implicitly received in Herbert Butterfield's devastating attack on *The Whig Interpretation of History*. Though he was never cited by name, there can be no doubt that Macaulay answers to the charges brought against Whig historians, particularly that they study the past with reference to the present, class people in the past as those who furthered progress and those who hindered it, and judge them accordingly". Speck also said that Macaulay too often "denies the past has its own validity, treating it as being merely a prelude to his own age. This is especially noticeable in the third chapter of his *History of England*, when again and again he contrasts the backwardness of 1685 with the advances achieved by 1848. Not only does this misuse the past, it also leads him to exaggerate the differences". Although Speck also wrote that Macaulay "took pains to present the virtues even of a rogue, and he painted the virtuous warts and all", and that "he was never guilty of suppressing or distorting evidence to make it support a proposition which he knew to be untrue". Speck concluded: "What is in fact striking is the extent to which his *History of England* at least has survived subsequent research. Although it is often dismissed as inaccurate, it is hard to pinpoint a passage where he is categorically in error...his account of events has stood up remarkably well...His interpretation of the Glorious Revolution also remains the essential starting point for any discussion of that episode...What has not survived, or has become subdued, is Macaulay's confident belief in progress. It was a dominant creed in the era of the Great Exhibition. But Auschwitz and Hiroshima destroyed this century's claim to moral superiority over its predecessors, while the exhaustion of natural resources raises serious doubts about the continuation even of material progress into the next."

In 1981 J. W. Burrow argued that Macaulay's *History of England*:

...is not simply partisan; a judgement, like that of Firth, that Macaulay was always the Whig politician could hardly be more inapposite. Of course Macaulay thought that the Whigs of the seventeenth century were correct in their fundamental ideas, but the hero of the *History* was William, who, as Macaulay says, was certainly no Whig...If this was Whiggism it was so only, by the mid-nineteenth century, in the most extended and inclusive sense, requiring only an acceptance of parliamentary government and a sense of gravity of precedent. Butterfield says, rightly, that in the nineteenth century the Whig view of history became the English view. The chief agent of that transformation was surely Macaulay, aided, of course, by the receding relevance of seventeenth-century conflicts to contemporary politics, as the power of the crown waned further, and the civil disabilities of Catholics and Dissenters were removed by legislation. The *History* is much more than the vindication of a party; it is an attempt to insinuate

a view of politics, pragmatic, reverent, essentially Burkean, informed by a high, even tumid sense of the worth of public life, yet fully conscious of its interrelations with the wider progress of society; it embodies what Hallam had merely asserted, a sense of the privileged possession by Englishmen of their history, as well as of the epic dignity of government by discussion. If this was sectarian it was hardly, in any useful contemporary sense, polemically Whig; it is more like the sectarianism of English respectability.

In 1982 Gertrude Himmelfarb wrote that "most professional historians have long since given up reading Macaulay, as they have given up writing the kind of history he wrote and thinking about history as he did. Yet there was a time when anyone with any pretension to cultivation read Macaulay". Himmelfarb also laments that "the history of the History is a sad testimonial to the cultural regression of our times".

A Radical War Song

Awake, arise, the hour is come,
For rows and revolutions;
There's no receipt like pike and drum
For crazy constitutions.
Close, close the shop! Break, break the loom,
Desert your hearths and furrows,
And throng in arms to seal the doom
Of England's rotten boroughs.

We'll stretch that tort'ring Castlereagh
On his own Dublin rack, sir;
We'll drown the King in Eau de vie,
The Laureate in his sack, sir,
Old Eldon and his sordid hag
In molten gold we'll smother,
And stifle in his own green bag
The Doctor and his brother.

In chains we'll hang in fair Guildhall
The City's famed recorder,
And next on proud St Stephen's fall,
Though Wynne should squeak to order.
In vain our tyrants then shall try
To 'scape our martial law, sir;
In vain the trembling Speaker cry
That "Strangers must withdraw," sir.

Copley to hang offends no text;
A rat is not a man, sir:
With schedules, and with tax bills next
We'll bury pious Van, sir.
The slaves who loved the income Tax,
We'll crush by scores, like mites, sir,
And him, the wretch who freed the blacks,
And more enslaved the whites, sir.

The peer shall dangle from his gate,
The bishop from his steeple,
Till all recanting, own, the State

Means nothing but the People.
We'll fix the church's revenues
On Apostolic basis,
One coat, one scrip, one pair of shoes
Shall pay their strange grimaces.

We'll strap the bar's deluding train
In their own darling halter,
And with his big church bible brain
The parson at the altar.
Hail glorious hour, when fair Reform
Shall bless our longing nation,
And Hunt receive commands to form
A new administration.

Carlisle shall sit enthroned, where sat
Our Cranmer and our Secker;
And Watson show his snow-white hat
In England's rich Exchequer.
The breast of Thistlewood shall wear
Our Wellesley's star and sash, man:
And many a mausoleum fair
Shall rise to honest Cashman.

Then, then beneath the nine-tailed cat
Shall they who used it writhe, sir;
And curates lean, and rectors fat,
Shall dig the ground they tithe, sir.
Down with your Bayleys, and your Bests,
Your Giffords, and your Gurneys:
We'll clear the island of the pests,
Which mortals name attorneys.

Down with your sheriffs, and your mayors,
Your registrars, and proctors,
We'll live without the lawyer's cares,
And die without the doctor's.
No discontented fair shall pout
To see her spouse so stupid;
We'll tread the torch of Hymen out,
And live content with Cupid.

Then, when the high-born and the great
Are humbled to our level,
On all the wealth of Church and State,
Like aldermen, we'll revel.
We'll live when hushed the battle's din,
In smoking and in cards, sir,
In drinking unexcised gin,
And wooing fair Poissardes, sir.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

An Election Ballad

As I sate down to breakfast in state,
At my living of Tithing-cum-Boring,
With Betty beside me to wait,
Came a rap that almost beat the door in.
I laid down my basin of tea,
And Betty ceased spreading the toast,
"As sure as a gun, sir," said she,
"That must be the knock of the post."

A letter--and free--bring it here--
I have no correspondent who franks.
No! Yes! Can it be? Why, my dear,
'Tis our glorious, our Protestant Bankes.
"Dear sir, as I know you desire
That the Church should receive due protection,
I humbly presume to require
Your aid at the Cambridge election.

"It has lately been brought to my knowledge,
That the Ministers fully design
To suppress each cathedral and college,
And eject every learned divine.
To assist this detestable scheme
Three nuncios from Rome are come over;
They left Calais on Monday by steam,
And landed to dinner at Dover.

"An army of grim Cordeliers,
Well furnished with relics and vermin,
Will follow, Lord Westmoreland fears,
To effect what their chiefs may determine.
Lollard's bower, good authorities say,
Is again fitting up for a prison;
And a wood-merchant told me to-day
'Tis a wonder how faggots have risen.

"The finance scheme of Canning contains
A new Easter-offering tax;
And he means to devote all the gains

To a bounty on thumb-screws and racks.
Your living, so neat and compact--
Pray, don't let the news give you pain!--
Is promised, I know for a fact,
To an olive-faced Padre from Spain."

I read, and I felt my heart bleed,
Sore wounded with horror and pity;
So I flew, with all possible speed,
To our Protestant champion's committee.
True gentlemen, kind and well-bred!
No fleeing! no distance! no scorn!
They asked after my wife who is dead,
And my children who never were born.

They then, like high-principled Tories,
Called our Sovereign unjust and unsteady,
And assailed him with scandalous stories,
Till the coach for the voters was ready.
That coach might be well called a casket
Of learning and brotherly love:
There were parsons in boot and in basket;
There were parsons below and above.

There were Sneaker and Griper, a pair
Who stick to Lord Mulesby like leeches;
A smug chaplain of plausible air,
Who writes my Lord Goslingham's speeches.
Dr Buzz, who alone is a host,
Who, with arguments weighty as lead,
Proves six times a week in the Post
That flesh somehow differs from bread.

Dr Nimrod, whose orthodox toes
Are seldom withdrawn from the stirrup;
Dr Humdrum, whose eloquence flows,
Like droppings of sweet poppy syrup;
Dr Rosygill puffing and fanning,
And wiping away perspiration;
Dr Humbug who proved Mr Canning
The beast in St John's Revelation.

A layman can scarce form a notion
Of our wonderful talk on the road;
Of the learning, the wit, and devotion,
Which almost each syllable showed:
Why divided allegiance agrees
So ill with our free constitution;
How Catholics swear as they please,
In hope of the priest's absolution;

How the Bishop of Norwich had bartered
His faith for a legate's commission;
How Lyndhurst, afraid to be martyr'd,
Had stooped to a base coalition;
How Papists are cased from compassion
By bigotry, stronger than steel;
How burning would soon come in fashion,
And how very bad it must feel.

We were all so much touched and excited
By a subject so direly sublime,
That the rules of politeness were slighted,
And we all of us talked at a time;
And in tones, which each moment grew louder,
Told how we should dress for the show,
And where we should fasten the powder,
And if we should bellow or no.

Thus from subject to subject we ran,
And the journey passed pleasantly o'er,
Till at last Dr Humdrum began;
From that time I remember no more.
At Ware he commenced his prelection,
In the dullest of clerical drones;
And when next I regained recollection
We were rambling o'er Trumpington stones.

Thomas Babbington Macaulay

Dies Irae

On that great, that awful day,
This vain world shall pass away.
Thus the sibyl sang of old,
Thus hath holy David told.
There shall be a deadly fear
When the Avenger shall appear,
And unveiled before his eye
All the works of man shall lie.
Hark! to the great trumpet's tones
Pealing o'er the place of bones:
Hark! it waketh from their bed
All the nations of the dead,--
In a countless throng to meet,
At the eternal judgment seat.
Nature sickens with dismay,
Death may not retain its prey;
And before the Maker stand
All the creatures of his hand.
The great book shall be unfurled,
Whereby God shall judge the world;
What was distant shall be near,
What was hidden shall be clear.
To what shelter shall I fly?
To what guardian shall I cry?
Oh, in that destroying hour,
Source of goodness, Source of power,
Show thou, of thine own free grace,
Help unto a helpless race.
Though I plead not at thy throne
Aught that I for thee have done,
Do not thou unmindful be,
Of what thou hast borne for me:
Of the wandering, of the scorn,
Of the scourge, and of the thorn.
Jesus, hast thou borne the pain,
And hath all been borne in vain?
Shall thy vengeance smite the head
For whose ransom thou hast bled?
Thou, whose dying blessing gave

Glory to a guilty slave:
Thou, who from the crew unclean
Didst release the Magdalene:
Shall not mercy vast and free,
Evermore be found in thee?
Father, turn on me thine eyes,
See my blushes, hear my cries;
Faint though be the cries I make,
Save me for thy mercy's sake,
From the worm, and from the fire,
From the torments of thine ire.
Fold me with the sheep that stand
Pure and safe at thy right hand.
Hear thy guilty child implore thee,
Rolling in the dust before thee.
Oh the horrors of that day!
When this frame of sinful clay,
Starting from its burial place,
Must behold thee face to face.
Hear and pity, hear and aid,
Spare the creatures thou hast made.
Mercy, mercy, save, forgive,
Oh, who shall look on thee and live?

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Epitaph On A Jacobite

To my true king I offered free from stain
Courage and faith; vain faith, and courage vain.
For him, I threw lands, honours, wealth, away.
And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
For him I languished in a foreign clime,
Grey-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
Each morning started from the dream to weep;
Till God who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting place I asked, an early grave.
Oh thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Epitaph On Henry Martyn

Here Martyn lies. In Manhood's early bloom
The Christian Hero finds a Pagan tomb.
Religion, sorrowing o'er her favourite son,
Points to the glorious trophies that he won.
Eternal trophies! not with carnage red,
Not stained with tears by hapless captives shed,
But trophies of the Cross! for that dear name,
Through every form of danger, death, and shame,
Onward he journeyed to a happier shore,
Where danger, death, and shame assault no more.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Horatius

A Lay Made About the Year Of The City CCCLX

I

Lars Porsena of Closium
By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
To summon his array.

II

East and west and south and north
The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome.

III

The horsemen and the footmen
Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place,
From many a fruitful plain,
From many a lonely hamlet,
Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
Of purple Apennine;

IV

From lordly Volaterræ,

Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
For godlike kings of old;
From seagirt Populonia,
Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
Fringing the southern sky;

V

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
Heavy with fair-haired slaves;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
Through corn and vines and flowers;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
Her diadem of towers.

VI

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
Drop in dark Auser's rill;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill;
Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volsinian mere.

VII

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer;
Unharm'd the water fowl may dip
In the Volsinian mere.

VIII

The harvests of Arretium,
This year, old men shall reap;
This year, young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

IX

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand:
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

X

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given:
'Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven;
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome;
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome.'

XI

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten.
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting day.

XII

For all the Etruscan armies
Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following
To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.

XIII

But by the yellow Tiber
Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
The throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see
Through two long nights and days.

XIV

For aged folks on crutches,
And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
That clung to them and smiled,
And sick men borne in litters
High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sun-burned husbandmen
With reaping-hooks and staves,

XV

And droves of mules and asses
Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of wagons
That creaked beneath the weight

Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
Choked every roaring gate.

XVI

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman come
With tidings of dismay.

XVII

To eastward and to westward
Have spread the Tuscan bands;
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
And the stout guards are slain.

XVIII

I wis, in all the Senate, [wis: know]
There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached, and fast it beat,
When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
And hied them to the wall.

XIX

They held a council standing,
Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
For musing or debate.

Out spake the Consul roundly:
'The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
Nought else can save the town.'

XX

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear:
'To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here.'
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

XXI

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

XXII

And plainly and more plainly,
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

XXIII

And plainly and more plainly
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest,
Each warlike Lucumo.
There Cilnius of Arretium
On his fleet roan was seen;
And Astur of the four-fold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield,
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By reedy Thrasymene.

XXIV

Fast by the royal standard,
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name;
And by the left false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame.

XXV

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
And shook its little fist.

XXVI

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
And darkly at the foe.

'Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
What hope to save the town?'

XXVII

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
'To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his gods,

XXVIII

'And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame?

XXIX

'Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?'

XXX

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:

'Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee.'
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
'I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee.'

XXXI

'Horatius,' quoth the Consul,
'As thou sayest, so let it be.'
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

XXXII

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

XXXIII

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold:
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

XXXIV

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

XXXV

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Come flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

XXXVI

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way;

XXXVII

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium

Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that gray crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

XXXVIII

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath;
Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth;
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

XXXIX

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three;
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

XL

Herminius smote down Aruns:
Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
'Lie there,' he cried, 'fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy

Thy thrice accursed sail.'

XLI

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamor
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

XLII

But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the four-fold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

XLIII

He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, 'The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?'

