

Classic Poetry Series

**Thomas Love Peacock**  
**- poems -**

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## Thomas Love Peacock(1785 - 1866)

Thomas Love Peacock was born in 1785, in Dorset, at Weymouth. He was the son of a glass merchant, who died three years after he was born. He was raised at his grandfather's house in Chertsey, by his mother. Despite the fact that his formal schooling ended before his teens (he never attended a university), it is important to note that he read widely in five languages throughout his lifetime.

When he could no longer support himself without working, he took a job in 1819 with the East India Company. The next year, he married Jane Gryffyd, daughter to a Welsh rector. Peacock's daughter later married George Meredith, also a literary man.

Peacock mixed with many of his contemporary Romantic poets. He often openly criticized them, but this never gave him much trouble. His best known work is his satirical prose. His novels consist chiefly of witty conversation with sparse action. The characters were often burlesque, but subtle imitations of famous men of his day.

In 1866, the hardheaded, tongue-in-cheeked Peacock died in his library at Halliford-on-Thames, after refusing to leave his precious books to burn.

# A Bill For The Better Promotion Of Oppression On The Sabbath Day

Forasmuch as the Canter's and Fanatic's Lord  
Sayeth peace and joy are by me abhorred;  
And would fill each Sunday with gloom and pain  
For all too poor his regard to obtain;  
And forasmuch as the laws heretofore  
Have not sufficiently squeezed the poor  
Be it therefore enacted by Commons, King  
And Lords, a crime for any thing  
To be done on the Sabbath by any rank  
Excepting the rich. No beer may be drank,  
Food eaten, rest taken, away from home,  
And each House shall a Sunday prison become;  
And spies and jailers must carefully see,  
Under severest penalty,  
None stirs but to conventicle,  
Thrice a day at toll of bell.  
And each sickly cit who dare engage  
His place by steamer, fly or stage,  
With owner thereof shall by this said bill,  
Be punished with fine, imprisonment or treadmill.  
But nothing herein is designed to discourage  
Priest, noble or squire from the use of his carriage.  
No ship shall move however it blow,  
The Devil a bit shall said ship go  
Whether the winds will let it or no;  
And, as winds and weather we cannot imprison,  
Owners, Captain and sailors we therefore shall seize on,  
And whereas oxen, lambs and sheep  
About the roads and lanes will creep,  
And cocks and hens and ducks and geese  
Will not on Sunday hold their peace,  
Be it enacted that foresaid beasts,  
If not belonging to gentry or priests,  
Be caught and whipped and pounded on Sunday,  
And sold to pay expences on Monday.  
The drunkard, who paid five shillings before,  
Shall now pay twenty shillings more,

And mine host, if on Sabbath he dare unloose  
A bolt, shall be fined and his licence lose.  
All oranges, cakes & lollypop  
Shall be sized; & every open shop  
Shall be fined a pound an hour till it stop.  
Till nine the milkman may ply his trade,  
For pious breakfasts must be made  
At he risk of his soul. And the bakers at last,  
When the poor man's dinner is clearly past,  
Must set to work, the godly scorning  
Stale rolls and bread on a Monday morning.  
That Justices may have less to do,  
'Tis enacted they may convict on view,  
And shall, if they think the couse more drastic  
Transfer to Courts Ecclesiastic.  
All informers shall pass scot free,  
However false their averments may be;  
And witnesses who have no mind  
To convict shall be imprisoned and fined.  
And whereas from this act's operation  
Are exempted the following ranks in this nation:  
The rich man's servants---they cannot be spared  
(In spite of Scripture) from working hard---;  
Milkmen in the morning; at evening the bakers,  
With constables, doctors, thieves, parsons, tollmakers;  
And parties for music, gambling or dinners  
Are hereby exempt, when the rich are the sinners;  
For no party whatever has aught to fear  
From said act who has more than £500 a year.

Thomas Love Peacock

# A Fragment

Nay, deem me not insensible, Cesario,  
To female charms; nor think this heart of mine  
Is cas'd in adamant; because, forsooth,  
I cannot ogle, and hyperbolize,  
And whisper tender nothings in the ear  
Of ev'ry would-be beauty, holding out  
The bright but treacherous flame of flattery,  
To watch the she-moths of a drawing room  
Sport round the beam, and burn their pretty wings,  
Ere conscious of their danger: yet, believe me,  
I love a maid whose untranscended form  
Is yet less lovely than her spotless mind.  
With modest frankness, unaffected genius,  
Unchang'd good humour, beauty void of art,  
And polish'd wit that seeks not to offend,  
And winning smiles that seek not to betray,  
She charms the sight, and fascinates the soul.  
Where dwells this matchless nymph? alas, Cesario,  
'Tis but a sickly creature of my fancy,  
Unparallel'd in nature.

Thomas Love Peacock

# A Glee

Quickly pass the social glass,  
Hence with idle sorrow!  
No delay---enjoy today,  
Think not of tomorrow!  
Life at best is but a span,  
Let us taste it whilst we can;  
Let us still with smiles confess,  
All our aim is happiness!

Childish fears, and sighs and tears  
Still to us are strangers;  
Why destroy the bud of joy  
With ideal dangers?  
Let the song of pleasure swell;  
Care with us shall never dwell;  
Let us still with smiles confess,  
All our aim is happiness!

Thomas Love Peacock

# Beyond The Sea

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,  
My heart is gone, far, far from me;  
And ever on its track will flee  
My thoughts, my dreams, beyond the sea.

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,  
The swallow wanders fast and free:  
Oh, happy bird! were I like thee,  
I, too, would fly beyond the sea.

Beyond the sea, beyond the sea,  
Are kindly hearts and social glee:  
But here for me they may not be;  
My heart is gone beyond the sea.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Castles In The Air

My thoughts by night are often filled  
With visions false as fair:  
For in the past alone I build  
My castles in the air.

I dwell not now on what may be:  
Night shadows o'er the scene:  
But still my fancy wanders free  
Through that which might have been.

Thomas Love Peacock



# Duet

Milestone:

All my troubles disappear,  
When the dinner-bell I hear,  
Over woodland, dale, and fell,  
Swinging slow with solemn swell,---  
The dinner-bell! the dinner-bell!

Hippy:

What can bid my heart-ache fly?  
What can bid my heart-ache die?  
What can all the ills dispel,  
In my morbid frame that dwell?  
The dinner-bell! the dinner-bell!

Both:

Hark!---along the tangled ground,  
Loudly floats the pleasing sound!  
Sportive Fauns to Dryads tell,  
'Tis the cheerful dinner-bell!  
The dinner-bell! the dinner-bell!

Thomas Love Peacock

## Glee -- The Ghosts

In life three ghostly friars were we,  
And now three friarly ghosts we be.  
Around our shadowy table placed,  
The spectral bowl before us floats:  
With wine that none but ghosts can taste,  
We wash our unsubstantial throats.  
Three merry ghosts--three merry ghosts--  
three merry ghosts are we:  
Let the ocean be Port, and we'll think it good sport  
To be laid in that Red Sea.

With songs that jovial spectres chaunt,  
Our old refectory still we haunt.  
The traveller hears our midnight mirth:  
"O list!" he cries, "the haunted choir!  
"The merriest ghost that walks the earth, "  
"Is sure the ghost of a ghostly friar."  
Three merry ghosts--three merry ghosts--  
three merry ghosts are we:  
Let the ocean be Port, and we'll think it good sport  
To be laid in that Red Sea.

Thomas Love Peacock

# I Dug Beneath The Cypress Shade

I dug, beneath the cypress shade,  
What well might seem an elfin's grave;  
And every pledge in earth I laid,  
That erst thy false affection gave.

I pressed them down the sod beneath;  
I placed one mossy stone above;  
And twined the rose's fading wreath  
Around the sepulchre of love.

Frail as thy love, the flowers were dead,  
Ere yet the evening sun was set:  
But years shall see the cypress spread,  
Immutable as my regret.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Instead Of Sitting Wrapped Up In Flannel

Instead of sitting wrapped up in flannel  
With rheumatism in every joint,  
I wish I was in the English Channel,  
Just going 'round the Lizard Point  
All southward bound, with the seas before me,  
I should not care whether smooth or rough,  
For then no visitors would call to bore me,  
Of whose 'good-mornings' I have had enough.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Life's Uncertain Day

The briefest part of life's uncertain day,  
Youth's lovely blossom, hastes to swift decay:  
While love, wine, song, enhance our gayest mood  
Old age creeps on, nor thought, nor understood.

Thomas Love Peacock

## Lines On The Death Of Julia

Accept, bright spirit, reft in life's best bloom  
This votive wreath to thy untimely tomb.  
Formed to adorn all scenes, and charm in all,  
The fire-side circle, and the courtly hall;  
Thy friends to gladden, and thy home to bless;---  
Fair form thou hadst, and grace, and graciousness;  
A mind that sought, a tongue that spoke, the truth,  
And thought mature beneath the smiles of youth.  
Dear, dear young friend! ingenuous, cordial heart!  
And can it be, that thou shouldst first depart?  
That age should sorrow o'er thy youthful shrine?  
It owns more near, more sacred griefs than mine;  
Yet, midst the many who thy loss deplore,  
Few loved thee better, and few mourn thee more.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Love And Age

I play'd with you 'mid cowslips blowing,  
When I was six and you were four;  
When garlands weaving, flower-balls throwing,  
Were pleasures soon to please no more.  
Through groves and meads, o'er grass and heather,  
With little playmates, to and fro,  
We wander'd hand in hand together;  
But that was sixty years ago.

You grew a lovely roseate maiden,  
And still our early love was strong;  
Still with no care our days were laden,  
They glided joyously along;  
And I did love you very dearly,  
How dearly words want power to show;  
I thought your heart was touch'd as nearly;  
But that was fifty years ago.

Then other lovers came around you,  
Your beauty grew from year to year,  
And many a splendid circle found you  
The centre of its glimmering sphere.  
I saw you then, first vows forsaking,  
On rank and wealth your hand bestow;  
O, then I thought my heart was breaking!--  
But that was forty years ago.

And I lived on, to wed another:  
No cause she gave me to repine;  
And when I heard you were a mother,  
I did not wish the children mine.  
My own young flock, in fair progression,  
Made up a pleasant Christmas row:  
My joy in them was past expression;  
But that was thirty years ago.

You grew a matron plump and comely,  
You dwelt in fashion's brightest blaze;  
My earthly lot was far more homely;

But I too had my festal days.  
No merrier eyes have ever glisten'd  
Around the hearth-stone's wintry glow,  
Than when my youngest child was christen'd;  
But that was twenty years ago.

Time pass'd. My eldest girl was married,  
And I am now a grandsire gray;  
One pet of four years old I've carried  
Among the wild-flower'd meads to play.  
In our old fields of childish pleasure,  
Where now, as then, the cowslips blow,  
She fills her basket's ample measure;  
And that is not ten years ago.

But though first love's impassion'd blindness  
Has pass'd away in colder light,  
I still have thought of you with kindness,  
And shall do, till our last good-night.  
The ever-rolling silent hours  
Will bring a time we shall not know,  
When our young days of gathering flowers  
Will be an hundred years ago.

Thomas Love Peacock



# Margaret Love Peacock

Long night succeeds thy little day;  
Oh blighted blossom! can it be,  
That this grey stone, and grassy clay,  
Have clos'd our anxious care of thee?

The half-form'd speech of artless thought  
That spoke a mind beyond thy years;  
The song, the dance, by nature taught;  
The sunny smiles, the transient tears;

The symmetry of face and form,  
The eye with light and life replete;  
The little heart so fondly warm,  
The voice so musically sweet;

These, lost to hope, in memory yet  
Around the hearts that lov'd thee cling,  
Shadowing, with long and vain regret,  
The too fair promise of thy spring.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Newark Abbey

August, 1842  
with a remembrance of August, 1807

I gaze, where August's sunbeam falls  
Along these grey and lonely walls,  
Till in its light absorbed appears  
The lapse of five-and-thirty years.

If change there be, I trace it not  
In all this consecrated spot:  
No new imprint of Ruin's march  
On roofless wall and frameless arch:  
The hills, the woods, the fields, the stream,  
Are basking in the self-same beam:  
The fall, that turns the unseen mill  
As then it murmured, murmurs still:  
It seems, as if in one were cast  
The present and the imaged past,  
Spanning, as with bridge sublime,  
That awful lapse of human time,  
That gulph, unfathomably spread  
Between the living and the dead.

For all too well my spirit feels  
The only change this place reveals:  
The sunbeams play, the breezes stir,  
Unseen, unfelt, unheard by her,  
Who, on that long-past August day,  
First saw with me those ruins grey.

Whatever span the fates allow,  
Ere I shall be as she is now,  
Still in my bosom's inmost cell  
Shall that deep-treasured memory dwell:  
That, more than language can express,  
Pure miracle of loveliness,  
Whose voice so sweet, whose eyes so bright,  
Were my soul's music, and its light,

In those blest days, when life was new,  
And hope was false, but love was true.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Palmyra (1st Edition)

---anankta ton pantôn huperbal-  
lonta chronon makarôn.  
Pindar. Hymn. frag. 33

I

As the mountain-torrent rages,  
Loud, impetuous, swift, and strong,  
So the rapid streams of ages  
Rolls with ceaseless tide along.  
Man's little day what clouds o'ercast!  
How soon his longest day is past!  
All-conquering DEATH, in solemn date unfurl'd,  
Comes, like the burning desert blast,  
And sweeps him from the world.  
The noblest works of human pow'r  
In vain resist the fate-fraught hour;  
The marble hall, the rock-built tow'r,  
Alike submit to destiny:  
OBLIVION's awful storms resound;  
The massy columns fall around;  
The fabric totters to the ground,  
And darkness veils its memory!

II

'Mid SYRIA's barren world of sand,  
Where THEDMOR's marble wastes expand.  
Where DESOLATION, on the blasted plain,  
Has fix'd his adamantine throne,  
I mark, in silence and alone,  
His melancholy reign.  
These silent wrecks, more eloquent than speech,  
Full many a tale of awful note impart;  
Truths more sublime than bard or sage can teach  
This pomp of ruin presses on the heart.  
Whence rose that dim, mysterious sound,

That breath'd in hollow murmurs round?  
As sweeps the gale  
Along the vale,  
Where many a mould'ring tomb is spread,  
Awe-struck, I hear,  
In fancy's ear,  
The voices of th' illustrious dead:  
As slow they pass along, they seem to sigh,  
"Man, and the works of man, are only born to die!"

### III

As scatter'd round, a dreary space,  
Ye spirits of the wise and just!  
In reverential thought I trace  
The mansions of your sacred dust,  
Enthusiast FANCY, rob'd in light,  
Pours on the air her many-sparkling rays,  
Redeeming from OBLIVION's deep'ning night  
The deeds of ancient days.  
The mighty forms of chiefs of old,  
To VIRTUE dear, and PATRIOT TRUTH sublime,  
In feeble splendor I behold,  
Discover'd dimly through the mists of TIME,  
As through the vapours of the mountain-stream  
With pale reflection glows the sun's declining beam.