XLIV

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius

Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

XLV

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space;
Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face.
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

XLVI

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder smitten oak:
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

XLVII

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
'And see,' he cried, 'the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucomo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer?'

XLVIII

But at his haughty challenge

A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

XLIX

But all Etruria's noblest
Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
In the path the dauntless Three:
And, from the ghastly entrance
Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
Lies amidst bones and blood.

L

Was none who would be foremost
To lead such dire attack;
But those behind cried, 'Forward!'
And those before cried, 'Back!'
And backward now and forward
Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel
To and fro the standards reel;
And the victorious trumpet-peal
Dies fitfully away.

LI

Yet one man for one moment
Strode out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud.
'Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!

Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
Here lies the road to Rome.'

LII

Thrice looked he at the city;
Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread:
And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

LIII

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
'Come back, come back, Horatius!'
Loud cried the Fathers all.
'Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!'

LIV

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

LV

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck

Lay right athwart the stream:
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

LVI

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

LVII

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
'Down with him!' cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
'Now yield thee,' cried Lars Porsena,
'Now yield thee to our grace.'

LVIII

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome.

LVIX

'Oh, Tiber! Father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!'
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

LX

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges,
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

LXI

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor,
And spent with changing blows:
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

LXII

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber

Bare bravely up his chin.

LXIII

'Curse on him!' quoth false Sextus;
'Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!'
'Heaven help him!' quoth Lars Porsena
'And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before.'

LXIV

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers;
To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate
Borne by the joyous crowd.

LXV

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

LXVI

It stands in the Comitium
Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,

In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

LXVII

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home;
And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

LXVIII

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

LXIX

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows;

LXX

When the goodman mends his armor,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily

Goes flashing through the loom;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Ivry

NOW glory to the Lord of hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our sovereign liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, O pleasant land of France!
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou went constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy;
For cold and stiff and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah! hurrah! a single field hath turn'd the chance of war!
Hurrah! hurrah! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre.

Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand;
And, as we look'd on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The king is come to marshal us, in all his armor drest;
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He look'd upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He look'd upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smil'd on us, as roll'd from wing to wing.
Down all our line, a deafening shout: God save our lord the king!
"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never I saw promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled din,
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring culverin.
The fiery duke is pricking fast across Saint André's plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,
Charge for the golden lilies—upon them with the lance!

A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest;
And in they burst, and on they rush'd, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blaz'd the helmet of Navarre.

Now, God be prais'd, the day is ours: Mayenne hath turn'd his rein;
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter; the Flemish count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay gale;
The field is heap'd with bleeding steeds, and flags, and cloven mail.
And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along our van,
Remember Saint Bartholomew! was pass'd from man to man.
But out spake gentle Henry—"No French-man is my foe:
Down, down with every foreigner, but let your brethren go:"
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our sovereign lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought for France to-day;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in fight;
And the good lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cornet white—
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath ta'en,
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of false Lorraine.
Up with it high; unfurl it wide;—that all the host may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which wrought His Church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a footcloth meet for Henry of Navarre.

Ho! maidens of Vienna; ho! matrons of Lucerne—
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls.
Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright;
Ho! burghers of St. Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night;
For our God hath crush'd the tyrant, our God hath rais'd the slave,
And mock'd the counsel of the wise, and the valor of the brave.
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all glories are;
And glory to our sovereign lord, King Henry of Navarre!

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Lines To The Memory Of Pitt

Oh Britain! dear Isle, when the annals of story
Shall tell of the deeds that thy children have done,
When the strains of each poet shall sing of their glory,
And the triumphs their skill and their valour have won.

When the olive and palm in thy chaplet are blended,
When thy arts, and thy fame, and thy commerce increase,
When thy arms through the uttermost coasts are extended,
And thy war is triumphant, and happy thy peace;

When the ocean, whose waves like a rampart flow round thee,
Conveying thy mandates to every shore,
And the empire of nature no longer can bound thee,
And the world be the scene of thy conquests no more:

Remember the man who in sorrow and danger,
When thy glory was set, and thy spirit was low,
When thy hopes were o'erturned by the arms of the stranger,
And thy banners displayed in the halls of the foe,

Stood forth in the tempest of doubt and disaster,
Unaided, and single, the danger to brave.
Asserted thy claims, and the rights of his master,
Preserved thee to conquer, and saved thee to save.

Thomas Babbington Macaulay

Lines Written In August

The day of tumult, strife, defeat, was o'er;
Worn out with toil, and noise, and scorn, and spleen,
I slumbered, and in slumber saw once more
A room in an old mansion, long unseen.

That room, methought, was curtained from the light;
Yet through the curtains shone the moon's cold ray
Full on a cradle, where, in linen white,
Sleeping life's first soft sleep, an infant lay.

Pale flickered on the hearth the dying flame,
And all was silent in that ancient hall,
Save when by fits on the low night-wind came
The murmur of the distant waterfall.

And lo! the fairy queens who rule our birth
Drew nigh to speak the new-born baby's doom:
With noiseless step, which left no trace on earth,
From gloom they came, and vanished into gloom.

Not deigning on the boy a glance to cast
Swept careless by the gorgeous Queen of Gain;
More scornful still, the Queen of Fashion passed,
With mincing gait and sneer of cold disdain.

The Queen of Power tossed high her jewelled head,
And o'er her shoulder threw a wrathful frown;
The Queen of Pleasure on the pillow shed
Scarce one stray rose-leaf from her fragrant crown.

Still Fay in long procession followed Fay;
And still the little couch remained unblest:
But, when those wayward sprites had passed away,
Came One, the last, the mightiest, and the best.

Oh glorious lady, with the eyes of light
And laurels clustering round thy lofty brow,
Who by the cradle's side didst watch that night,
Warbling a sweet, strange music, who wast thou?

"Yes, darling; let them go;" so ran the strain:
"Yes; let them go, gain, fashion, pleasure, power,
And all the busy elves to whose domain
Belongs the nether sphere, the fleeting hour.

"Without one envious sigh, one anxious scheme,
The nether sphere, the fleeting hour resign.
Mine is the world of thought, the world of dream,
Mine all the past, and all the future mine.

"Fortune, that lays in sport the mighty low,
Age, that to penance turns the joys of youth,
Shall leave untouched the gifts which I bestow,
The sense of beauty and the thirst of truth.

"Of the fair brotherhood who share my grace,
I, from thy natal day, pronounce thee free;
And, if for some I keep a nobler place,
I keep for none a happier than for thee.

"There are who, while to vulgar eyes they seem
Of all my bounties largely to partake,
Of me as of some rival's handmaid deem
And court me but for gain's, power's, fashion's sake.

"To such, though deep their lore, though wide their fame,
Shall my great mysteries be all unknown:
But thou, through good and evil, praise and blame,
Wilt not thou love me for myself alone?

"Yes; thou wilt love me with exceeding love;
And I will tenfold all that love repay,
Still smiling, though the tender may reprove,
Still faithful, though the trusted may betray.

"For aye mine emblem was, and aye shall be,
The ever-during plant whose bough I wear,
Brightest and greenest then, when every tree
That blossoms in the light of Time is bare.

"In the dark hour of shame, I deigned to stand

Before the frowning peers at Bacon's side:
On a far shore I smoothed with tender hand,
Through months of pain, the sleepless bed of Hyde:

"I brought the wise and brave of ancient days
To cheer the cell where Raleigh pined alone:
I lighted Milton's darkness with the blaze
Of the bright ranks that guard the eternal throne.

"And even so, my child, it is my pleasure
That thou not then alone shouldst feel me nigh,
When in domestic bliss and studious leisure,
Thy weeks uncounted come, uncounted fly;

"Not then alone, when myriads, closely pressed
Around thy car, the shout of triumph raise;
Nor when, in gilded drawing rooms, thy breast
Swells at the sweeter sound of woman's praise.

"No: when on restless night dawns cheerless morrow,
When weary soul and wasting body pine,
Thine am I still, in danger, sickness, sorrow,
In conflict, obloquy, want, exile, thine;

"Thine, where on mountain waves the snowbirds scream,
Where more than Thule's winter barbs the breeze,
Where scarce, through lowering clouds, one sickly gleam
Lights the drear May-day of Antarctic seas;

"Thine, when around thy litter's track all day
White sandhills shall reflect the blinding glare;
Thine, when, through forests breathing death, thy way
All night shall wind by many a tiger's lair;

"Thine most, when friends turn pale, when traitors fly,
When, hard beset, thy spirit, justly proud,
For truth, peace, freedom, mercy, dares defy
A sullen priesthood and a raving crowd.

"Amidst the din of all things fell and vile,
Hate's yell, and envy's hiss, and folly's bray,
Remember me; and with an unforced smile

See riches, baubles, flatterers, pass away.

"Yes: they will pass away; nor deem it strange:
They come and go, as comes and goes the sea:
And let them come and go: thou, through all change,
Fix thy firm gaze on virtue and on me."

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Pompeii

A Poem Which Obtained the Chancellor's Medal at the Cambridge Commencement, July 1819.

Oh! land to Memory and to Freedom dear,
Land of the melting lyre and conquering spear,
Land of the vine-clad hill, the fragrant grove,
Of arts and arms, of Genius and of Love.
Hear, fairest Italy. Though now no more
The glittering eagles awe the Atlantic shore,
Nor at thy feet the gorgeous Orient flings
The blood-bought treasures of her tawny Kings,
Though vanished all that formed thine old renown,
The laurel garland, and the jewelled crown,
The avenging poniard, the victorious sword,
Which reared thine empire, or thy rights restored,
Yet still the constant Muses haunt thy shore,
And love to linger where they dwelt of yore.
If e'er of old they deigned, with favouring smile,
To tread the sea-girt shores of Albion's isle,
To smooth with classic arts our rugged tongue,
And warm with classic glow the British song,
Oh! bid them snatch their silent harps which wave
On the lone oak that shades thy Maro's grave,
And sweep with magic hand the slumbering strings,
To fire the poet.- For thy clime he sings,
Thy scenes of gay delight and wild despair,
Thy varied forms of awful and of fair.
How rich that climate's sweets, how wild its storms,
What charms array it, and what rage deforms.
Well have they mouldering walls, Pompeii, known,
Decked in those charms, and by that rage o'erthrown.
Sad City, gayly dawned thy latest day,
And poured its radiance on the scene as gay.
The leaves scarce rustled in the sighing breeze;
In azure dimples curled the sparkling seas,
And as the golden tide of light they quaffed,
Campania's sunny meads and vineyards laughed,
While gleamed each lichened oak and giant pine

On the far sides of swarthy Apennine.
Then mirth and music through Pompeii rung;
Then verdant wreaths on all her portals hung;
Her sons with solemn rite and jocund lay,
Hailed the glad splendours of that festal day.
With fillets bound the hoary priests advance,
And rosy virgins braid the choral dance.
The rugged warrior here unbends awhile
His iron front, and deigns a transient smile;
There, frantic with delight, the ruddy boy
Scarce treads on earth, and bounds and laughs with joy.
From every crowded altar perfumes rise
In billowy clouds of fragrance to the skies.
The milk-white monarch of the herd they lead;
With gilded horns, at yonder shrine to bleed
And while the victim crops the broidered plain,
And frisks and gambols towards the destined fane,
They little deem that like himself they stray
To death, unconscious, o'er a flowery way;
Heedless, like him, the impending stroke await,
And sport and wanton on the brink of fate.
What 'vails it that where yonder heights aspire,
With ashes piled, and scathed with rills of fire,
Gigantic phantoms dimly seem to glide,
In misty files, along the mountain's side,
To view with threatening scowl your fated lands,
And toward your city point their shadowy hands?
In vain celestial omens prompted fear,
And nature's signal spoke the ruin near.
In vain through many a night ye viewed from far
The meteor flag of elemental war
Unroll its blazing folds from yonder height,
In fearful sign of earth's intestine fight.
In vain Vesuvius groaned with wrath supprest,
And muttered thunder in his burning breast.
Long since the Eagle from that flaming peak
Hath soared with screams a safer nest to seek.
Awed by the infernal beacon's fitful glare,
The howling fox hath left his wonted lair;
Nor dares the browsing goat in venturous leap
To spring, as erst, from dizzy steep to steep.-
Man only mocks the peril. Man alone

Defies the sulphurous flame, the warning groan.
While instinct, humbler guardian, wakes and saves,
Proud reason sleeps, nor knows the doom it braves.
But see the opening theatre invites
The fates myriads to its gay delights.
In, in, they swarm, tumultuous as the roar
Of foaming breakers on a rocky shore.
The enraptured throng in breathless transport views
The gorgeous temple of the Tragic Muse.
There, while her wand in shadowy pomp arrays
Ideal scenes, and forms of other days,
Fair as the hopes of youth, a radiant band,
The sister arts around her footstool stand,
To deck their Queen, and lend a milder grace
To the stern beauty of that awful face.
Far, far, around the ravished eye surveys
The sculptured forms of Gods and heroes blaze.
Above the echoing roofs the peal prolong
Of lofty converse, or melodious song,
While, as the tones of passion sink or swell,
Admiring thousands own the moral spell,
Melt with the melting strains of fancied wo,
With terror sicken, or with transport glow.
Oh! for a voice like that which pealed of old
Through Salem's cedar courts and shrines of gold,
And in wild accents round the trembling dome
Proclaimed the havoc of avenging Rome;
While every palmy arch and sculptured tower
Shook with the footsteps of the parting power.
Such voice might check your tears, which idly stream
For the vain phantoms of the poet's dream,
Might bid those terrors rise, those sorrows flow;
For other perils, and for nearer wo.
The hour is come. Even now the sulphurous cloud
Involves the city in its funeral shroud,
And far along Campania's azure sky
Expands its dark and boundless canopy.
The Sun, though throned on heaven's meridian height,
Burns red and rayless through that sickly night.
Each bosom felt at once the shuddering thrill,
At once the music stopped. The song was still.
None in that cloud's portentous shade might trace

The fearful changes of another's face.
But through that horrid stillness each could hear
His neighbour's throbbing heart beat high with fear.
A moment's pause succeeds. Then wildly rise
Grief's sobbing plaints and terror's frantic cries.
The gates recoil; and towards the narrow pass
In wild confusion rolls the living mass.
Death - when thy shadowy sceptre waves away
From his sad couch the prisoner decay,
Though friendship view the close with glistening eye,
And love's fond lips imbibe the parting sigh,
By torture racked, by kindness soothed in vain,
The soul still clings to being and to pain.
But when have wilder terrors clothed thy brow,
Or keener torments edged thy dart than now,
When with thy regal horrors vainly strove
The law of Nature and the power of Love?
On mothers, babes in vain for mercy call,
Beneath the feet of brothers, brothers call,
Behold the dying wretch in vain upraise
Towards yonder well-known face the accusing gaze;
See trampled to the earth the expiring maid
Clings round her lover's feet, and shrieks for aid.
Vain is the imploring glance, the frenzied cry;
All, all is fear; - to succour is to die.-
Saw ye how wild, how red, how broad a light
Burst on the darkness of that mid-day night,
As fierce Vesuvius scatter'd o'er the vale
Her drifted flames and sheets of burning hail,
Shook hell's wan lightnings from his blazing cone,
And gilded heaven with meteors not its own?
The morn all blushing rose; but sought in vain
The snowy villas and the flowery plain,
The purpled hills with marshalled vineyards gay,
The domes that sparkled in the sunny ray.
Where art or nature late hath deck'd the scene
With blazing marble or with spangled green,
There, streaked by many a fiery torrent's bed,
A boundless waste of hoary ashes spread.
Along that dreary waste where lately rung
The festal lay which smiling virgins sung,
Where rapture echoed from the warbling lute,