### IV

Still as twilight's mantle hoary  
Spreads progressive on the sky,  
See, in visionary glory,  
Darkly-thron'd, they sit on high.  
But whose the forms, oh FAME, declare,  
That crowd majestic on the air?  
Bright Goddess! come, on rapid wings,  
To tell the mighty deeds of kings.  
Where art thou, FAME?  
Each honor'd name  
From thy eternal roll unfold:

Awake the lyre,  
In songs of fire,  
To chiefs renown'd in days of old.  
I call in vain!  
The welcome strain  
Of praise to them no more shall sound:  
Their actions bright  
Must sleep in night,  
Till TIME shall cease his mystic round.  
The dazzling glories of their day  
The stream of years has swept away;  
Their names, that struck the foe with fear,  
Shall ring no more on mortal ear!

## V

Yet faithful MEMORY's raptur'd eye  
Can still the godlike form descry,  
Of him, who, on EUPHRATES' shore,  
From SAPOR's brow his blood-stain'd laurels tore,  
And bade the ROMAN banner stream unfurl'd;  
When the stern GENIUS of the startling waves  
Beheld on PERSIA s host of slaves  
Tumultuous ruin hurl'd!  
Meek SCIENCE too, and TASTE refin'd,  
The grave with deathless flow'rs have dress'd,  
Of him whose virtue-kindling mind  
Their ev'ry charm supremely bless'd;  
Who trac'd the mazy warblings of the lyre  
With all a critic's art, and all a poet's fire.

## VI

Where is the bard, in these degen'rate days,  
To whom the muse the blissful meed awards,  
Again the dithyrambic song to raise,  
And strike the golden harp's responsive chords?  
Be his alone the song to swell,  
The all-transcendent praise to tell  
Of yon immortal form,

That bursting through the veil of years,  
In changeless majesty appears,  
Bright as the sun-beams thro' the scatt'ring storm!  
What countless charms around her rise!  
What dazzling splendor sparkles in her eyes!  
On her radiant brow enshrin'd,  
MINERVA's beauty blends with JUNO's grace;  
The matchless virtues of her godlike mind  
Are stamp'd conspicuous on her angel-face.

## VII

Hail, sacred shade, to NaATURE dear!  
Though sorrow clos'd thy bright career,  
Though clouds obscur'd thy setting day,  
Thy fame shall never pass away!  
Long shall the mind's unfading gaze  
Retrace thy pow'r's meridian blaze,  
When o'er ARABIAN deserts, vast and wild,  
And EGYPT s land, (where REASON's wakeful eye  
First on the birth of ART and SCIENCE smil'd,  
And bade the shades of mental darkness fly)  
And o'er ASSYRIA's many-peopled plains,  
By Justice led, thy conqu'ring armies pour'd,  
When humbled nations kiss'd thy silken chains,  
Or fled dismay'd from zABDAS ' victor-sword:  
Yet vain the hope to share the purple robe,  
Or snatch from ROMAN arms the empire of the globe.

## VIII

Along the wild and wasted plain  
His veteran bands the ROMAN monarch led,  
And rolled his burning wheels o'er heaps of slain:  
The prowling chacal heard afar  
The devastating yell of war,  
And rush'd, with gloomy howl, to banquet on the dead!

## IX

For succour to PALMYRA's walls  
Her trembling subjects fled, confounded,  
But wide amid her regal halls  
The whirling fires resounded.  
Onward the hostile legions pour'd:  
Nor beauteous youth, nor helpless age,  
Nor female charms, by savage breasts ador'd,  
Could check the ROMAN's barb'rous rage,  
Or blunt the murd'rous sword.  
Loud, long, and fierce, the voice of slaughter roar'd,  
The night-shades fell, the work of death was o'er,  
PALMYRA's sun had set, to rise no more!

X

What mystic form, uncouth and dread,  
With wither'd cheek, and hoary head,  
Swift as the death-fire cleaves the sky,  
Swept on sounding pinions by?  
'Twas TIME: I know the FOE OF KINGS,  
His scythe, and sand, and eagle wings:  
He cast a burning look around,  
And wav'd his bony hand, and frown'd.  
Far from the spectre's scowl of fire  
FANCY's feeble forms retire,  
Her air-born phantoms melt away,  
Like stars before the rising day.

XI

Yes, all are flown!  
I stand alone,  
At ev'ning's calm and pensive hour,  
Mid wasted domes,  
And mould'ring tombs,  
The wrecks of vanity and pow'r.  
One shadowy tint enwraps the plain;  
No form is near, no sounds intrude,  
To break the melancholy reign



Of silence and of solitude.

How oft, in scenes like these, since TIME began,  
With downcast eye has CONTEMPLATION trod,  
Far from the haunts of FOLLY, VICE, and MAN,  
To hold sublime communion with her GOD!  
How oft, in scenes like these, the pensive sage  
Has mourn'd the hand of FATE, severely just,  
WAR's wasteful course, and DEATH's unsparing rage,  
And dark OBLIVION, frowning in the dust!  
Has mark'd the tombs, that king's o'erthrown declare,  
Just wept their fall, and sunk to join them there!

## XII

In yon proud fane, majestic in decay,  
How oft of old the swelling hymn arose,  
In loud thanksgiving to the LORD OF DAY,  
Or pray'r for vengeance on triumphant foes!  
'Twas there, ere yet AURELIAN's hand  
Had kindled Ruin's smould'ring brand,  
As slowly mov'd the sacred choir  
Around the altar's rising fire,  
The priest, with wild and glowing eye,  
Bade the flow'r-bound victim die;  
And while he fed the incense-flame,  
With many a holy mystery,  
Prophetic inspiration came  
To teach th' impending destiny,  
And shook his venerable frame  
With most portentous augury!  
In notes of anguish, deep and slow,  
He told the coming hour of woe;  
The youths and maids, with terror pale,  
In breathless torture heard the tale,  
And silence hung  
On ev'ry tongue,  
While thus the voice prophetic rung:

## XIII

"Whence was the hollow scream of fear,  
Whose tones appall'd my shrinking ear?  
Whence was the modulated cry,  
That seem'd to swell, and hasten by?  
What sudden blaze illum'd the night?  
Ha! 'twas DESTRUCTION's meteor-light!  
Whence was the whirlwind's eddying breath?  
Ha! 'twas the fiery blast of DEATH!

#### XIV

See! the mighty God of Battle  
Spreads abroad his crimson train!  
Discord's myriad voices rattle  
O'er the terror-shaken plain.  
Banners stream, and helmets glare,  
Show'ring arrows hiss in air;  
Echoing through the darken'd skies,  
Wildly-mingling murmurs rise,  
The clash of splendor-beaming steel,  
The buckler ringing hollowly,  
The cymbal's silver-sounding peal,  
The last deep groan of agony,  
The hurrying feet  
Of wild retreat,  
The lengthening shout of victory!

#### XV

"O'er our plains the vengeful stranger  
Pours, with hostile hopes elate:  
Who shall check the coming danger?  
Who escape the coming fate?  
Thou! that through the heav'ns afar,  
When the shades of night retire,  
Proudly roll'st thy shining car,  
Clad in sempiternal fire!  
Thou! from whose benignant light  
Fiends of darkness, strange and fell,  
Urge their ebon-pinion'd flight

To the central caves of hell!  
Sun ador'd! attend our call!  
Must thy favor'd people fall?  
Must we leave our smiling plains,  
To groan beneath the stranger's chains ?  
Rise, supreme in heav'nly pow'r,  
On our foes destruction show'r;  
Bid thy fatal arrows fly,  
Till their armies sink and die;  
Through their adverse legions spread  
Pale Disease, and with'ring Dread,  
Wild Confusion's fev'rish glare,  
Horror, Madness, and Despair!

#### XVI

"Woe to thy numbers fierce and rude,  
Thou madly-rushing multitude,  
Loud as the tempest that o'er ocean raves!  
Woe to the nations proud and strong,  
That rush tumultuously along,  
As rolls the foaming stream its long-resounding waves!  
As the noise of mighty seas,  
As the loudly-murmuring breeze,  
Shall gath'ring nations rush, a pow'rful band:  
Rise, God of Light, in burning wrath severe,  
And stretch, to blast their proud career,  
Thy arrow-darting hand!  
Then shall their ranks to certain~fate be giv'n,  
Then on their course Despair her fires shall cast,  
Then shall they fly, to endless ruin driv'n,  
As flies the thistle-down before the mountain-blast !

#### XVII

"Alas! in vain, in vain we call!  
The stranger triumphs in our fall!  
And Fate comes on, with ruthless frown,  
To strike Palmyra's splendor down.  
Urg'd by the steady breath of Time,

The desert-whirlwind sweeps sublime,  
The eddyng sands in mountain-columns rise:  
Borne on the pinions of the gale,  
In one concenter'd cloud they sail;  
Along the darken'd skies.  
It falls! it falls! on Thedmor's walls  
The whelming weight of ruin falls  
Th' avenging thunder-bolt is hurl'd,  
Her pride is blotted from the world,  
Her name unknown in story:  
The trav'ller on her site shall stand,  
And seek, amid the desert-sand,  
The records of her glory!  
Her palaces are crush'd, her tow'rs o'erthrown,  
Oblivion follows stern, and marks her for his own!"

### XVIII

How oft, the festal board around,  
These time-worn walls among,  
Has rung the full symphonious sound  
Of rapture-breathing song!  
Ah! little thought the wealthy proud,  
When rosy pleasure laugh'd aloud,  
That here, amid their ancient land,  
The wand'rer of the distant days  
Should mark, with sorrow-clouded gaze,  
The mighty wilderness of sand;  
While not a sound should meet his ear,  
Save of the desert-gales that sweep,  
In modulated murmurs deep,  
The wasted graves above,  
Of those who once had revell'd here,  
In happiness and love!

### XIX

Short is the space to man assign'd  
This earthly vale to tread  
He wanders, erring, weak, and blind,

By adverse passions led.  
Love, the balm of ev'ry woe,  
The dearest blessing man can know;  
Jealousy, whose pois'nous breath  
Blasts affection's opining bud;  
Stern Despair, that laughs in death;  
Black Revenge, that bathes in blood;  
Fear, that his form in darkness shrouds,  
And trembles at the whisp'ring air;  
And Hope, that pictures on the clouds  
Celestial visions, false, but fair;  
All rule by turns:  
To-day he burns  
With ev'ry pang of keen distress;  
To-morrow's sky  
Bids sorrow fly  
With dreams of promis'd happiness.

XX

From the earliest twilight-ray,  
That mark'd Creation's natal day,  
Till yesterday's declining fire,  
Thus still have roll'd, perplex'd by strife,  
The many-clashing wheels of life,  
And still shall roll, till Time's last beams expire  
And thus, in ev'ry age, in ev'ry clime,  
While circling years shall fly,  
The varying deeds that mark the present time  
Will be but shadows of the days gone by.

XXI

Along the desolated shore,  
Where, broad and swift, Euphrates flows,  
The trav'ller's anxious eye can trace no more  
The spot where once the Queen of Cities rose.  
Where old Persepolis sublimely tow'r'd,  
In cedar-groves embow'r'd,  
A rudely-splendid wreck alone remains,

The course of Fate no pomp or pow'r can shun  
Pollution tramples on thy giant-fanes,  
Oh City of the Sun!  
Fall'n are the Tyrian domes of wealth and joy,  
The hundred gates of Thebes, the tow'rs of Troy;  
In shame and sorrow pre-ordain'd to cease,  
Proud Salem met th' irrevocable doom;  
In darkness sunk the arts and arms of Greece,  
And the long glories of imperial Rome.

## XXII

When the tyrants iron hand  
The mountain-piles of Memphis rais'd,  
That still the storms of angry Time defy,  
In self-adoring thought he gaz'd,  
And bade the massive labors stand,  
Till Nature's self should die!  
Presumptuous fool! the death-wind came,  
And swept away thy worthless name;  
And ages, with insidious flow,  
Shall lay those blood-bought fabrics low.  
Then shall the stranger pause, and oft be told,  
"Here stood the mighty Pyramids of old!"  
And smile, half-doubtful, when the tale he hears,  
That speaks the wonders of the distant years

## XXIII

Though Night awhile usurp the skies,  
Yet soon the smiling Morn shall rise,  
And light and life restore;  
Again the sun-beams gild the plain;  
The youthful day returns again,  
But man returns no more.  
Though Winter's frown severe  
Deform the wasted year,  
Spring smiles again, with renovated bloom;  
But what sweet Spring, with genial breath,  
Shall chase the icy sleep of death,

The dark and cheerless winter of the tomb ?  
Hark! from the mansions of the dead,  
What thrilling sounds of deepest import spread I  
Sublimely mingled with the eddying gale,  
Full on the desert-air these solemn accents sail:

XXIV

"Unthinking man! and cost thou weep,  
That clouds o'er cast thy little day?  
That Death's stern hands so quickly sweep  
Thy ev'ry earthly hope away?  
Thy rapid hours in darkness flow, '  
But well those rapid hours employ,  
And they shall lead from realms of woe  
To realms of everlasting joy.  
For though thy Father and thy God  
Wave o'er thy head his chast'ning rod,  
Benignantly severe,  
Yet future blessings shall repair,  
In tenfold measure, ev'ry care,  
That marks thy progress here.

XXV

"BOW THEN TO HIM, FOR HE IS GOOD,  
And loves the works His hands have made;  
In earth, in air, in fire, in flood,  
His parent-bounty shines display'd.  
BOW THEN TO HIM, FOR HE IS JUST,  
Though mortals scan His ways in vain;  
Repine not, children of the dust!  
For HE in mercy sends ye pain.  
BOW THEN TO HIM, FOR HE IS GREAT,  
And was, ere NATURE, TIME, and FATE,  
Began their mystic flight;  
And still shall be, when consummating flame  
Shall plunge this universal frame  
In everlasting night.  
BOW THEN TO HIM, the LORD of ALL.

Whose nod bids empires rise and fall,  
EARTH, HEAV'N, and NATURE's SIRE;  
To HIM, Who, matchless and alone,  
Has fix'd in boundless space His throne,  
Unchang'd, unchanging still,while worlds and suns expire!"

Thomas Love Peacock



## Palmyra (2nd Edition)

---anankta ton pantôn huperbal-  
lonta chronon makarôn.  
Pindar. Hymn. frag. 33

Spirit of the days of yore!  
Thou! who, in thy haunted cave,  
By the torrent's sounding shore,  
Mark'st the autumnal tempest rave:  
Or, where on some ivied wall  
Twilight-mingled moonbeams fall,  
Deep in aisles and cloisters dim,  
Hear'st the grey monks' verpser hymn:  
Or, beneath the cypress shade,  
Where forgotten chiefs are laid,  
Pacing slow with solemn tread,  
Breathest the verse that wakes the dead---  
By the ivied convent lone,  
By the Runic warrior's stone,  
By the mountain-cataract's roar,  
Spirit! thee I seek no more.  
Let me, remote from earthly care,  
Thy philosophic vigils share,  
Amid the wrecks of ancient time,  
More sad, more solemn, more sublime,  
Where, half-sunk in seas of sand,  
Thedmor's marble wastes expand.