And the gay dance resounded, all is mute.-
Mute! - Is it Fancy shapes that wailing sound
Which faintly murmurs from the blasted ground,
Or live there still, who, breathing in the tomb,
Curse the dark refuge which delays their doom,
In massive vaults, on which the incumbent plain
And ruined city heap their weight in vain?
Oh! who may sing that hour of mortal strife,
When Nature calls on Death, yet clings to life?
Who paint the wretch that draws sepulchral breath,
A living prisoner in the house of Death?
Pale as the corpse which loads the funeral pile,
With face convulsed that writhes a ghastly smile,
Behold him speechless move with hurried pace,
Incessant, round his dungeon's caverned space,
Now shrink in terror, and now groan in pain,
Gnaw his white lips and strike his burning brain,
Till Fear o'erstained in stupor dies away,
And Madness wrests her victim from dismay.
His arms sink down; his wild and stony eye
Glares without sight on blackest vacancy,
He feels not, sees not: wrapped in senseless trance
His soul is still and listless as his glance.
One cheerless blank, one rayless mist is there,
Thoughts, senses, passions, live not with despair.
Haste, Famine, haste, to urge the destined close,
And lull the horrid scene to stern repose.
Yet ere, dire Fiend, thy lingering tortures cease,
And all be hushed in still sepulchral peace,
Those caves shall wilder, darker deeds behold
Than e'er the voice of song or fable told,
Whate'er dismay may prompt, or madness dare,
Feasts of the grave, and banquets of despair.-
Hide, hide the scene; and o'er the blasting sight
Fling the dark veil of ages and of night.
Go, seek Pompeii now: - with pensive tread
Roam through the silent city of the dead.
Explore each spot, where still, in ruin grand,
Her shapeless piles and tottering columns stand,
Where the pale ivy's clasping wreaths o'ershade
The ruined temple's moss-clad colonnade,
Or violets on the hearth's cold marble wave,

And muse in silence on a people's grave.
Fear not. - No sign of death thine eyes shall scare,
No, all is beauty, verdure, fragrance there.
A gentle slope includes the fatal ground
With odorous shrubs and tufted myrtles crowned;
Beneath, o'ergrown with grass, or wreathed with flowers,
Lie tombs and temples, columns, baths, and towers.
As if, in mockery, Nature seems to dress
In all her charms the beautiful wilderness,
And bids her gayest flowerets twine and bloom
In sweet profusion o'er a city's tomb.
With roses here she decks the untrodden path,
With lilies fringes there the stately bath;
The acanthus' spreading foliage here she weaves
Round the gay capital which mocks its leaves;
There hangs the sides of every mouldering room
Wallflowers and weeds, whose glowing hues supply
With simple grace the purple's Tyrian dye.
The ruined city sleeps in fragrant shade,
Like the pale corpse of some Athenian maid,
Whose marble arms, cold brows, and snowy neck
The fairest flowers of fairest climates deck,
Meet types of her whose form their wreaths array,
Of radiant beauty, and of swift decay.
Advance, and wander on through crumbling halls,
Through prostrate gates and ivied pedestals,
Arches, whose echoes now no chariots rouse,
Tombs, on whose summits goats undaunted browse.
See where yon ruined wall on earth reclines,
Through weeds and moss the half-seen painting shines,
Still vivid midst the dewy cowslips glows,
Or blends its colours with the blushing rose.
Thou lovely, ghastly scene of fair decay,
In beauty awful, and midst horrors gay,
Renown more wide, more bright shall gild thy name,
Than thy wild charms or fearful doom could claim.
Immortal spirits, in whose deathless song
Latium and Athens yet their reign prolong,
And from their thrones of fame and empire hurled,
Still sway the sceptre of the mental world,
You in whose breasts the flames of Pindus beamed,
Whose copious lips with rich persuasion streamed,

Whose minds unravelled nature's mystic plan,
Or traced the mazy labyrinth of man:
Bend, glorious spirits, from your blissful bowers,
And brodered couches of unfading flowers,
While round your locks the Elysian garlands blow,
While sweeter odours, and with brighter glow.
Once more, immortal shades, atoning Fame
Repairs the honours of each glorious name.
Behold Pompeii's opening vaults restore
The long-lost treasures of your ancient lore,
The vestal radiance of poetic fire,
The stately buskin and the tuneful lyre,
The wand of eloquence, whose magic sway
The sceptres and the swords of earth obey,
And every mighty spell, whose strong control
Could nerve or melt, could fire or soothe the soul.
And thou, sad city, raise thy drooping head,
And share the honours of the glorious dead.
Had Fate reprieved thee till the frozen North
Poured in wild swarms its hoarded millions forth,
Till blazing cities marked where Albion trod,
Or Europe quaked beneath
the scourge of
God,
No lasting wreath had graced thy funeral pall,
No fame redeemed the horrors of thy fall.
Now shall thy deathless memory live entwined
With all that conquers, rules, or charms the mind,
Each lofty thought of Poet or of Sage,
Each grace of Virgil's lyre or Tully's page.
Like theirs whose Genius consecrates thy tomb,
Thy fame shall snatch from time a greener bloom,
Shall spread where'er the Muse has rear'd her throne,
And live renowned in accents yet unknown;
Earth's utmost bounds shall join the glad acclaim,
And distant Camus bless Pompeii's name.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Sermon In A Churchyard

Let pious Damon take his seat,
With mincing step and languid smile,
And scatter from his 'kerchief sweet,
Sabaean odours o'er the aisle;
And spread his little jewelled hand,
And smile round all the parish beauties,
And pat his curls, and smooth his band,
Meet prelude to his saintly duties.

Let the thronged audience press and stare,
Let stifled maidens ply the fan,
Admire his doctrines, and his hair,
And whisper, "What a good young man!"
While he explains what seems most clear,
So clearly that it seems perplexed,
I'll stay and read my sermon here;
And skulls, and bones, shall be the text.

Art thou the jilted dupe of fame?
Dost thou with jealous anger pine
Whene'er she sounds some other name,
With fonder emphasis than thine?
To thee I preach; draw near; attend!
Look on these bones, thou fool, and see
Where all her scorns and favours end,
What Byron is, and thou must be.

Dost thou revere, or praise, or trust
Some clod like those that here we spurn;
Some thing that sprang like thee from dust,
And shall like thee to dust return?
Dost thou rate statesmen, heroes, wits,
At one sear leaf, or wandering feather?
Behold the black, damp narrow pits,
Where they and thou must lie together.

Dost thou beneath the smile or frown
Of some vain woman bend thy knee?
Here take thy stand, and trample down

Things that were once as fair as she.
Here rave of her ten thousand graces,
Bosom, and lip, and eye, and chin,
While, as in scorn, the fleshless faces
Of Hamiltons and Waldegraves grin.

Whate'er thy losses or thy gains,
Whate'er thy projects or thy fears,
Whate'er the joys, whate'er the pains,
That prompt thy baby smiles and tears;
Come to my school, and thou shalt learn,
In one short hour of placid thought,
A stoicism, more deep, more stern,
Than ever Zeno's porch hath taught.

The plots and feats of those that press
To seize on titles, wealth, or power,
Shall seem to thee a game of chess,
Devised to pass a tedious hour.
What matters it to him who fights
For shows of unsubstantial good,
Whether his Kings, and Queens, and Knights,
Be things of flesh, or things of wood?

We check, and take; exult, and fret;
Our plans extend, our passions rise,
Till in our ardour we forget
How worthless is the victor's prize.
Soon fades the spell, soon comes the night:
Say will it not be then the same,
Whether we played the black or white,
Whether we lost or won the game?

Dost thou among these hillocks stray,
O'er some dear idol's tomb to moan?
Know that thy foot is on the clay
Of hearts once wretched as thy own.
How many a father's anxious schemes,
How many rapturous thoughts of lovers,
How many a mother's cherished dreams,
The swelling turf before thee covers!

Here for the living, and the dead,
The weepers and the friends they weep,
Hath been ordained the same cold bed,
The same dark night, the same long sleep;
Why shouldst thou writhe, and sob, and rave
O'er those with whom thou soon must be?
Death his own sting shall cure--the grave
Shall vanquish its own victory.

Here learn that all the griefs and joys,
Which now torment, which now beguile,
Are children's hurts, and children's toys,
Scarce worthy of one bitter smile.
Here learn that pulpit, throne, and press,
Sword, sceptre, lyre, alike are frail,
That science is a blind man's guess,
And History a nurse's tale.

Here learn that glory and disgrace,
Wisdom and folly, pass away,
That mirth hath its appointed space,
That sorrow is but for a day;
That all we love, and all we hate,
That all we hope, and all we fear,
Each mood of mind, each turn of fate,
Must end in dust and silence here.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Song

O STAY, Madonna! stay;
'Tis not the dawn of day
That marks the skies with yonder opal streak:
The stars in silence shine;
Then press thy lips to mine,
And rest upon my neck thy fervid cheek.

O sleep, Madonna! sleep;
Leave me to watch and weep
O'er the sad memory of departed joys,
O'er hope's extinguished beam,
O'er fancy's vanished dream;
O'er all that nature gives and man destroys.

O wake, Madonna! wake;
Even now the purple lake
Is dappled o'er with amber flakes of light;
A glow is on the hill;
And every trickling rill
In golden threads leaps down from yonder height.

O fly, Madonna! fly,
Lest day and envy spy
What only love and night may safely know:
Fly, and tread softly, dear!
Lest those who hate us hear
The sounds of thy light footsteps as they go.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

The Armada

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise;
I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.
It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Plymouth Bay;
Her crew had seen Castile's black fleet beyond Aurigny's isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace,
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post,
With his white hair, unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes;
Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound the drums;
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space;
For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells,
Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Caesar's eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely hunters lay.
Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, sir Knight: ho! scatter flowers, fair maids:
Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: ho! gallants, draw your blades:
Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes, waft her wide;
Our glorious semper eadem, the banner of our pride.
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold:
Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again shall be.
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone: it shone on Beachy Head.
Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,

Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering waves:
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves:
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery herald flew
And roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out from Bristol town, 45
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton down;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill that streak of blood-red light.
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the death-like silence broke,
And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice of fear;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder cheer:
And from the farthest wards was heard the rush of hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down each roaring street;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring in;
And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright couriers forth;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started for the north;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded still:
All night from tower to tower they sprang; they sprang from hill to hill:
Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's rocky dales
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of Trent;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

The Battle Of Ivry

Now glory to the Lord of hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our sovereign liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, O pleasant land of France!
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou went constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy;
For cold and stiff and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah! hurrah! a single field hath turn'd the chance of war!
Hurrah! hurrah! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre.

Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand;
And, as we look'd on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The king is come to marshal us, in all his armor drest;
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He look'd upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He look'd upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smil'd on us, as roll'd from wing to wing.
Down all our line, a deafening shout: God save our lord the king!
?And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never I saw promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre.?

Hurrah! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled din,
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring culverin.
The fiery duke is pricking fast across Saint Andr#38067; plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.
Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,
Charge for the golden lilies?upon them with the lance!

A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest;
And in they burst, and on they rush'd, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blaz'd the helmet of Navarre.

Now, God be prais'd, the day is ours: Mayenne hath turn'd his rein;
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter; the Flemish count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay gale;
The field is heap'd with bleeding steeds, and flags, and cloven mail.
And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along our van,
Remember Saint Bartholomew! was pass'd from man to man.
But out spake gentle Henry? No French-man is my foe:
Down, down with every foreigner, but let your brethren go:
Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our sovereign lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought for France to-day;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in fight;
And the good lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cornet white?
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath ta'en,
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of false Lorraine.
Up with it high; unfurl it wide; that all the host may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which wrought His Church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a footcloth meet for Henry of Navarre.

Ho! maidens of Vienna; ho! matrons of Lucerne?
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return.
Ho! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls.
Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright;
Ho! burghers of St. Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night;
For our God hath crush'd the tyrant, our God hath rais'd the slave,
And mock'd the counsel of the wise, and the valor of the brave.
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all glories are;
And glory to our sovereign lord, King Henry of Navarre!

Thomas Babington Macaulay

The Battle Of Moncontour

Oh, weep for Moncontour! Oh! weep for the hour,
When the children of darkness and evil had power,
When the horsemen of Valois triumphantly trod
On the bosoms that bled for their rights and their God.

Oh, weep for Moncontour! Oh! weep for the slain,
Who for faith and for freedom lay slaughtered in vain;
Oh, weep for the living, who linger to bear
The renegade's shame, or the exile's despair.

One look, one last look, to our cots and our towers,
To the rows of our vines, and the beds of our flowers,
To the church where the bones of our fathers decayed,
Where we fondly had deemed that our own would be laid.

Alas! we must leave thee, dear desolate home,
To the spearmen of Uri, the shavelings of Rome,
To the serpent of Florence, the vulture of Spain,
To the pride of Anjou, and the guile of Lorraine.

Farewell to thy fountains, farewell to thy shades,
To the song of thy youths, and the dance of thy maids,
To the breath of thy gardens, the hum of thy bees,
And the long waving line of the blue Pyrenees.

Farewell, and for ever. The priest and the slave
May rule in the halls of the free and the brave.
Our hearths we abandon; our lands we resign;
But, Father, we kneel to no altar but thine.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

The Battle Of Naseby

Oh! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh, evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swell'd into a shout,
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!
For Charles King of England and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes, close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippon has a wound; the centre hath given ground:
Hark! hark!--What means the trampling of horsemen on our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'Tis he, thank God, 'tis he, boys,
Bear up another minute: brave Oliver is here.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar;
And he--he turns, he flies:--shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war.

Ho! comrades scour the plain; and, ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure,
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and locketts,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the rocks,
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades,
Your perfum'd satin clothes, your catches and your oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the crown,
With the Belial of the Court and the Mammon of the Pope;
There is woe in Oxford halls: there is wail in Durham's Stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom: the Bishop rends his cope.

And She of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the Kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

The Battle Of The Lake Regillus

A Lay Sung at the Feast of Castor and Pollux on the Ides of Quintilis in the year of the City CCCCLI.