These silent wrecks, more eloquent than speech,  
Full many a tale of awful note impart:  
Truths more severe than bard or sage can teach  
This pomp of ruin presses on the heart  
Sad through the palm the evening breezes-sigh:  
No sound of man the solitude pervades,  
Where shattered forms of ancient monarchs lie,  
Mid grass-grown halls, and falling colonnades.  
Beneath the drifting sand, the clustering weed,  
Rest the proud relics of departed power.  
None may the trophy-cinctured tablet read,

On votive urn, or monumental tower,  
Nor tell whose wasted forms the mouldering tombs embower.

Enthusiast fancy, robed in light,  
Dispels oblivion's deepening night.  
Her charms a solemn train unfold,  
Sublime on evening clouds of gold,  
Of sceptred kings, in proud array,  
And laurelled chiefs, and sages grey.  
But whose the forms, oh fame! declare,  
That crowd majestic on the air?  
Pour from thy deathless roll the praise  
Of kings renowned in elder days.  
I call in vain! The welcome strain  
Of praise to them no more shall sound:  
Their actions bright must sleep in night,  
Till time shall cease his mystic round.  
The glories of their ancient sway  
The stream of years has swept away:  
Their names, that nations heard with fear,  
Shall ring no more on mortal ear.  
Yet still the muse's eye may trace  
The noblest chief of Thedmor's race,  
Who, by Euphrates' startling waves,  
Bade outraged Rome her prostrate might unfold,  
Tore from the brow of Persia's pride  
The wreath in crimson victory dyed,  
And o'er his flying slaves  
Tumultuous ruin rolled.  
Throned by his side, a lovely form,  
In youthful majesty sublime,  
Like sun-beams through the scattering storm,  
Shines through the floating mists of time:  
Even as in other years she shone,  
When here she fixed her desert-throne,  
Triumphant in the transient smiles of fate;  
When Zabdas led her conquering bands  
O'er Asia's many-peopled lands,  
And subject monarchs thronged her palace-gate:  
Ere yet stern war's avenging storm,  
Captivity's dejected form,  
And death, in solitude and darkness furled,

Closed round the setting star, that ruled the eastern world.

Dim shades around her move again,  
From memory blotted by the lapse of years:  
Yet, foremost in the sacred train,  
The venerable sage appears,  
Who once, these desolate arcades  
And time-worn porticoes among,  
Disclosed to princely youths and high-born maids  
The secret fountains of Mæonian song,  
And traced the mazy warblings of the lyre,  
With all a critic's art, and all a poet's fire.

What mystic form, uncouth and dread,  
With withered cheek, and hoary head,  
Swift as the death-fire cleaves the sky,  
Swept on sounding pinions by?  
'Twas Time. I know the foe of kings,  
His scythe, and sand, and eagle-wings:  
He cast a burning look around,  
And waved his bony hand, and frowned.  
Far from the spectre's scowl of fire,  
Fancy's feeble forms retire:  
Her air-born phantoms melt away,  
Like stars before the rising day.

One shadowy tint enwraps the plain:  
No form is near, no steps intrude,  
To break the melancholy reign  
Of silence and of solitude.  
Ah! little thought the wealthy proud,  
When rosy pleasure laughed aloud,  
And music, with symphonious swell,  
Attuned to joy her festal shell,  
That here, amid their ancient land,  
The wanderer of the distant days  
Should mark, with sorrow-clouded gaze,  
The mighty wilderness of sand,  
While not a sound should meet his ear,  
Save of the desert-gales, that sweep,  
In modulated murmurs deep,

The wasted graves above  
Of those, who once had revelled here  
In happiness and love.

Short is the space to man assigned,  
His earthly vale to tread.  
He wanders, erring, weak, and blind,  
By adverse passions led:  
Love, that with feeling's tenderest flow  
To rapture turns divided woe,  
And brightens every smile of fate  
That kindred souls participate:  
Jealousy, whose poisonous breath  
Blasts affection's opening bud:  
Wild despair, that laughs in death:  
Stern revenge, that bathes in blood:  
Fear, that his form in darkness shrouds,  
And trembles at the whispering air:  
And hope, that pictures on the clouds  
Celestial visions, false, but fair.

From the earliest twilight-ray,  
That marked creation's natal day,  
Till yesterday's declining fire,  
Thus still have rolled, perplexed by strife,  
The many-mingling wheels of life,  
And still shall roll, till time's last beams expire.  
And thus, in every age, in every clime,  
While years swift-circling fly,  
The varying deeds, that mark the present time,  
Will be but shadows of the days gone by.

Swift as the meteor's midnight course,  
Swift as the cataract's headlong force,  
Swift as the clouds, whose changeful forms  
Hang on the rear of flying storms,  
So swift is Time's colossal stride  
Above the wrecks of human pride.  
These temples, awful in decay,  
Whose ancient splendor half endures,  
These arches, dim in parting day,  
These dust-defiled entablatures,

These shafts, whose prostrate pride around  
The desert-weed entwines its wreath,  
These capitals, that strew the ground,  
Their shattered colonnades beneath,  
These pillars, white in lengthening files,  
Grey tombs, and broken peristyles,  
May yet, through many an age, retain  
The pomp of Thedmor's wasted reign:  
But Time still shakes, with giant-tread,  
The marble city of the dead,  
That crushed at last, a shapeless heap,  
Beneath the drifted sands shall sleep.

The flower, that drinks the morning-dew,  
Far on the evening gale shall fly:  
The bark, that glides o'er ocean blue,  
Dashed on the distant rocks shall lie:  
The tower, that frowns in martial pride,  
Shall by the lightning-brand be riven:  
The arch, that spans the summer tide,  
Shall down the wintry floods be driven:  
The tomb, that guards the great one's name,  
Shall yield to time its sacred trust:  
The laurel of imperial fame  
Shall wither in unwatered dust.  
His mantle dark oblivion flings  
Around the monuments of kings,  
Who once to conquest shouting myriads bore.  
Fame's trumpet-blast, and victory's clarion shrill,  
Pass, like an echo of the hill,  
That breathes one wild response, and then is heard no more.

But ne'er shall earthly time throw down  
The immortal pile that virtue rears:  
Her golden throne, and starry crown,  
Decay not with revolving years:  
For He, whose solemn voice controlled  
Necessity's mysterious sway,  
And yon vast orbs from chaos rolled  
Along the elliptic paths of day,  
Has fixed her empire, vast and high,  
Where primogenial harmony

Unites, in ever-cloudless skies,  
Affection's death-divided ties;  
Where wisdom, with unwearying gaze,  
The universal scheme surveys,  
And truth, in central light enshrined,  
Leads to its source sublime the indissoluble mind.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Quintetto

[To the tune of "Turning, turning, turning, as wheel goes round."]

RECITATIVE. MR. PAPERSTAMP:

Jack Horner's CHRISTMAS PIE my learned nurse  
Interpreted to mean the public purse.  
From thence a plum he drew. O happy Horner!  
Who would not be ensconced in thy snug corner

THE FIVE:

While round the public board all eagerly we linger,  
for what we can get we will try, try, try:  
And we'll all have a finger, a finger, a finger,  
We'll all have a finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

MR. FEATHERNEST:

By my own poetic laws, I'm a dealer in applause  
For those who don't deserve it, but will buy, buy  
So round the court I linger, and thus I get a fidget  
A finger, finger, finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

THE FIVE:

And we'll all have a finger, a finger, a finger,  
We'll all have a finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

MR. VAMP:

My share of pie to win, I will dash through thick and thin  
And philosophy and liberty shall fly, fly, fly:  
And truth and taste shall know, that their eve Iasting foe  
Has a finger, finger, finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

THE FIVE:

And we'll all have a finger, a finger, a finger,  
We'll all have a finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

MR. KILLTHEDEAD:

I'll make my verses rattle with the din of war and battle,  
For war doth increase sa-la-ry, ry, ry:  
And I'll shake the public ears with the triumph of Algiers,  
And thus I ll get a finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

THE FIVE:

And we'll all have a finger, a finger, a finger,  
We'll all have a finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

MR. PAPERSTAMP:

And while you thrive by ranting, I'll try my luck at canting,  
And scribble verse and prose all so dry, dry, dry:  
And Mystic's patent smoke public intellect shall choke,  
Ard we ll all have a finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

THE FIVE:

We'll all have a finger, a finger, a finger,  
We'll all have a finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

MR. ANYSIDE ANTIJACK:

My tailor is so clever, that my coat will turn for ever,  
And take any colour you can dye, dye, dye:  
For all my earthly wishes are among the loaves and fishes,  
And to have my little finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.



THE FIVE:

And we'll all have a finger, a finger, a finger,  
We'll all have a finger in the CHRISTMAS PIE.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Rich & Poor; Or Saint & Sinner

The poor man's sins are glaring;  
In the face of ghostly warning  
He is caught in the fact  
Of an overt act---  
Buying greens on a Sunday morning.

The rich man's sins are hidden  
In the pomp of wealth and station;  
And escape the sight  
Of the children of light,  
Who are wise in their generation.

The rich man has a kitchen,  
And cooks to dress his dinner;  
The poor who would roast  
To the baker's must post,  
And thus becomes a sinner.

The rich man has a cellar,  
And a ready butler by him;  
The poor man must steer  
For his pint of beer  
Where the saint can't choose but to spy him.

The rich man's painted windows  
Hide the concerts of the quality;  
The poor can but share  
A crack'd fiddle in the air,  
Which offends all sound morality.

The rich man is invisible  
In the crowd of his gay society;  
But the poor man's delight  
Is a sore in the sight,  
And a stench in the nose of piety.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Seamen Three

Seamen three! What men be ye?  
Gotham's three wise men we be.  
Whither in your bowl so free?  
To rake the moon from out the sea.  
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.  
And our ballast is old wine;  
And your ballast is old wine.

Who art thou, so fast adrift?  
I am he they call Old Care.  
Here on board we will thee lift.  
No: I may not enter there.  
Wherefore so? 'Tis Jove's decree,  
In a bowl Care may not be;  
In a bowl Care may not be.

Fear ye not the waves that roll?  
No: in charmed bowl we swim.  
What the charm that floats the bowl?  
Water may not pass the brim.  
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.  
And our ballast is old wine;  
And your ballast is old wine.

Thomas Love Peacock

# Sir Hornbook

I.

O'er bush and briar Childe Launcelot sprung  
With ardent hopes elate,  
And loudly blew the horn that hung  
Before Sir Hornbook's gate.

The inner portals opened wide,  
And forward strode the chief,  
Arrayed in paper helmet's pride,  
And arms of golden leaf.

--"What means,"--he cried,--"This daring noise,  
That wakes the summer day?  
I hate all idle truant boys:  
Away, Sir Childe, away!"--

--"No idle, truant boy am I,"--  
Childe Launcelot answered straight;  
--"Resolved to climb this hill so high,  
I seek thy castle gate.

"Behold the talisman I bear,  
And aid my bold design:"--  
Sir Hornbook gazed, and written there,  
Knew Emulation's sign.

"If Emulation sent thee here,"  
Sir Hornbook quick replied,  
"My merry men all shall soon appear,  
To aid thy cause with shield and spear,  
And I will head thy bold career,  
And prove thy faithful guide."--

Loud rung the chains; the drawbridge fell;  
The gates asunder flew:  
The knight thrice beat the portal bell,  
And thrice he call'd "Halloo."

And out, and out, in hasty rout,  
By ones, twos, threes, and fours;  
His merry men rush'd the walls without,  
And stood before the doors.

II.

Full six and twenty men were they,  
In line of battle spread:  
The first that came was mighty A,  
The last was little Z.

Six Vocal men Sir Hornbook had,  
Four Double men to boot,  
And four were Liquids soft and sad,  
And all the rest were Mute.

He called his Corporal, Syllable,  
To range the scatter'd throng;  
And Captain Word dispos'd them well  
In bands compact and strong.

--"Now mark, Sir Childe,"--Sir Hornbook said:--  
"These well-compacted powers,  
Shall lead thy vent'rous steps to tread  
Through all the Muses' bowers,

"If rightly thou thyself address,  
To use their proffer'd aid:  
Still unallur'd by idleness,  
By labor undismay'd;

"For many troubles intervene,  
And perils widely spread,  
Around the groves of evergreen,  
That crown this mountain's head:  
But rich reward he finds, I ween,  
Who through them all has sped."--

Childe Launcelot felt his bosom glow  
At thought of noble deed;

Resolved through every path to go,  
Where that bold knight should lead.

Sir Hornbook wound his bugle horn,  
Full long, and loud, and shrill;  
His merry men all, for conquest born,  
With armour glittering to the morn,  
Went marching up the hill.

III.

--"What men are you beside the way?"--  
The bold Sir Hornbook cried:  
--"My name is The, my brother's A,"--  
Sir Article replied.

"My brother's home is any where,  
At large and undefin'd;  
But I a preference ever bear  
For one fix'd spot, and settle there;  
Which speaks my constant mind."

--"What ho! Childe Launcelot! seize them there,  
And look you have them sure!"--  
--Sir Hornbook cried,--"my men shall bear  
Your captives off secure."--

The twain were seized: Sir Hornbook blew  
His bugle loud and shrill:  
His merry men all, so stout and true,  
Went marching up the hill.

IV.

And now a wider space they gained,  
A steeper, harder ground,  
Where by one ample wall contained,  
All earthly things they found:

All beings, rich, poor, weak, or wise,

Were there, full strange to see,  
And attributes and qualities  
Of high and low degree.

Before the circle stood a knight,  
Sir Substantive his name,  
With Adjective, his lady bright,  
Who seemed a portly dame;

Yet only seemed; for whenso'er  
She strove to stand alone,  
She proved no more than smoke and air,  
Who looked like flesh and bone.

And therefore to her husband's arm  
She clung for evermore,  
And lent him many a grace and charm  
He had not known before;

Yet these the knight felt well advised,  
He might have done without;  
For lightly foreign help he prized  
He was so staunch and stout.

Five sons had they, their dear delight,  
Of different forms and faces;  
And two of them were Numbers bright,  
And three they christened Cases.

Now loudly rung Sir Hornbook's horn;  
Childe Launcelot poised his spear;  
And on they rushed, to conquest borne,  
In swift and full career.

Sir Substantive kicked down the wall:  
It fell with furious rattle:  
And earthly things and beings all  
Rushed forth to join the battle.

But earthly things and beings all,  
Through mixed in boundless plenty,  
Must one by one dissolving fall

To Hornbook's six-and-twenty.

Childe Launcelot won the arduous fray,  
And, when they ceased from strife,  
Led stout Sir Substantive away,  
His children, and his wife.