I.

Ho, trumpets, sound a war-note!
Ho, lictors, clear the way!
The Knights will ride, in all their pride,
Along the streets to-day.
To-day the doors and windows
Are hung with garlands all,
From Castor in the Forum,
To Mars without the wall.
Each Knight is robed in purple,
With olive each is crowned;
A gallant war-horse under each
Paws haughtily the ground.
While flows the Yellow River,
While stands the Sacred Hill,
The proud Ides of Quintilis
Shall have such honor still.
Gay are the Martian Kalends,
December's Nones are gay,
But the proud Ides, when the squadron rides,
Shall be Rome's whitest day.

II.

Unto the Great Twin Brethren
We keep this solemn feast.
Swift, swift, the Great Twin Brethren
Came spurring from the east.
They came o'er wild Parthenius
Tossing in waves of pine,
O'er Cirrha's dome, o'er Adria's foam,
O'er purple Apennine,
From where with flutes and dances
Their ancient mansion rings,
In lordly Lacedaemon,
The City of two kings,

To where, by Lake Regillus,
Under the Porcian height,
All in the lands of Tusculum,
Was fought the glorious fight.

III.

Now on the place of slaughter
Are cots and sheepfolds seen,
And rows of vines, and fields of wheat,
And apple-orchards green;
The swine crush the big acorns
That fall from Corne's oaks.
Upon the turf by the Fair Fount
The reaper's pottage smokes.
The fisher baits his angle;
The hunter twangs his bow;
Little they think on those strong limbs
That moulder deep below.
Little they think how sternly
That day the trumpets pealed;
How in the slippery swamp of blood
Warrior and war-horse reeled;
How wolves came with fierce gallops,
And crows on eager wings,
To tear the flesh of captains,
And peck the eyes of kings;
How thick the dead lay scattered
Under the Porcian height;
How through the gates of Tusculum
Raved the wild stream of flight;
And how the Lake Regillus
Bubbled with crimson foam,
What time the Thirty Cities
Came forth to war with Rome.

IV.

But Roman, when thou standest
Upon that holy ground,
Look thou with heed on the dark rock
That girds the dark lake round.
So shalt thou see a hoof-mark
Stamped deep into the flint:

It was not hoof of mortal steed
That made so strange a dint:
There to the Great Twin Brethren
Vow thou thy vows, and pray
That they, in tempest and in flight,
Will keep thy head away.

V.

Since last the Great Twin Brethren
Of mortal eyes were seen,
Have years gone by an hundred
And fourscore and thirteen.
That summer a Virginius
Was Consul first in place;
The second was stout Aulus,
Of the Posthumian race.
The Herald of the Latines
From Gabii came in state:
The Herald of the Latines
Passed through Rome's Eastern Gate:
The Herald of the Latines
Did in our Forum stand;
And there he did his office,
A sceptre in his hand.

VI.

'Hear, Senators and people
Of the good town of Rome,
The Thirty Cities charge you
To bring the Tarquins home:
And if ye still be stubborn
To work the Tarquins wrong,
The Thirty Cities warn you,
Look your walls be strong.'

VII.

Then spake the Consul Aulus,
He spake a bitter jest:
'Once the jays sent a message
Unto the eagle's nest:-
Now yield thou up thine eyrie
Unto the carrion-kite,

Or come forth valiantly, and face
The jays in deadly fight.-
Forth looked in wrath the eagle;
And carrion-kite and jay,
Soon as they saw his beak and claw,
Fled screaming far away.'

VIII.

The Herald of the Latines
Hath hied him back in state:
The Fathers of the City
Are met in high debate.
Then spake the elder Consul,
And ancient man and wise:
'Now harken, Conscript Fathers,
To that which I advise.
In seasons of great peril
'Tis good that one bear sway;
Then choose we a Dictator,
Whom all men shall obey.
Camerium knows how deeply
The sword of Aulus bites,
And all our city calls him
The man of seventy fights.
Then let him be Dictator
For six months and no more,
And have a Master of the Knights,
And axes twenty-four.'

IX.

So Aulus was Dictator,
The man of seventy fights;
He made Aebutius Elva
His Master of the Knights.
On the third morn thereafter,
At downing of the day,
Did Aulus and Aebutius
Set forth with their array.
Sempronius Atratinus
Was left in charge at home
With boys, and with gray-headed men,
To keep the walls of Rome.

Hard by the Lake Regillus
Our camp was pitched at night:
Eastward a mile the Latines lay,
Under the Porcian height.
Far over hill and valley
Their mighty host was spread;
And with their thousand watch-fires
The midnight sky was red.

X.

Up rose the golden morning
Over the Porcian height,
The proud Ides of Quintilis
Marked evermore in white.
Not without secret trouble
Our bravest saw the foe;
For girt by threescore thousand spears,
The thirty standards rose.
From every warlike city
That boasts the Latian name,
Fordoomed to dogs and vultures,
That gallant army came;
From Setia's purple vineyards,
From Norba's ancient wall,
From the white streets of Tusculum,
The proudest town of all;
From where the Witch's Fortress
O'er hangs the dark-blue seas;
From the still glassy lake that sleeps
Beneath Aricia's trees-
Those trees in whose dim shadow
The ghastly priest doth reign,
The priest who slew the slayer,
And shall himself be slain;
From the drear banks of Ufens,
Where flights of marsh-fowl play,
And buffaloes lie wallowing
Through the hot summer's day;
From the gigantic watch-towers,
No work of earthly men,
Whence Cora's sentinels o'erlook
The never-ending fen;

From the Laurentian jungle,
The wild hog's reedy home;
From the green steeps whence Anio leaps
In floods of snow-white foam.

XI.

Aricia, Cora, Norba,
Velitr欠with the might
Of Setia and of Tusculum,
Were marshalled on the right:
The leader was Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name;
Upon his head a helmet
Of red gold shone like flame:
High on a gallant charger
Of dark-gray hue he rode;
Over his gilded armor
A vest of purple flowed,
Woven in the land of sunrise
By Syria's dark-browed daughters,
And by the sails of Carthage brought
Far o'er the southern waters.

XII.

Lavinium and Laurentum
Had on the left their post,
With all the banners of the marsh,
And banners of the coast.
Their leader was false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame:
With restless pace and haggard face
To his last field he came.
Men said he saw strange visions
Which none beside might see;
And that strange sounds were in his ears
Which none might hear but he.
A woman fair and stately,
But pale as are the dead,
Oft through the watches of the night
Sat spinning by his bed.
And as she plied the distaff,
In a sweet voice and low,

She sang of great old houses,
And fights fought long ago.
So spun she, and so sang she,
Until the east was gray.
Then pointed to her bleeding breast,
And shrieked, and fled away.

XIII.

But in the centre thickest
Were ranged the shields of foes,
And from the centre loudest
The cry of battle rose.
There Tibur marched and Pedum
Beneath proud Tarquin's rule,
And Ferentinum of the rock,
And Gabii of the pool.
There rode the Volscian succors:
There, in the dark stern ring,
The Roman exiles gathered close
Around the ancient king.
Though white as Mount Soracte,
When winter nights are long,
His beard flowed down o'er mail and belt,
His heart and hand were strong:
Under his hoary eyebrows
Still flashed forth quenchless rage:
And, if the lance shook in his gripe,
'Twas more with hate than age.
Close at his side was Titus
On an Apulian steed,
Titus, the youngest Tarquin,
Too good for such a breed.

XIV.

Now on each side the leaders
Gave signal for the charge;
And on each side the footmen
Strode on with lance and targe;
And on each side the horsemen
Struck their spurs deep in gore,
And front to front the armies
Met with a mighty roar:

And under that great battle
The earth with blood was red;
And, like the Pomptine fog at morn,
The dust hung overhead;
And louder still and louder
Rose from the darkened field
The braying of the war-horns,
The clang of sword and shield,
The rush of squadrons sweeping
Like whirlwinds o'er the plain,
The shouting of the slayers,
And screeching of the slain.

XV.

False Sextus rode out foremost,
His look was high and bold;
His corslet was of bison's hide,
Plated with steel and gold.
As glares the famished eagle
From the Digentian rock
On a choice lamb that bounds alone
Before Bandusia's flock,
Herminius glared on Sextus,
And came with eagle speed,
Herminius on black Auster,
Brave champion on brave steed;
In his right hand the broadsword
That kept the bridge so well,
And on his helm the crown he won
When proud Fidenae fell.
Woe to the maid whose lover
Shall cross his path to-day!
False Sextus saw, and trembled,
And turned, and fled away.
As turns, as flies, the woodman
In the Calabrian brake,
When through the reeds gleams the round eye
Of that fell speckled snake;
So turned, so fled, false Sextus,
And hid him in the rear,
Behind the dark Lavinian ranks,
Bristling with crest and spear.

XVI.

But far to the north Aebutius,
The Master of the Knights,
Gave Tubero of Norba
To feed the Porcian kites.
Next under those red horse-hoofs
Flaccus of Setia lay;
Better had he been pruning
Among his elms that day.
Mamilus saw the slaughter,
And tossed his golden crest,
And towards the Master of the Knights
Through the thick battle pressed.
Aebutius smote Mamilius
So fiercely on the shield
That the great lord of Tusculum
Well-nigh rolled on the field.
Mamilius smote Aebutius,
With a good aim and true,
Just where the neck and shoulder join,
And pierced him through and through;
And brave Aebutius Elva
Fell swooning to the ground:
But a thick wall of bucklers
Encompassed him around.
His clients from the battle
Bare him some little space,
And filled a helm from the dark lake,
And bathed his brow and face;
And when at last he opened
His swimming eyes to light,
Men say, the earliest words he spake
Was, 'Friends, how goes the fight?'

XVII.

But meanwhile in the centre
Great deeds of arms were wrought;
There Aulus the Dictator
And there Valerius fought.
Aulus with his good broadsword
A bloody passage cleared

To where, amidst the thickest foes,
He saw the long white beard.
Flat lighted that good broadsword
Upon proud Tarquin's head.
He dropped the lance: he dropped the reins:
He fell as fall the dead.
Down Aulus springs to slay him,
With eyes like coals of fire;
But faster Titus hath sprung down,
And hath bestrode his sire.
Latian captains, Roman knights,
Fast down to earth they spring,
And hand to hand they fight on foot
Around the ancient king.
First Titus gave tall Caeso
A death wound in the face;
Tall Caeso was the bravest man
Of the brave Fabian race:
Aulus slew Rex of Gabii,
The priest of Juno's shrine;
Valerius smote down Julius,
Of Rome's great Julian line;
Julius, who left his mansion,
High on the Velian hill,
And through all turns of weal and woe
Followed proud Tarquin still.
Now right across proud Tarquin
A corpse was Julius laid;
And Titus groaned with rage and grief,
And at Valerius made.
Valerius struck at Titus,
And lopped off half his crest;
But Titus stabbed Valerius
A span deep in the breast.
Like a mast snapped by the tempest,
Valerius reeled and fell.
Ah! woe is me for the good house
That loves the people well!
Then shouted loud the Latines;
And with one rush they bore
The struggling Romans backward
Three lances' length and more:

And up they took proud Tarquin,
And laid him on a shield,
And four strong yeomen bare him,
Still senseless, from the field.

XVIII.

But fiercer grew the fighting
Around Valerius dead;
For Titus dragged him by the foot
And Aulus by the head.
'On, Latines, on!' quoth Titus,
'See how the rebels fly!'
'Romans, stand firm!' quoth Aulus,
'And win this fight or die!
They must not give Valerius
To raven and to kite;
For aye Valerius loathed the wrong,
And aye upheld the right:
And for your wives and babies
In the front rank he fell.
Now play the men for the good house
That loves the people well!.'

XIX.

Then tenfold round the body
The roar of battle rose,
Like the roar of a burning forest,
When a strong north wind blows,
Now backward, and now forward,
Rocked furiously the fray,
Till none could see Valerius,
And none wist where he lay.
For shivered arms and ensigns
Were heaped there in a mound,
And corpses stiff, and dying men
That writhed and gnawed the ground;
And wounded horses kicking,
And snorting purple foam:
Right well did such a couch befit
A Consular of Rome.

XX.

But north looked the Dictator;
North looked he long and hard,
And spake to Caius Cossus,
The Captain of his Guard;
'Caius, of all the Romans
Thou hast the keenest sight,
Say, what through yonder storm of dust
Comes from the Latian right;'

XXI.

Then answered Caius Cossus:
'I see an evil sight;
The banner of proud Tusculum
Comes from the Latian right;
I see the plum餠horsemen;
And far before the rest
I see the dark-gray charger,
I see the purple vest;
I see the golden helmet
That shines far off like flame;
So ever rides Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.'

XXII.

'Now hearken, Caius Cossus:
Spring on thy horse's back;
Ride as the wolves of Apennine
Were all upon thy track;
Haste to our southward battle:
And never draw thy rein
Until thou find Herminius,
And bid hime come amain.'

XXIII.

So Aulus spake, and turned him
Again to that fierce strife;
And Caius Cossus mounted,
And rode for death and life.
Loud clanged beneath his horse-hoofs
The helmets of the dead,
And many a curdling pool of blood
Splashed him heel to head.

So came he far to southward,
Where fought the Roman host,
Against the banners of the marsh
And banners of the coast.
Like corn before the sickle
The stout Laninians fell,
Beneath the edge of the true sword
That kept the bridge so well.

XXIV.

'Herminius! Aulus greets thee;
He bids thee come with speed,
To help our central bettle,
For sore is there our need;
There wars the youngest Tarquin,
And there the Crest of Flame,
The Tusculan Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name.
Valerius hath fallen fighting
In front of our array;
And Aulus of the seventy fields
Alone upholds the day.'

XXV.

Herminius beat his bosom:
But never a word he spake.
He clapped his hand on Auster's mane,
He gave the reins a shake.
Away, away, went Auster,
Like an arrow from the bow:
Black Auster was the fleetest steed
From Aufidus to Po.

XXVI.

Right glad were all the Romans
Who, in that hour of dread,
Against great odds bare up the war
Around Valerius dead,
When from the south the cheering
Rose with a mighty swell;
'Herminius comes, Herminius,
Who kept the bridge so well!'

XXVII.

Mamilius spied Herminius,
And dashed across the way.
'Herminius! I have sought thee
Through many a bloody day.
One of us two, Herminius,
Shall never more go home.
I will lay on for Tusculum,
And lay thou on for Rome!

XXVIII.

All round them paused the battle,
While met in mortal fray
The Roman and the Tusculan,
The horses black and gray.
Herminius smote Mamilius
Through breast-plate and through breast,
And fast flowed out the purple blood
Over the purple vest.
Mamilius smote Herminius
Through head-piece and through head,
And side by side those chiefs of pride,
Together fell down dead.
Down fell they dead together
In a great lake of gore;
And still stood all who saw them fall
While men might count a score.