Sir Hornbook wound his horn again,  
Full long, and loud, and shrill:  
His merry men all, a warlike train,  
Went marching up the hill.

V.

Now when Sir Pronoun look'd abroad,  
And spied the coming train,  
He left his fort beside the road,  
And ran with might and main.

Two cloth-yard shafts from I and U,  
Went forth with whizzing sound:  
Like lightning sped the arrows true;  
Sir Pronoun pressed the ground:  
But darts of science ever flew  
To conquer, not to wound.

His fear was great: his hurt was small:  
Childe Launcelot took his hand:  
--"Sir Knight,"--said he,--"though doomed to fall  
Before my conquering band,

"Yet knightly treatment shall you find,  
On faith of cavalier:  
Then join Sir Substantive behind,  
And follow our career."--

Sir Substantive, that man of might,  
Felt knightly anger rise;  
For he had marked Sir Pronoun's flight  
With no approving eyes.



"Great Substantive, my sovereign liege!"--  
Thus sad Sir Pronoun cried,  
--"When you had fallen in furious siege,  
Could I the shock abide?"

"That all resistance would be vain,  
Too well, alas! I knew:  
For what could I, when you were ta'en,  
Your poor lieutenant, do?"

Then louder rung Sir Hornbook's horn,  
In signals long and shrill:  
His merry men all, for conquest born,  
Went marching up the hill.

VI.

Now steeper grew the rising ground,  
And rougher grew the road,  
As up the steep ascent they wound  
To bold Sir Verb's abode.

Sir Verb was old, and many a year,  
All scenes and climates seeing,  
Had run a wild and strange career  
Through every mode of being.

And every aspect, shape, and change  
Of action, and of passion:  
And known to him was all the range  
Of feeling, taste, and fashion.

He was an Augur, quite at home  
In all things present done,  
Deeds past, and every act to come  
In ages yet to run.

Entrenched in intricacies strong,  
Ditch, fort, and palisado,  
He marked with scorn the coming throng,  
And breathed a bold bravado:

--"Ho! who are you that dare invade  
My turrets, moats, and fences?  
Soon will your vaunting courage fade,  
When you on the walls, in lines array'd,  
You see me marshal undismay'd  
My host of moods and tenses."--

--"In vain,"--Childe Launcelot cried in scorn,--  
--"On them is your reliance;"--  
Sir Hornbook wound his bugle horn,  
And twange'd a loud defiance.

They swam the moat, they scal'd the wall,  
Sir Verb, with rage and shame,  
Beheld his valiant general fall,  
Infinitive by name.

Indicative declar'd the foes  
Should perish by his hand;  
And stout Imperative arose,  
The squadron to command.

Potential and Subjunctive then  
Came forth with doubt and chance:  
All fell alike, with all their men,  
Before Sir Hornbook's lance.

Action and Passion nought could do  
To save Sir Verb from fate;  
Whose doom poor Participle knew,  
He must participate.

Then Adverb, who had skulk'd behind,  
To shun the mighty jar,  
Came forward, and himself resign'd  
A prisoner of war.

Three children of Imperative,  
Full strong, though somewhat small,  
Next forward came, themselves to give  
To conquering Launcelot's thrall.

Conjunction press'd to join the crowd;  
But Preposition swore,  
Though Interjection sobb'd aloud,  
That he would go before.

Again his horn Sir Hornbook blew,  
Full long, and loud, and shrill;  
His merry men all, so stout and true,  
Went marching up the hill.

VII.

Sir Syntax dwelt in thick fir-grove,  
All strown with scraps of flowers,  
Which he had pluck'd to please his love,  
Among the Muses' bowers.

His love was gentle Prosody,  
More fair than morning beam;  
Who liv'd beneath a flowering tree,  
Beside a falling stream.

And these two claim'd, with high pretence  
The whole Parnassian ground,  
Albeit some little difference  
Between their taste was found:  
Sir Syntax he was all for sense,  
And Prosody for sound.

Yet in them both the Muses fair  
Exceedingly delighted;  
And thought no earthly thing so rare,  
That might with that fond twain compare,  
When they were both united.

--"Ho! yield, Sir Syntax!"--Hornbook cried,  
"This youth must pass thy grove,  
Led on by me, his faithful guide,  
In yonder bowers to rove."--

Thereat full much, Sir Syntax said,  
But found resistance vain:  
And through his grove Childe Launcelot sped,  
With all Sir Hornbook's train.

They reach'd the tree where Prosody  
Was singing in the shade:  
Great joy Childe Launcelot had to see,  
And hear that lovely maid.

Now, onward as they press'd along,  
Did nought their course oppose;  
Till full before the martial throng  
The Muses' gates arose.

There Etymology they found,  
Who scorn'd surrounding fruits;  
And ever dug in deepest ground,  
For old and mouldy Roots.

Sir Hornbook took Childe Launcelot's hand,  
And tears at parting fell:  
--"Sir Childe,"--he said,--"with all my band  
I bid you here farewell.

"Then wander through these sacred bowers,  
Unfearing and alone:  
All shrubs are hear, and fruits, and flowers,  
To happiest climates known."--

Once more his horn Sir Hornbook blew,  
A parting signal shrill:  
His merry men all, so stout and true,  
Went marching down the hill.

Childe Launcelot pressed the sacred ground,  
With hope's exulting glow;  
Some future song perchance may sound  
The wondrous thing which there he found,  
If you the same would know.



# Terzetto

Hark! o'er the silent waters stealing,  
The dash of oars sounds soft and clear:  
Through night's deep veil, all forms concealing,  
Nearer it comes, and yet more near.

See! where the long reflection glistens,  
In yon lone tower her watch-light burns:  
To hear our distant oars she listens,  
And, listtening, strikes the harp by turns.

The stars are bright, the skies unclouded;  
No moonbeam shines; no breezes wake:  
Is it my love, in darkness shrouded,  
Whose dashing oar disturbs the lake?

O haste, sweet maid, the cords unrolling;  
The holy hermit chides our stay!  
Hark! from his lonely islet tolling,  
His midnight bell shall guide our way.

Thomas Love Peacock

# The Flower Of Love

'Tis said the rose is Love's own flower,  
Its blush so bright, its thorns so many;  
And winter on its bloom has power,  
But has not on its sweetness any.  
For though young Love's ethereal rose  
Will droop on Age's wintry bosom,  
Yet still its faded leaves disclose  
The fragrance of their earliest blossom.

But ah! the fragrance lingering there  
Is like the sweets that mournful duty  
Bestows with sadly-soothing care,  
To deck the grave of bloom and beauty.  
For when its leaves are shrunk and dry,  
Its blush extinct, to kindle never,  
That fragrance is but Memory's sigh,  
That breathes of pleasures past for ever.

Why did not Love the amaranth choose,  
That bears no thorns, and cannot perish ?  
Alas! no sweets its flowers diffuse,  
And only sweets Love's life can cherish.  
But be the rose and amaranth twined,  
And Love, their mingled powers assuming,  
Shall round his brows a chaplet bind,  
For ever sweet, for ever blooming.

Thomas Love Peacock





# The Lady, The Knight, And The Friar

THE LADY.

O cavalier! what dost thou here,  
Thy tuneful vigils keeping;  
While the northern star looks cold from far  
And half the world is sleeping?

THE KNIGHT.

O lady! here, for seven long year,  
Have I been nightly sighing,  
Without the hope of a single tear  
To pity me were I dying.

THE LADY.

Should I take thee to have and to hold,  
Who hast nor lands nor money?  
Alas! 'tis only in flowers of gold  
That married bees find honey.

THE KNIGHT.