XXIX.

Fast, fast, with heels wild spurning,
The dark-gray charger fled:
He burst through ranks of fighting men,
He sprang o'er heaps of dead.
His bridle far out-streeming,
His flanks all blood and foam,
He sought the southern mountains,
The mountains of his home.
The pass was steep and rugged,
The wolves they howled and whined;
But he ran like a whirlwind up the pass,
And he left the wolves behind.

Through many a startled hamlet
Thundered his flying feet;
He rushed through the gate of Tusculum,
He rushed up the long white street;
He rushed by tower and temple,
And paused not from his race
Till he stood before his master's door
In the stately market-place.
And straightway round him gathered
A pale and trembling crowd,
And when they knew him, cries of rage
Broke forth, and wailing loud:
And women rent their tresses
For their great prince's fall;
And old men girt on their old swords,
And went to man the wall.

XXX.

But, like a graven image,
Black Auster kept his place,
And ever wistfully he looked
Into his master's face.
The raven-mane that daily,
With pats and fond caresses,
The young Herminia washed and combed,
And twined in even tresses,
And decked with colored ribbons
From her own gay attire,
Hung sadly o'er her father's corpse
In carnage and in mire.
Forth with a shout sprang Titus,
And seized black Auster's rein.
Then Aulus swore a fearful oath,
And ran at him amain.
'The furies of thy brother
With me and mine abide,
If one of your accursed house
Upon black Auster ride!'
As on a Alpine watch-tower
From heaven comes down the flame,
Full on the neck of Titus
The blade of Aulus came:

And out the red blood spouted,
In a wide arch and tall,
As spouts a fountain in the court
Of some rich Capuan's hall.
The knees of all the Latines
Were loosened with dismay,
When dead, on dead Herminius,
The bravest Tarquin lay.

XXXI.

And Aulus the Dictator
Stroked Auster's raven mane,
With heed he looked unto the girths,
With heed unto the rein.
'Now bear me well, black Auster,
Into yon thick array;
And thou and I will have revenge
For thy good lord this day.'

XXXII.

So spake he; and was buckling
Tighter black Auster's band,
When he was aware of a princely pair
That rode at his right hand.
So like they were, no mortal
Might one from other know:
White as snow their armor was:
Their steeds were white as snow.
Never on earthly anvil
Did such rare armor gleam;
And never did such gallant steeds
Drink of an earthly stream.

XXXIII.

And all who saw them trembled,
And pale grew every cheek;
And Aulus the Dictator
Scarce gathered voice to speak.
'Say by what name men call you?
What city is your home?
And wherefore ride ye in such guise
Before the ranks of Rome?'

XXXIV.

'By many names men call us;
In many lands we dwell:
Well Samothracia knows us;
Cyrene knows us well.
Our house in gay Tarentum
Is hung each morn with flowers:
High o'er the masts of Syracuse
Our marble portal towers;
But by the proud Eurotas
Is our dear native home;
And for the right we come to fight
Before the ranks of Rome.'

XXXV.

So answered those strange horsemen,
And each couched low his spear;
And forthwith all the ranks of Rome
Were bold, and of good cheer:
And on the thirty armies
Came wonder and affright,
And Ardea wavered on the left,
And Cora on the right.
'Rome to the charge!' cried Aulus;
'The foe begins to yield!
Charge for the hearth of Vesta!
Charge for the Golden Shield!
Let no man stop to plunder,
But slay, and slay, and slay;
The gods who live forever
Are on our side to-day.'

XXXVI.

Then the fierce trumpet-flourish
From earth to heaven arose,
The kites know well the long stern swell
That bids the Romans close.
Then the good sword of Aulus
Was lifted up to slay;
Then, like a crag down Apennine,
Rushed Auster through the fray.

But under those strange horsemen
Still thicker lay the slain;
And after those strange horses
Black Auster toiled in vain.
Behind them Rome's long battle
Came rolling on the foe,
Ensigns dancing wild above,
Blades all in line below.
So comes the Po in flood-time
Upon the Celtic plain;
So comes the squall, blacker than night,
Upon the Adrian main.
Now, by our Sire Quirinus,
It was a goodly sight
To see the thirty standards
Swept down the tide of flight.
So flies the spray of Adria
When the black squall doth blow
So corn-sheaves in the flood-time
Spin down the whirling Po.
False Sextus to the mountains
Turned first his horse's head;
And fast fled Ferentinum,
And fast Lanuvium fled.
The horsemen of Nomentus
Spurred hard out of the fray;
The footmen of Velitrae
Threw shield and spear away.
And underfoot was trampled,
Amidst the mud and gore,
The banner of proud Tusculum,
That never stooped before:
And down went Flavius Faustus,
Who led his stately ranks
From where the apple blossoms wave
On Anio's echoing banks,
And Tullus of Arpinum,
Chief of the Volscian aids,
And Metius with the long fair curls,
The love of Anxur's maids,
And the white head of Vulso,
The great Arician seer,

And Nepos of Laurentum
The hunter of the deer;
And in the back false Sextus
Felt the good Roman steel,
And wriggling in the dust he died,
Like a worm beneath the wheel:
And fliers and pursuers
Were mingled in a mass;
And far away the battle
Went roaring through the pass.

XXXVII.

Sempronius Atratinus
Sat in the Eastern Gate,
Beside him were three Fathers,
Each in his chair of state;
Fabius, whose nine stout grandsons
That day were in the field,
And Manlius, eldest of the Twelve
Who keep the Golden Shield;
And Sergius, the High Pontiff,
For wisdom far renowned;
In all Etruria's colleges
Was no such Pontiff found.
And all around the portal,
And high above the wall,
Stood a great throng of people,
But sad and silent all;
Young lads and stooping elders
That might not bear the mail,
Matrons with lips that quivered,
And maids with faces pale.
Since the first gleam of daylight,
Sempronius had not ceased
To listen for the rushing
Of horse-hoofs from the east.
The mist of eve was rising,
The sun was hastening down,
When he was aware of a princely pair
Fast pricking towards the town.
So like they were, man never
Saw twins so like before;

Red with gore their armor was,
Their steeds were red with gore.

XXXVIII.

'Hail to the great Asylum!
Hail to the hill-tops seven!
Hail to the fire that burns for aye,
And the shield that fell from heaven!
This day, by Lake Regillus,
Under the Porcian height,
All in the lands of Tusculum
Was fought a glorious fight.
Tomorrow your Dictator
Shall bring in triumph home
The spoils of thirty cities
To deck the shrines of Rome!'

XXXIX.

Then burst from that great concourse
A shout that shook the towers,
And some ran north, and some ran south,
Crying, 'The day is ours!'
But on rode these strange horsemen,
With slow and lordly pace;
And none who saw their bearing
Durst ask their name or race.
On rode they to the Forum,
While laurel-boughs and flowers,
From house-tops and from windows,
Fell on their crests in showers.
When they drew nigh to Vesta,
They vaulted down amain,
And washed their horses in the well
That springs by Vesta's fane.
And straight again they mounted,
And rode to Vesta's door;
Then, like a blast, away they passed,
And no man saw them more.

XL.

And all the people trembled,
And pale grew every cheek;

And Sergius the High Pontiff
Alone found voice to speak:
'The gods who live forever
Have fought for Rome to-day!
These be the Great Twin Brethren
To whom the Dorians pray.
Back comes the chief in triumph,
Who, in the hour of fight,
Hath seen the Great Twin Brethren
In harness on his right.
Safe comes the ship to haven,
Through billows and through gales,
If once the Great Twin Brethren
Sit shining on the sails.
Wherefore they washed their horses
In Vesta's holy well,
Wherefore they rode to Vesta's door,
I know, but may not tell.
Here, hard by Vesta's temple,
Build we a stately dome
Unto the Great Twin Brethren
Who fought so well for Rome.
And when the months returning
Bring back this day of fight,
The proud Ides of Quintilis,
Marked evermore with white,
Unto the Great Twin Brethren
Let all the people throng,
With chaplets and with offerings,
With music and with song;
And let the doors and windows
Be hung with garlands all,
And let the knights be summoned
To Mars without the wall:
Thence let them ride in purple
With joyous trumpet-sound,
Each mounted on his war-horse,
And each with olive crowned;
And pass in solemn order
Before the sacred dome,
Where dwell the Great Twin Brethren
Who fought so well for Rome.'

Thomas Babington Macaulay

The Cavalier's March To London

To horse! to horse! brave Cavaliers!
To horse for Church and Crown!
Strike, strike your tents! snatch up your spears!
And ho for London town!
The imperial harlot, doom'd a prey
To our avenging fires,
Sends up the voice of her dismay
From all her hundred spires.

The Strand resounds with maidens' shrieks,
The 'Change with merchants' sighs,
And blushes stand on brazen cheeks,
And tears in iron eyes;
And, pale with fasting and with fright,
Each Puritan Committee
Hath summon'd forth to prayer and fight
The Roundheads of the City.

And soon shall London's sentries hear
The thunder of our drum,
And London's dames, in wilder fear,
Shall cry, Alack! They come!
Fling the fascines;--tear up the spikes;
And forward one and all.
Down, down with all their train-band pikes,
Down with their mud-built wall.

Quarter?--Foul fall your whining noise,
Ye recreant spawn of fraud!
No quarter! Think on Strafford, boys.
No quarter! Think on Laud.
What ho! The craven slaves retire.
On! Trample them to mud,
No quarter!--Charge--No quarter!--Fire.
No quarter!--Blood!--Blood!--Blood!--

Where next? In sooth there lacks no witch,
Brave lads, to tell us where,
Sure London's sons be passing rich,

Her daughters wondrous fair:
And let that dastard be the theme
Of many a board's derision,
Who quails for sermon, cuff, or scream
Of any sweet Precisian.

Their lean divines, of solemn brow,
Sworn foes to throne and steeple,
From an unwonted pulpit now
Shall edify the people:
Till the tir'd hangman, in despair,
Shall curse his blunted shears,
And vainly pinch, and scrape, and tear,
Around their leathern ears.

We'll hang, above his own Guildhall,
The city's grave Recorder,
And on the den of thieves we'll fall,
Though Pym should speak to order.
In vain the lank-haired gang shall try
To cheat our martial law;
In vain shall Lenthall trembling cry
That strangers must withdraw.

Of bench and woolsack, tub and chair,
We'll build a glorious pyre,
And tons of rebel parchment there
Shall crackle in the fire.
With them shall perish, cheek by jowl,
Petition, psalm and libel,
The Colonel's canting muster-roll,
The Chaplain's dog-ear'd Bible.

We'll tread a measure round the blaze
Where England's past expires,
And lead along the dance's maze
The beauties of the friars:
Then smiles in every face shall shine,
And joy in every soul.
Bring forth, bring forth the oldest wine,
And crown the largest bowl.

And as with nod and laugh ye sip
The goblet's rich carnation,
Whose bursting bubbles seem to tip
The wink of invitation;
Drink to those names,--those glorious names,--
Those names no time shall sever,--
Drink, in draught as deep as Thames,
Our Church and King forever!

Thomas Babington Macaulay

The Country Clergyman's Trip To Cambridge -- An Election Ballad

As I sate down to breakfast in state,
At my living of Tithing-cum-Boring,
With Betty beside me to wait,
Came a rap that almost beat the door in.
I laid down my basin of tea,
And Betty ceased spreading the toast,
'As sure as a gun, sir,' said she,
'That must be the knock of the post.'

A letter-and free-bring it here-
I have no correspondent who franks.
No! Yes! Can it be? Why, my dear,
'Tis our glorious, our Protestant Bankes.
'Dear sir, as I know you desire
That the Church should receive due protection,
I humbly presume to require
Your aid at the Cambridge election.

'It has lately been brought to my knowledge,
That the Ministers fully design
To suppress each cathedral and college,
And eject every learned divine.
To assist this detestable scheme
Three nuncios from Rome are come over;
They left Calais on Monday by steam,
And landed to dinner at Dover.

'An army of grim Cordeliers,
Well furnished with relics and vermin,
Will follow, Lord Westmoreland fears,
To effect what their chiefs may determine.
Lollard's bower, good authorities say,
Is again fitting up for a prison;
And a wood-merchant told me to-day
'Tis a wonder how faggots have risen.

'The finance scheme of Canning contains

A new Easter-offering tax;
And he means to devote all the gains
To a bounty on thumb-screws and racks.
Your living, so neat and compact-
Pray, don't let the news give you pain!-
Is promised, I know for a fact,
To an olive-faced Padre from Spain.'

I read, and I felt my heart bleed,
Sore wounded with horror and pity;
So I flew, with all possible speed,
To our Protestant champion's committee.
True gentlemen, kind and well-bred!
No fleeing! no distance! no scorn!
They asked after my wife who is dead,
And my children who never were born.

They then, like high-principled Tories,
Called our Sovereign unjust and unsteady,
And assailed him with scandalous stories,
Till the coach for the voters was ready.
That coach might be well called a casket
Of learning and brotherly love:
There were parsons in boot and in basket;
There were parsons below and above.

There were Sneaker and Griper, a pair
Who stick to Lord Mulesby like leeches;
A smug chaplain of plausible air,
Who writes my Lord Goslingham's speeches.
Dr Buzz, who alone is a host,
Who, with arguments weighty as lead,
Proves six times a week in the Post
That flesh somehow differs from bread.

Dr Nimrod, whose orthodox toes
Are seldom withdrawn from the stirrup;
Dr Humdrum, whose eloquence flows,
Like droppings of sweet poppy syrup;
Dr Rosygill puffing and fanning,
And wiping away perspiration;
Dr Humbug who proved Mr Canning

The beast in St John's Revelation.

A layman can scarce form a notion
Of our wonderful talk on the road;
Of the learning, the wit, and devotion,
Which almost each syllable showed:
Why divided allegiance agrees
So ill with our free constitution;
How Catholics swear as they please,
In hope of the priest's absolution;

How the Bishop of Norwich had bartered
His faith for a legate's commission;
How Lyndhurst, afraid to be martyr'd,
Had stooped to a base coalition;
How Papists are cased from compassion
By bigotry, stronger than steel;
How burning would soon come in fashion,
And how very bad it must feel.

We were all so much touched and excited
By a subject so direly sublime,
That the rules of politeness were slighted,
And we all of us talked at a time;
And in tones, which each moment grew louder,
Told how we should dress for the show,
And where we should fasten the powder,
And if we should bellow or no.

Thus from subject to subject we ran,
And the journey passed pleasantly o'er,
Till at last Dr Humdrum began;
From that time I remember no more.
At Ware he commenced his prelection,
In the dullest of clerical drones;
And when next I regained recollection
We were rambling o'er Trumpington stones.

Thomas Babington Macaulay

The Last Buccaneer

The winds were yelling, the waves were swelling,
The sky was black and drear,
When the crew with eyes of flame brought the ship without a name
Alongside the last Buccaneer.

"Whence flies your sloop full sail before so fierce a gale,
When all others drive bare on the seas?
Say, come ye from the shore of the holy Salvador,
Or the gulf of the rich Caribbees?"

"From a shore no search hath found, from a gulf no line can sound,
Without rudder or needle we steer;
Above, below, our bark, dies the sea-fowl and the shark,
As we fly by the last Buccaneer.

"To-night there shall be heard on the rocks of Cape de Verde,
A loud crash, and a louder roar;
And to-morrow shall the deep, with a heavy moaning, sweep
The corpses and wreck to the shore."

The stately ship of Clyde securely now may ride,
In the breath of the citron shades;
And Severn's towering mast securely now flies fast,
Through the sea of the balmy Trades.

From St Jago's wealthy port, from Havannah's royal fort,
The seaman goes forth without fear;
For since that stormy night not a mortal hath had sight
Of the flag of the last Buccaneer.

Thomas Babbington Macaulay

The Marriage Of Tirzah And Ahirad

IT is the dead of night:
Yet more than noonday light
Beams far and wide from many a gorgeous hall.
Unnumbered harps are tinkling,
Unnumbered lamps are twinkling,
In the great city of the fourfold wall.
By the brazen castle's moat,
The sentry hums a livelier note.
The ship-boy chaunts a shriller lay
From the galleys in the bay.
Shout, and laugh, and hurrying feet
Sound from mart and square and street,
From the breezy laurel shades,
From the granite colonnades,
From the golden statue's base,
From the stately market-place,
Where, upreared by captive hands,
The great Tower of Triumph stands,
All its pillars in a blaze
With the many-coloured rays,
Which lanthorns of ten thousand dyes
Shed on ten thousand panoplies.
But closest is the throng,
And loudest is the song,
In that sweet garden by the river side,
The abyss of myrtle bowers,
The wilderness of flowers,
Where Cain hath built the palace of his pride.
Such palace ne'er shall be again
Among the dwindling race of men.
From all its threescore gates the light
Of gold and steel afar was thrown;
Two hundred cubits rose in height
The outer wall of polished stone.
On the top was ample space
For a gallant chariot race,
Near either parapet a bed
Of the richest mould was spread,
Where amidst flowers of every scent and hue

Rich orange trees, and palms, and giant cedars grew.

In the mansion's public court
All is revel, song, and sport;
For there, till morn shall tint the east,
Menials and guards prolong the feast.
The boards with painted vessels shine;
The marble cisterns foam with wine.
A hundred dancing girls are there
With zoneless waists and streaming hair;
And countless eyes with ardour gaze,
And countless hands the measure beat,
As mix and part in amorous maze
Those floating arms and bounding feet.
But none of all the race of Cain,
Save those whom he hath deigned to grace
With yellow robe and sapphire chain,
May pass beyond that outer space.
For now within the painted hall
The Firstborn keeps high festival.
Before the glittering valves all night
Their post the chosen captains hold.
Above the portal's stately height
The legend flames in lamps of gold:
'In life united and in death
'May Tirzah and Ahirad be,
'The bravest he of all the sons of Seth,
'Of all the house of Cain the loveliest she.'

Through all the climates of the earth
This night is given to festal mirth.
The long continued war is ended.
The long divided lines are blended.
Ahirad's bow shall now no more
Make fat the wolves with kindred gore.
The vultures shall expect in vain
Their banquet from the sword of Cain.
Without a guard the herds and flocks
Along the frontier moors and rocks
From eve to morn may roam:
Nor shriek, nor shout, nor reddened sky,
Shall warn the startled hind to fly

From his beloved home.
Nor to the pier shall burghers crowd
With straining necks and faces pale,
And think that in each flitting cloud
They see a hostile sail.
The peasant without fear shall guide
Down smooth canal or river wide
His painted bark of cane,
Fraught, for some proud bazaar's arcades,
With chestnuts from his native shades,
And wine, and milk, and grain.
Search round the peopled globe to-night,
Explore each continent and isle,
There is no door without a light,
No face without a smile.
The noblest chiefs of either race,
From north and south, from west and east,
Crowd to the painted hall to grace
The pomp of that atoning feast.
With widening eyes and labouring breath
Stand the fair-haired sons of Seth,
As bursts upon their dazzled sight
The endless avenue of light,
The bowers of tulip, rose, and palm,
The thousand cressets fed with balm,
The silken vests, the boards piled high
With amber, gold, and ivory,
The crystal founts whence sparkling flow
The richest wines o'er beds of snow,
The walls where blaze in living dyes
The king's three hundred victories.
The heralds point the fitting seat
To every guest in order meet,
And place the highest in degree
Nearest th' imperial canopy.
Beneath its broad and gorgeous fold,
With naked swords and shields of gold,
Stood the seven princes of the tribes of Nod.
Upon an ermine carpet lay
Two tiger cubs in furious play,
Beneath the emerald throne where sat the signed of God.

Over that ample forehead white
The thousandth year returneth.
Still, on its commanding height,
With a fierce and blood-red light,
The fiery token burneth.
Wheresoe'er that mystic star
Blazeth in the van of war,
Back recoil before its ray
Shield and banner, bow and spear,
Maddened horses break away
From the trembling charioteer.
The fear of that stern king doth lie
On all that live beneath the sky:
All shrink before the mark of his despair,
The seal of that great curse which he alone can bear.
Blazing in pearls and diamonds' sheen.
Tirzah, the young Ahirad's bride,
Of humankind the destined queen,
Sits by her great forefather's side.
The jetty curls, the forehead high,
The swan like neck, the eagle face,
The glowing cheek, the rich dark eye,
Proclaim her of the elder race.
With flowing locks of auburn hue,
And features smooth, and eye of blue,
Timid in love as brave in arms,
The gentle heir of Seth askance
Snatches a bashful, ardent glance
At her majestic charms;
Blest when across that brow high musing flashes
A deeper tint of rose,
Thrice blest when from beneath the silken lashes
Of her proud eye she throws
The smile of blended fondness and disdain
Which marks the daughters of the house of Cain.

All hearts are light around the hall
Save his who is the lord of all.
The painted roofs, the attendant train,
The lights, the banquet, all are vain.
He sees them not. His fancy strays
To other scenes and other days.

A cot by a lone forest's edge,
A fountain murmuring through the trees,
A garden with a wildflower hedge,
Whence sounds the music of the bees,
A little flock of sheep at rest
Upon a mountain's swarthy breast.
On his rude spade he seems to lean
Beside the well remembered stone,
Rejoicing o'er the promised green
Of the first harvest man hath sown.
He sees his mother's tears;
His father's voice he hears,
Kind as when first it praised his youthful skill.
And soon a seraph-child,
In boyish rapture wild,
With a light crook comes bounding from the hill,
Kisses his hands, and strokes his face,
And nestles close in his embrace.
In his adamant eye
None might discern his agony;
But they who had grown hoary next his side,
And read his stern dark face with deepest skill,
Could trace strange meanings in that lip of pride,
Which for one moment quivered and was still.
No time for them to mark or him to feel
Those inward stings; for clarion, flute, and lyre,
And the rich voices of a countless quire,
Burst on the ear in one triumphant peal.
In breathless transport sits the admiring throng,
As sink and swell the notes of Jubal's lofty song.

'Sound the timbrel, strike the lyre,
Wake the trumpet's blast of fire,
Till the gilded arches ring.
Empire, victory, and fame,
Be ascribed unto the name
Of our father and our king.
Of the deeds which he hath done,
Of the spoils which he hath won,
Let his grateful children sing.
When the deadly fight was fought,
When the great revenge was wrought,

When on the slaughtered victims lay
The minion stiff and cold as they,
Doomed to exile, sealed with flame,
From the west the wanderer came.
Six score years and six he strayed
A hunter through the forest shade.
The lion's shaggy jaws he tore,
To earth he smote the foaming boar,
He crushed the dragon's fiery crest,
And scaled the condor's dizzy nest;
Till hardy sons and daughters fair
Increased around his woodland lair.
Then his victorious bow unstrung
On the great bison's horn he hung.
Giraffe and elk he left to hold
The wilderness of boughs in peace,
And trained his youth to pen the fold,
To press the cream, and weave the fleece.
As shrunk the streamlet in its bed,
As black and scant the herbage grew,
O'er endless plains his flocks he led
Still to new brooks and postures new.
So strayed he till the white pavilions
Of his camp were told by millions,
Till his children's households seven
Were numerous as the stars of heaven.
Then he bade us rove no more;
And in the place that pleased him best,
On the great river's fertile shore,
He fixed the city of his rest.
He taught us then to bind the sheaves,
To strain the palm's delicious milk,
And from the dark green mulberry leaves
To cull the filmy silk.
Then first from straw-built mansions roamed
O'er flower-beds trim the skilful bees;
Then first the purple wine vats foamed
Around the laughing peasant's knees;
And olive-yards, and orchards green,
O'er all the hills of Nod were seen.

'Of our father and our king

Let his grateful children sing.
From him our race its being draws,
His are our arts, and his our laws.
Like himself he bade us be,
Proud, and brave, and fierce, and free.
True, through every turn of fate,
In our friendship and our hate.
Calm to watch, yet prompt to dare;
Quick to feel, yet firm to bear;
Only timid, only weak,
Before sweet woman's eye and cheek.
We will not serve, we will not know,
The God who is our father's foe.
In our proud cities to his name
No temples rise, no altars flame.
Our flocks of sheep, our groves of spice,
To him afford no sacrifice.
Enough that once the House of Cain
Hath courted with oblation vain
The sullen power above.
Henceforth we bear the yoke no more;
The only gods whom we adore
Are glory, vengeance, love.

'Of our father and our king
Let his grateful children sing.
What eye of living thing may brook
On his blazing brow to look?
What might of living thing may stand
Against the strength of his right hand?
First he led his armies forth
Against the Mammoths of the north,
What time they wasted in their pride
Pasture and vineyard far and wide.
Then the White River's icy flood
Was thawed with fire and dyed with blood,
And heard for many a league the sound
Of the pine forests blazing round,
And the death-howl and trampling din
Of the gigantic herd within.
From the surging sea of flame
Forth the tortured monsters came;

As of breakers on the shore
Was their onset and their roar;
As the cedar-trees of God
Stood the stately ranks of Nod.
One long night and one short day
The sword was lifted up to slay.
Then marched the firstborn and his sons
O'er the white ashes of the wood,
And counted of that savage brood
Nine times nine thousand skeletons.

'On the snow with carnage red
The wood is piled, the skins are spread.
A thousand fires illumine the sky;
Round each a hundred warriors lie.
But, long ere half the night was spent,
Forth thundered from the golden tent
The rousing voice of Cain.
A thousand trumps in answer rang
And fast to arms the warriors sprang
O'er all the frozen plain.
A herald from the wealthy bay
Hath come with tidings of dismay.
From the western ocean's coast
Seth hath led a countless host,
And vows to slay with fire and sword
All who call not on the Lord.
His archers hold the mountain forts;
His light armed ships blockade the ports;
His horsemen tread the harvest down.
On twelve proud bridges he hath passed
The river dark with many a mast,
And pitched his mighty camp at last
Before the imperial town.

'On the south and on the west,
Closely was the city prest.
Before us lay the hostile powers.
The breach was wide between the towers.
Pulse and meal within were sold
For a double weight of gold.
Our mighty father had gone forth

Two hundred marches to the north.
Yet in that extreme of ill
We stoutly kept his city still;
And swore beneath his royal wall,
Like his true sons to fight and fall.

'Hark, hark, to gong and horn,
Clarion, and fife, and drum,
The morn, the fortieth morn,
Fixed for the great assault is come.
Between the camp and city spreads
A waving sea of helmed heads.
From the royal car of Seth
Was hung the blood-red flag of death:
At sight of that thrice-hallowed sign
Wide flew at once each banner's fold;
The captains clashed their arms of gold;
The war cry of Elohim rolled
Far down their endless line.
On the northern hills afar
Pealed an answering note of war.
Soon the dust in whirlwinds driven,
Rushed across the northern heaven.
Beneath its shroud came thick and loud
The tramp as of a countless crowd;
And at intervals were seen
Lance and hauberk glancing sheen;
And at intervals were heard
Charger's neigh and battle word.

'Oh what a rapturous cry
From all the city's thousand spires arose,
With what a look the hollow eye
Of the lean watchman glared upon the foes,
With what a yell of joy the mother pressed
The moaning baby to her withered breast;
When through the swarthy cloud that veiled the plain
Burst on his children's sight the flaming brow of Cain!'

There paused perforce that noble song;
For from all the joyous throng,
Burst forth a rapturous shout which drowned

Singer's voice and trumpet's sound.
Thrice that stormy clamour fell,
Thrice rose again with mightier swell.
The last and loudest roar of all
Had died along the painted wall.
The crowd was hushed; the minstrel train
Prepared to strike the chords again;
When on each ear distinctly smote
A low and wild and wailing note.
It moans again. In mute amaze
Menials, and guests, and harpers gaze.
They look above, beneath, around,
No shape doth own that mournful sound.
It comes not from the tuneful quire;
It comes not from the feasting peers.
There is no tone of earthly lyre
So soft, so sad, so full of tears.
Then a strange horror came on all
Who sate at that high festival.
The far famed harp, the harp of gold,
Dropped from Jubal's trembling hold.
Frantic with dismay the bride
Clung to her Ahirad's side.
And the corpse-like hue of dread
Ahirad's haughty face o'erspread.
Yet not even in that agony of awe
Did the young leader of the fair-haired race
From Tirzah's shuddering grasp his hand withdraw,
Or turn his eyes from Tirzah's livid face.
The tigers to their lord retreat,
And crouch and whine beneath his feet.
Prone sink to earth the golden shielded seven.
All hearts are cowed save his alone
Who sits upon the emerald throne;
For he hath heard Elohim speak from heaven.
Still thunders in his ear the peal;
Still blazes on his front the seal:
And on the soul of the proud king
No terror of created thing
From sky, or earth, or hell, hath power
Since that unutterable hour.

He rose to speak, but paused, and listening stood,
Not daunted, but in sad and curious mood,
With knitted brow, and searching eye of fire.
A deathlike silence sank on all around,
And through the boundless space was heard no sound,
Save the soft tones of that mysterious lyre.
Broken, faint, and low,
At first the numbers flow.
Louder, deeper, quicker, still
Into one fierce peal they swell,
And the echoing palace fill
With a strange funereal yell.
A voice comes forth. But what, or where?
On the earth, or in the air?
Like the midnight winds that blow
Round a lone cottage in the snow,
With howling swell and sighing fall,
It wails along the trophied hall.
In such a wild and dreary moan
The watches of the Seraphim
Poured out all night their plaintive hymn
Before the eternal throne.
Then, when from many a heavenly eye
Drops as of earthly pity fell
For her who had aspire too high,
For him who loved too well.
When, stunned by grief, the gentle pair
From the nuptial garden fair,
Linked in a sorrowful caress,
Strayed through the untrodden wilderness;
And close behind their footsteps came
The desolating sword of flame,
And drooped the cedared alley's pride,
And fountains shrank, and roses died.

'Rejoice, O Son of God, rejoice,'
Sang that melancholy voice,
'Rejoice, the maid is fair to see;
The bower is decked for her and thee;
The ivory lamps around it throw
A soft and pure and mellow glow.
Where'er the chastened lustre falls

On roof or cornice, floor or walls,
Woven of pink and rose appear
Such words as love delights to hear.
The breath of myrrh, the lute's soft sound,
Float through the moonlight galleries round.
O'er beds of violet and through groves of spice,
Lead thy proud bride into the nuptial bower;
For thou hast bought her with a fearful price,
And she hath dowered thee with a fearful dower.
The price is life. The dower is death.
Accursed loss! Accursed gain!
For her thou givest the blessedness of Seth,
And to thine arms she brings the curse of Cain.

Round the dark curtains of the fiery throne
Pauses awhile the voice of sacred song:
From all the angelic ranks goes forth a groan,
'How long, O Lord, how long?'
The still small voice makes answer, 'Wait and see,
Oh sons of glory, what the end shall be.'

'But, in the outer darkness of the place
Where God hath shown his power without his grace,
Is laughter and the sound of glad acclaim,
Loud as when, on wings of fire,
Fulfilled of his malign desire,
From Paradise the conquering serpent came.
The giant ruler of the morning star
From off his fiery bed
Lifts high his stately head,
Which Michael's sword hath marked with many a scar.
At his voice the pit of hell
Answers with a joyous yell,
And flings her dusky portals wide
For the bridegroom and the bride.

'But louder still shall be the din
In the halls of Death and Sin,
When the full measure runneth o'er,
When mercy can endure no more,
When he who vainly proffers grace,
Comes in his fury to deface

The fair creation of his hand;
When from the heaven streams down amain
For forty days the sheeted rain;
And from his ancient barriers free,
With a deafening roar the sea
Comes foaming up the land.
Mother, cast thy babe aside:
Bridegroom, quit thy virgin bride:
Brother, pass thy brother by:
'Tis for life, for life, ye fly.
Along the drear horizon raves
The swift advancing line of waves.
On: on: their frothy crests appear
Each moment nearer, and more near.
Urge the dromedary's speed;
Spur to death the reeling steed;
If perchance ye yet may gain
The mountains that o'erhang the plain.

'Oh thou haughty land of Nod,
Hear the sentence of thy God.
Thou hast said, 'Of all the hills
Whence, after autumn rains, the rills
In silver trickle down,
The fairest is that mountain white
Which intercepts the morning light
From Cain's imperial town.
On its first and gentlest swell
Are pleasant halls where nobles dwell;
And marble porticoes are seen
Peeping through terraced gardens green.
Above are olives, palms, and vines;
And higher yet the dark-blue pines;
And highest on the summit shines
The crest of everlasting ice.
Here let the God of Abel own
That human art hath wonders shown
Beyond his boasted paradise.'

'Therefore on that proud mountain's crown
Thy few surviving sons and daughters
Shall see their latest sun go down

Upon a boundless waste of waters.
None salutes and none replies;
None heaves a groan or breathes a prayer
They crouch on earth with tearless eyes,
And clenched hands, and bristling hair.
The rain pours on: no star illumines
The blackness of the roaring sky.
And each successive billow booms
Nigher still and still more nigh.
And now upon the howling blast
The wreaths of spray come thick and fast;
And a great billow by the tempest curled
Falls with a thundering crash; and all is o'er.
In what is left of all this glorious world?
A sky without a beam, a sea without a shore.

'Oh thou fair land, where from their starry home
Cherub and seraph oft delight to roam,
Thou city of the thousand towers,
Thou palace of the golden stairs,
Ye gardens of perennial flowers,
Ye moted gates, ye breezy squares;
Ye parks amidst whose branches high
Oft peers the squirrel's sparkling eye;
Ye vineyards, in whose trellised shade
Pipes many a youth to many a maid;
Ye ports where rides the gallant ship,
Ye marts where wealthy burghers meet;
Ye dark green lanes which know the trip
Of woman's conscious feet;
Ye grassy meads where, when the day is done,
The shepherd pens his fold;
Ye purple moors on which the setting sun
Leaves a rich fringe of gold;
Ye wintry deserts where the larches grow;
Ye mountains on whose everlasting snow
No human foot hath trod;
Many a fathom shall ye sleep
Beneath the grey and endless deep,
In the great day of the revenge of God.'

The Prophecy Of Capys

A Lay Sung at the Banquet in the Capitol, on the Day Whereon Manius Curius Dentatus, a Second Time Consul, Triumphed Over King Pyrrhus and the Tarentines, in the Year of the City CCCCLXXIX.

I.

Now slain is King Amulius,
Of the great Sylvian line,
Who reigned in Alba Longa,
On the throne of Aventine.
Slain is the Pontiff Camers,
Who spake the words of doom:
'The children to the Tiber,
The mother to the tomb.'

II.

In Alba's lake no fisher
His net to-day is flinging;
On the dark rind of Alba's oaks
To-day no axe is ringing;
The yoke hangs o'er the manger;
The scythe lies in the hay:
Through all the Alban villages
No work is done to-day.

III.

And every Alban burgher
Hath donned his whitest gown;
And every head in Alba
Weareth a poplar crown;
And every Alban door-post
With boughs and flowers is gay,
For to-day the dead are living,
The lost are found to-day.

IV.

They were doomed by a bloody king,
They were doomed by a lying priest,
They were cast on the raging flood,

They were tracked by the raging beast;
Raging beast and raging flood
Alike have spared the prey;
And to-day the dead are living,
The lost are found to-day.

V.

The troubled river knew them,
And smoothed his yellow foam,
And gently rocked the cradle
That bore the fate of Rome.
The ravening she-wolf knew them,
And licked them o'er and o'er,
And gave them of her own fierce milk,
Rich with raw flesh and gore.
Twenty winters, twenty springs,
Since then have rolled away;
And to-day the dead are living:
The lost are found to-day.

VI.

Blithe it was to see the twins,
Right goodly youths and tall,
Marching from Alba Longa
To their old grandsire's hall.
Along their path fresh garlands
Are hung from tree to tree:
Before them stride the pipers,
Piping a note of glee.

VII.

On the right goes Romulus,
With arms to the elbows red,
And in his hand a broadsword,
And on the blade a head-
A head in an iron helmet,
With horse-hair hanging down,
A shaggy head, a swarthy head,
Fixed in a ghastly frown-
The head of King Amulius
Of the great Sylvian line,
Who reigned in Alba Longa,

On the throne of Aventine.

VIII.

On the left side goes Remus,
With wrists and fingers red,
And in his hand a boar-spear,
And on the point a head-
A wrinkled head and aged,
With silver beard and hair,
And holy fillets round it,
Such as the pontiffs wear-
The head of ancient Camers,
Who spake the words of doom:
'The children to the Tiber;
The mother to the tomb.'

IX.

Two and two behind the twins
Their trusty comrades go,
Four and forty valiant men,
With club, and axe, and bow.
On each side every hamlet
Pours forth its joyous crowd,
Shouting lads and baying dogs,
And children laughing loud,
And old men weeping fondly
As Rhea's boys go by,
And maids who shriek to see the heads,
Yet, shrieking, press more nigh.

X.

So marched they along the lake;
They marched by fold and stall,
By cornfield and by vineyard,
Unto the old man's hall.

XI.

In the hall-gate sat Capys,
Capys, the sightless seer;
From head to foot he trembled
As Romulus drew near.
And up stood stiff his thin white hair,

And his blind eyes flashed fire:
'Hail! foster child of the wondrous nurse!
Hail! son of the wondrous sire!'

XII.

'But thou-what dost thou here
In the old man's peaceful hall?
What doth the eagle in the coop,
The bison in the stall?
Our corn fills many a garner;
Our vines clasp many a tree;
Our flocks are white on many a hill:
But these are not for thee.

XIII.

'For thee no treasure ripens
In the Tartessian mine;
For thee no ship brings precious bales
Across the Libyan brine;
Thou shalt not drink from amber;
Thou shalt not rest on down;
Arabia shall not steep thy locks,
Nor Sidon tinge thy gown.

XIV.

'Leave gold and myrrh and jewels,
Rich table and soft bed,
To them who of man's seed are born,
Whom woman's milk have fed.
Thou wast not made for lucre,
For pleasure, nor for rest;
Thou, that art sprung from the War-god's loins,
And hast tugged at the she-wolf's breast.

XV.

'From sunrise unto sunset
All earth shall hear thy fame:
A glorious city thou shalt build,
And name it by thy name:
And there, unquenched through ages,
Like Vesta's sacred fire,
Shall live the spirit of thy nurse,

The spirit of thy sire.

XVI.

'The ox toils through the furrow,
Obedient to the goad;
The patient ass, up flinty paths,
Plods with his weary load:
With whine and bound the spaniel
His master's whistle hears;
And the sheep yields her patiently
To the loud-clashing shears.

XVII.

'But thy nurse will hear no master,
Thy nurse will bear no load;
And woe to them that shear her,
And woe to them that goad!
When all the pack, loud baying,
Her bloody lair surrounds,
She dies in silence, biting hard,
Amidst the dying hounds.

XVIII.

Pomona loves the orchard;
And Liber loves the vine;
And Pales loves the straw-built shed
Warm with the breath of kine;
And Venus loves the whispers
Of plighted youth and maid,
In April's ivory moonlight
Beneath the chestnut shade.

XIX.

'But thy father loves the clashing
Of broadsword and of shield:
He loves to drink the steam that reeks
From the fresh battlefield:
He smiles a smile more dreadful
Than his own dreadful frown,
When he sees the thick black cloud of smoke
Go up from the conquered town.

XX.

'And such as is the War-god,
The author of thy line,
And such as she who suckled thee,
Even such be thou and thine.
Leave to the soft Campanian
His baths and his perfumes;
Leave to the sordid race of Tyre
Their dyeing-vats and looms;
Leave to the sons of Carthage
The rudder and the oar;
Leave to the Greek his marble Nymphs
And scrolls of wordy lore.

XXI.

'Thine, Roman, is the pilum:
Roman, the sword is thine,
The even trench, the bristling mound,
The legion's ordered line;
And thine the wheels of triumph,
Which with their laurelled train
Move slowly up the shouting streets
To Jove's eternal flame.

XXII.

Beneath thy yoke the Volscian
Shall veil his lofty brow;
Soft Capua's curled revellers
Before thy chairs shall bow:
The Lucumoes of Arnus
Shall quake thy rods to see;
And the proud Samnite's heart of steel
Shall yield to only thee.

XXIII.

'The Gaul shall come against thee
From the land of snow and night;
Thou shalt give his fair-haired armies
To the raven and the kite.

XXIV.

'The Greek shall come against thee,

The conqueror of the East.
Beside him stalks to battle
The huge earth-shaking beast,
The beast on whom the castle
With all its guards doth stand,
The beast who hath between his eyes
The serpent for a hand.
First march the bold Epirotes,
Wedged close with shield and spear
And the ranks of false Tarentum
Are glittering in the rear.

XXV.

The ranks of false Tarentum
Like hunted sheep shall fly:
In vain the bold Epirotes
Shall round their standards die:
And Apennine's gray vultures
Shall have a noble feast
On the fat and the eyes
Of the the huge earth-shaking beast.

XXVI.

'Hurrah! for the good weapons
That keep the War-god's land.
Hurrah! for Rome's stout pilum
In a stout Roman hand.
Hurrah! for Rome's short broadsword
That through the thick array
Of levelled spears and serried shields
Hews deep its gory way.

XXVII.

'Hurrah! for the great triumph
That stretches many a mile.
Hurrah! for the wan captives
That pass in endless file.
Ho! bold Epirotes, whither
Hath the Red King taken flight?
Ho! dogs of false Tarentum,
Is not the gown washed white?

XXVIII.

'Hurrah! for the great triumph
That stretches many a mile.
Hurrah! for the rich dye of Tyre,
And the fine web of Nile,
The helmets gay with plumage
Torn from the pheasant's wings,
The belts set thick with starry gem
That shone on Indian kings,
The urns of massy silver,
The goblets rough with gold,
The many-colored tablets bright
With loves and wars of old,
The stone that breathes and struggles,
The brass that seems to speak;-
Such cunning they who dwell on high
Have given unto the Greek.

XXIX.

'Hurrah! for Manius Curius,
The bravest son of Rome,
Thrice in utmost need sent forth,
Thrice drawn in triumph home.
Weave, weave, for Manius Curius
The third embroidered gown:
Make ready the third lofty car,
And twine the third green crown;
And yoke the steeds of Rosea
With necks like a bended bow,
And deck the bull, Mevania's bull,
The bull as white as snow.

XXX.

'Blest and thrice blest the Roman
Who sees Rome's brightest day,
Who sees that long victorious pomp
Wind down the Sacred Way,
And through the bellowing Forum,
And round the Suppliant's Grove,
Up to the everlasting gates
Of Capitolian Jove.

XXXI.

'Then where, o'er two bright havens,
The towers of Corinth frown;
Where the gigantic King of Day
On his own Rhodes looks down;
Where oft Orontes murmurs
Beneath the laurel shades;
Where Nile reflects the endless length
Of dark red colonnades;
Where in the still deep water,
Sheltered from waves and blasts,
Bristles the dusky forest
Of Byrsa's thousand masts;
Where fur-clad hunters wander
Amidst the northern ice;
Where through the sand of morning-land
The camel bears the spice;
Where Atlas flings his shadow
Far o'er the western foam,
Shall be great fear on all who hear
The mighty name of Rome.'

Thomas Babington Macaulay

Virginia

Fragments of a Lay Sung in the Forum on the Day Whereon Lucius Sextius Sextinus Lateranus and Caius Licinius Calvus Stolo Were Elected Tribunes of the Commons the Fifth Time, in the Year of the City CCCLXXXII.

Ye good men of the Commons, with loving hearts and true,
Who stand by the bold Tribunes that still have stood by you,
Come, make a circle round me, and mark my tale with care,
A tale of what Rome once hath borne, of what Rome yet may bear.
This is no Grecian fable, of fountains running wine,
Of maids with snaky tresses, or sailors turned to swine.
Here, in this very Forum, under the noonday sun,
In sight of all the people, the bloody deed was done.
Old men still creep among us who saw that fearful day,
Just seventy years and seven ago, when the wicked Ten bare sway.

Of all the wicked Ten still the names are held accursed,
And of all the wicked Ten Appius Claudius was the worst.
He stalked along the Forum like King Tarquin in his pride:
Twelve axes waited on him, six marching on a side;
The townsmen shrank to right and left, and eyed askance with fear
His lowering brow, his curling mouth which always seemed to sneer;
That brow of hate, that mouth of scorn, marks all the kindred still;
For never was there Claudius yet but wished the Commons ill;
Nor lacks he fit attendance; for close behind his heels,
With outstretched chin and crouching pace, the client Marcus steals,
His loins girt up to run with speed, be the errand what it may,
And the smile flickering on his cheek, for aught his lord may say.
Such varlets pimp and jest for hire among the lying Greeks:
Such varlets still are paid to hoot when brave Licinius speaks.
Where'er ye shed the honey, the buzzing flies will crowd;
Where'er ye fling the carrion, the raven's croak is loud;
Where'er down Tiber garbage floats, the greedy pike ye see;
And wheresoe'er such lord is found, such client still will be.

Just then, as through one cloudless chink in a black stormy sky
Shines out the dewy morning-star, a fair young girl came by.
With her small tablets in her hand, and her satchel on her arm,
Home she went bounding from the school, nor dreamed of shame or harm;

And past those dreaded axes she innocently ran,
With bright frank brow that had not learned to blush at gaze of man;
And up the Sacred Street she turned, and, as she danced along,
She warbled gayly to herself lines of the good old song,
How for a sport the princes came spurring from the camp,
And found Lucrece, combing the fleece, under the midnight lamp.
The maiden sang as sings the lark, when up he darts his flight,
From his nest in the green April corn, to meet the morning light;
And Appius heard her sweet young voice, and saw her sweet young face,
And loved her with the accursed love of his accursed race,
And all along the Forum, and up the Sacred Street,
His vulture eye pursued the trip of those small glancing feet.

.....

Over the Alban mountains the light of morning broke;
From all the roofs of the Seven Hills curled the thin wreaths of smoke:
The city-gates were opened; the Forum all alive
With buyers and with sellers was humming like a hive:
Blithely on brass and timber the craftsman's stroke was ringing,
And blithely o'er her panniers the market-girl was singing,
And blithely young Virginia came smiling from her home:
Ah! woe for young Virginia, the sweetest maid in Rome!
With her small tablets in her hand, and her satchel on her arm,
Forth she went bounding to the school, nor dreamed of shame or harm.
She crossed the Forum shining with stalls in alleys gay,
And just had reached the very spot whereon I stand this day,
When up the varlet Marcus came; not such as when erewhile
He crouched behind his patron's heels with the true client smile:
He came with lowering forehead, swollen features, and clenched fist,
And strode across Virginia's path, and caught her by the wrist.
Hard strove the frightened maiden, and screamed with look aghast;
And at her scream from right and left the folk came running fast;
The money-changer Crispus, with his thin silver hairs,
And Hanno from the stately booth glittering with Punic wares,
And the strong smith Muraena, grasping a half-forged brand,
And Volero the flesher, his cleaver in his hand.
All came in wrath and wonder, for all knew that fair child;
And, as she passed them twice a day, all kissed their hands and smiled;
And the strong smith Muraena gave Marcus such a blow,
The caitiff reeled three paces back, and let the maiden go.
Yet glared he fiercely round him, and growled in harsh, fell tone,

'She's mine, and I will have her, I seek but for mine own:
She is my slave, born in my house, and stolen away and sold,
The year of the sore sickness, ere she was twelve hours old.
'Twas in the sad September, the month of wail and fright,
Two augers were borne forth that morn; the Consul died ere night.
I wait on Appius Claudius, I waited on his sire:
Let him who works the client wrong beware the patron's ire.'

So spake the varlet Marcus; and dread and silence came
On all the people at the sound of the great Claudian name.
For then there was no Tribune to speak the word of might,
Which makes the rich man tremble, and guards the poor man's right.
There was no brave Licinius, no honest Sxtius then;
But all the city, in great fear, obeyed the wicked Ten.
Yet ere the varlet Marcus again might seize the maid,
Who clung tight to Muraena's skirt, and sobbed, and shrieked for aid,
Forth through the throng of gazers the young Icilius pressed,
And stamped his foot, and rent his gown, and smote upon his breast,
And sprang upon that column, by many a minstrel sung,
Whereon three mouldering helmets, three rusting swords, are hung,
And beckoned to the people, and in bold voice and clear
Poured thick and fast the burning words which tyrants quake to hear.

'Now, by your children's cradles, now by your fathers' graves,
Be men to-day, Quirites, or be forever slaves!
For this did Servius give us laws? For this did Lucrece bleed?
For this was the great vengeance wrought on Tarquin's evil seed?
For this did those false sons make red the axes of their sire?
For this did Scaevola's right hand hiss in the Tuscan fire?
Shall the vile fox-earth awe the race that stormed the lion's den?
Shall we, who could not brook one lord, crouch to the wicked Ten?
Oh, for that ancient spirit which curbed the Senate's will!
Oh, for the tents which in old time whitened the Sacred Hill!
In those brave days our fathers stood firmly side by side;
They faced the Marcian fury; they tamed the Fabian pride:
They drove the fiercest Quinctius an outcast forth from Rome;
They sent the haughtiest Claudius with shivered fasces home.
But what their care bequeathed us our madness flung away:
All the ripe fruit of threescore years was blighted in a day.
Exult, ye proud Patricians! The hard-fought fight is o'er.
We strove for honors-'twas in vain; for freedom-'tis no more.
No crier to the polling summons the eager throng;

No Tribune breathes the word of might that guards the weak from wrong.
Our very hearts, that were so high, sink down beneath your will.
Riches, and lands, and power, and state-ye have them:-keep them still.
Still keep the holy fillets; still keep the purple gown,
The axes, and the curule chair, the car, and laurel crown:
Still press us for your cohorts, and, when the fight is done,
Still fill your garners from the soil which our good swords have won.
Still, like a spreading ulcer, which leech-craft may not cure,
Let your foul usance eat away the substance of the poor.
Still let your haggard debtors bear all their fathers bore;
Still let your dens of torment be noisome as of yore;
No fire when Tiber freezes; no air in dog-star heat;
And store of rods for free-born backs, and holes for free-born feet.
Heap heavier still the fetters; bar closer still the grate;
Patient as sheep we yield us up unto your cruel hate.
But, by the Shades beneath us, and by the gods above,
Add not unto your cruel hate your yet more cruel love!
Have ye not graceful ladies, whose spotless lineage springs
From Consuls, and High Pontiffs, and ancient Alban kings?
Ladies, who deign not on our paths to set their tender feet,
Who from their cars look down with scorn upon the wondering street,
Who in Corinthian mirrors their own proud smiles behold,
And breathe the Capuan odors, and shine with Spanish gold?
Then leave the poor Plebeian his single tie to life -
The sweet, sweet love of daughter, of sister, and of wife,
The gentle speech, the balm for all that his vexed soul endures,
The kiss, in which he half forgets even such a yoke as yours.
Still let the maiden's beauty swell the father's breast with pride;
Still let the bridegroom's arms infold an unpolluted bride.
Spare us the inexpiable wrong, the unutterable shame,
That turns the coward's heart to steel, the sluggard's blood to flame,
Lest, when our latest hope is fled, ye taste of our despair,
And learn by proof, in some wild hour, how much the wretched dare.'

.....

Straightway Virginius led the maid a little space aside,
To where the reeking shambles stood, piled up with horn and hide,
Close to yon low dark archway, where, in a crimson flood,
Leaps down to the great sewer the gurgling stream of blood.
Hard by, a flesher on a block had laid his whittle down:
Virginius caught the whittle up, and hid it in his gown.

And then his eyes grew very dim, and his throat began to swell,
And in a hoarse, changed voice he spake, 'Farewell, sweet child! Farewell!
Oh! how I loved my darling! Though stern I sometimes be,
To thee, thou know'st, I was not so. Who could be so to thee?
And how my darling loved me! How glad she was to hear
My footstep on the threshold when I came back last year!
And how she danced with pleasure to see my civic crown,
And took my sword, and hung it up, and brought me forth my gown!
Now, all those things are over-yes, all thy pretty ways,
Thy needlework, thy prattle, thy snatches of old lays;
And none will grieve when I go forth, or smile when I return,
Or watch beside the old man's bed, or weep upon his urn.
The house that was the happiest within the Roman walls,
The house that envied not the wealth of Capua's marble halls,
Now, for the brightness of thy smile, must have eternal gloom,
And for the music of thy voice, the silence of the tomb.
The time is come. See how he points his eager hand this way!
See how his eyes gloat on thy grief, like a kite's upon the prey!
With all his wit, he little deems, that, spurned, betrayed, bereft,
Thy father hath in his despair one fearful refuge left.
He little deems that in this hand I clutch what still can save
Thy gentle youth from taunts and blows, the portion of the slave;
Yea, and from nameless evil, that passeth taunt and blow-
Foul outrage which thou knowest not, which thou shalt never know.
Then clasp me round the neck once more, and give me one more kiss;
And now mine own dear little girl, there is no way but this."
With that he lifted high the steel, and smote her in the side,
And in her blood she sank to earth, and with one sob she died.

Then, for a little moment, all people held their breath;
And through the crowded Forum was stillness as of death;
And in another moment brake forth from one and all
A cry as if the Volscians were coming o'er the wall.
Some with averted faces shrieking fled home amain;
Some ran to call a leech; and some ran to lift the slain;
Some felt her lips and little wrist, if life might there be found;
And some tore up their garments fast, and strove to stanch the wound.
In vain they ran, and felt, and stanch'd; for never truer blow
That good right arm had dealt in fight against a Volscian foe.

When Appius Claudius saw that deed, he shuddered and sank down,
And hid his face some little space with the corner of his gown,

Till, with white lips and bloodshot eyes, Virginius tottered nigh,
And stood before the judgment-seat, and held the knife on high.
'Oh! dwellers in the nether gloom, avengers of the slain,
By this dear blood I cry to you, do right between us twain;
And even as Appius Claudius hath dealt by me and mine,
Deal you by Appius Claudius and all the Claudian line!'
So spake the slayer of his child, and turned, and went his way;
But first he cast one haggard glance to where the body lay,
And writhed, and groaned a fearful groan, and then, with steadfast feet,
Strode right across the market-place unto the Sacred Street.

Then up sprang Appius Claudius: 'Stop him; alive or dead!
Ten thousand pounds of copper to the man who brings his head.'
He looked upon his clients; but none would work his will.
He looked upon his lictors, but they trembled, and stood still.
And, as Virginius through the press his way in silence cleft,
Ever the mighty multitude fell back to right and left.
And he hath passed in safety unto his woeful home,
And there ta'en horse to tell the camp what deeds are done in Rome.

By this the flood of people was swollen from every side,
And streets and porches round were filled with that o'erflowing tide;
And close around the body gathered a little train
Of them that were the nearest and dearest to the slain.
They brought a bier, and hung it with many a cypress crown,
And gently they uplifted her, and gently laid her down.
The face of Appius Claudius wore the Claudian scowl and sneer,
And in the Claudian note he cried, 'What doth this rabble here?
Have they no crafts to mind at home, that hitherward they stray?
Ho! lictors, clear the market-place, and fetch the corpse away!'
The voice of grief and fury till then had not been loud;
But a deep sullen murmur wandered among the crowd,
Like the moaning noise that goes before the whirlwind on the deep,
Or the growl of a fierce watch-dog but half aroused from sleep.
But when the lictors at that word, tall yeomen all and strong,
Each with his axe and sheaf of twigs, went down into the throng,
Those old men say, who saw that day of sorrow and of sin,
That in the Roman Forum was never such a din.
The wailing, hooting, cursing, the howls of grief and hate,
Were heard beyond the Pincian Hill, beyond the Latin Gate.
But close around the body, where stood the little train
Of them that were the nearest and dearest to the slain,

No cries were there, but teeth set fast, low whispers and black frowns,
And breaking up of benches, and girding up of gowns.
'Twas well the lictors might not pierce to where the maiden lay,
Else surely had they been all twelve torn limb from limb that day.
Right glad they were to struggle back, blood streaming from their heads,
With axes all in splinters, and raiment all in shreds.
Then Appius Claudius gnawed his lip, and the blood left his cheek,
And thrice he beckoned with his hand, and thrice he strove to speak;
And thrice the tossing Forum set up a frightful yell:
'See, see, thou dog! what thou hast done; and hide thy shame in hell!
Thou that wouldst make our maidens slaves must first make slaves of men.
Tribunes! Hurrah for Tribunes! Down with the wicked Ten!'
And straightway, thick as hailstones, came whizzing through the air,
Pebbles, and bricks, and potsherds, all round the curule chair:
And upon Appius Claudius great fear and trembling came,
For never was a Claudius yet brave against aught but shame.
Though the great houses love us not, we own, to do them right,
That the great houses, all save one, have borne them well in fight.
Still Caius of Corioli, his triumphs and his wrongs,
His vengeance and his mercy, live in our camp-fire songs.
Beneath the yoke of Furius oft have Gaul and Tuscan bowed:
And Rome may bear the pride of him of whom herself is proud.
But evermore a Claudius shrinks from a stricken field,
And changes color like a maid at sight of sword and shield.
The Claudian triumphs all were won within the city towers;
The Claudian yoke was never pressed on any necks but ours.
A Cossus, like a wild cat, springs ever at the face;
A Fabius rushes like a boar against the shouting chase;
But the vile Claudian litter, raging with currish spite,
Still yelps and snaps at those who run, still runs from those who smite.
So now 'twas seen of Appius. When stones began to fly,
He shook, and crouched, and wrung his hands, and smote upon his thigh.
'Kind clients, honest lictors, stand by me in this fray!
Must I be torn in pieces? Home, home the nearest way!'
While yet he spake, and looked around with a bewildered stare,
Four sturdy lictors put their necks beneath the curule chair;
And fourscore clients on the left, and fourscore on the right,
Arrayed themselves with swords and staves, and loins girt up to fight.
But, though without or staff or sword, so furious was the throng,
That scarce the train with might and main could bring their lord along.
Twelve times the crowd made at him; five times they seized his gown;
Small chance was his to rise again, if once they got him down:

And sharper came the pelting; and evermore the yell,-
'Tribunes! we will have Tribunes!'- rose with a louder swell:
And the chair tossed as tosses a bark with tattered sail
When raves the Adriatic beneath an eastern gale,
When Calabrian sea-marks are lost in clouds of spume,
And the great Thunder-Cape has donned his veil of inky gloom.
One stone hit Appius in the mouth, and one beneath the ear;
And ere he reached Mount Palatine, he swooned with pain and fear.
His cursed head, that he was wont to hold so high with pride,
Now, like a drunken man's, hung down, and swayed from side to side;
And when his stout retainers had brought him to his door,
His face and neck were all one cake of filth and clotted gore.
As Appius Claudius was that day, so may his grandson be!
God send Rome one such other sight, and send me there to see!

Thomas Babington Macaulay