O lady fair! to my constant prayer  
Fate proves at last propitious;  
And bags of gold in my hand I bear,  
And parchment scrolls delicious.

THE LADY.

My maid the door shall open throw,  
For we too long have tarried:  
The friar keeps watch in the cellar below,  
And we will at once be married.

THE FRIAR.

My children! great is Fortune's power;  
And plain this truth appears,  
That gold thrives more in a single hour,  
Than love in seven long years.

Thomas Love Peacock

# The Legend Of St. Laura

Saint Laura, in her sleep of death,  
Preserves beneath the tomb  
---'Tis willed where what is willed must be---  
In incorruptibility  
Her beauty and her bloom.

So pure her maiden life had been,  
So free from earthly stain,  
'Twas fixed in fate by Heaven's own Queen,  
That till the earth's last closing scene  
She should unchanged remain.

Within a deep sarcophagus  
Of alabaster sheen,  
With sculptured lid of roses white,  
She slumbered in unbroken night  
By mortal eyes unseen.

Above her marble couch was reared  
A monumental shrine,  
Where cloistered sisters, gathering round,  
Made night and morn the aisle resound  
With choristry divine.

The abbess died: and in her pride  
Her parting mandate said,  
They should her final rest provide,  
The alabaster couch beside,  
Where slept the sainted dead.

The abbess came of princely race:  
The nuns might not gainsay:  
And sadly passed the timid band,  
To execute the high command  
They dared not disobey.

The monument was opened then:  
It gave to general sight  
The alabaster couch alone:

But all its lucid substance shone  
With præ.ternatural light.

They laid the corpse within the shrine:  
They closed its doors again:  
But nameless terror seemed to fall,  
Throughout the live-long night, on all  
Who formed the funeral train.

Lo! on the morrow morn, still closed  
The monument was found:  
But in its robes funereal drest,  
The corpse they had consigned to rest  
Lay on the stony ground.

So pure her maiden life had been,  
So free from earthly stain,  
'Twas fixed in fate by Heaven's own Queen,  
That till the earth's last closing scene  
She should unchanged remain.

Fear and amazement seized on all:  
They salled on Mary's aid:  
And in the tomb, unclosed again,  
With choral hymn and funeral train,  
The corpse again was laid.

So was it found when morning beamed:  
In solemn suppliant strain,  
The nuns implored all saints in heaven,  
That rest might to the corpse be given,  
Which they entombed again.

On the third night a watch was kept  
By many a friar and nun:  
Trembling, all knelt in fervebt parayer,  
Till on the dreary midnight air  
Rolled the deep bell-toll, "One!"

The saint within the opening tomb  
Like marble statue stood:  
All fell to earth in deep dismay:

And through their ranks she passed away,  
In calm unchanging mood.

No answering sound her footsteps raised  
Along the stony floor:  
Silent as death, severe as fate,  
She glided through the chapel gate,  
And none beheld her more.

The alabaster couch was gone:  
The tomb was void and bare:  
For the last time, with hasty rite,  
Even 'mid the terror of the night,  
They laid the abbess there.

'Tis said, the abbess rests not well  
In that sepulchral pile:  
But yearly, when the night comes round,  
And dies of "One" the bell's deep sound  
She flits along the aisle.

But whither passed the virgin saint,  
To slumber far away,  
Destined by Mary to endure,  
Unfettered in her semblance pure,  
Until the judgement day?

None knew, and none may ever know:  
Angels the secret keep:  
Impenetrable ramparts bound,  
Eternal silence dwells around,  
The chamber of her sleep.

Thomas Love Peacock

# The Magic Bark

I

O freedom! power of life and light!  
Sole nurse of truth and glory!  
Bright dweller on the rocky cliff!  
Lone wanderer on the sea!  
Where'er the sunbeam slumbers bright  
On snow-clad mountains hoary;  
Wherever flies the veering skiff,  
O'er waves that breathe of thee!  
Be thou the guide of all my thought  
The source of all my being  
The genius of my waking mind---  
The spirit of my dreams!  
To me thy magic spell be taught,  
The captive spirit freeing,  
To wander with the ocean-wind  
Where'er thy beacon beams.

II.

O! sweet it were, in magic bark,  
On one loved breast reclining,  
To sail around the varied world,  
To every blooming shore;  
And oft the gathering storm to mark  
Its lurid folds combining;  
And safely ride, with sails unfurled,  
Amid the tempest's roar;  
And see the mighty breakers rave  
On cliff, and sand, and shingle,  
And hear, with long re-echoing shock,  
The caverned steeps reply;  
And while the storm-cloud and the wave  
In darkness seemed to mingle,  
To skim beside the surf-swept rock,  
And glide uninjured by.

### III.

And when the summer seas were calm,  
And summer skies were smiling,  
And evening came, with clouds of gold,  
To gild the western wave;  
And gentle airs and dews of balm,  
The pensive mind beguiling,  
Should call the Ocean Swain to fold  
His sea-flocks in the cave,  
Unearthly music's tenderest spell,  
With gentlest breezes blending  
And waters softly rippling near  
The prow's light course along,  
Should flow from Triton's winding shell,  
Through ocean's depths ascending  
From where it charmed the Nereid's ear,  
Her coral bowers among.

### IV.

How sweet, where eastern Nature smiles,  
With swift and mazy motion  
Before the odour-breathing breeze  
Of dewy morn to glide;  
Or, 'mid the thousand emerald isles  
That gem the southern ocean,  
Where fruits and flowers, from loveliest trees,  
O'erhang the slumbering tide:  
Or up some western stream to sail,  
To where its myriad fountains  
Roll down their everlasting rills  
From many a cloud-capped height,  
Till mingling in some nameless vale,  
'Mid forest-cinctured mountains,  
The river-cataract shakes the hills  
With vast and volumed might.

### V.

The poison-trees their leaves should shed,  
The yellow snake should perish,  
The beasts of blood should crouch and cower,  
Where'er that vessel past:  
All plagues of fens and vapours bred,  
That tropic fervors cherish,  
Should fly before its healing power,  
Like mists before the blast.  
Where'er its keel the strand imprest,  
The young fruit's ripening cluster,  
The bird's free song, its touch should greet,  
The opening flower's perfume;  
The streams zalong the green earth's breast  
Should roll in purer lustre,  
And love should heighten every sweet,  
And brighten every bloom.

VI.

And, Freedom! thy meridian blaze  
Should chase the clouds that lower,  
Wherever mental twilight dim  
Obscures Truth's vestal flame,  
Wherever Fraud and Slavery raise  
The throne of blood-stained Power,  
Wherever Fear and Ignorance hymn  
Some fabled daemon's name!  
The bard, where torrents thunder down  
Beside thy burning altar,  
Should kindle, as in days of old,  
The mind's ethereal fire;  
Ere yet beneath a tyrant's frown  
The Muse's voice could falter,  
Or Flattery strung with chords of gold  
The minstrel's venal lyre.

Thomas Love Peacock



# The Monks Of St. Mark

'Tis midnight: the sky is with clouds overcast;  
The forest-trees bend in the loud-rushing blast;  
The rain strongly beats on these time-hallow'd spires;  
The lightning pours swiftly its blue-pointed fires;  
Triumphant the tempest-fiend rides in the dark,  
And howls round the old abbey-walls of St. Mark!

The thunder, whose roaring the trav'ller appals,  
Seems as if with the ground it would level the walls:  
But in vain pours the storm-king this horrible rout;  
The uproar within drowns the uproar without;  
For the friars, with Bacchus, not Satan, to grapple,  
The refect'ry have met in, instead of the chapel.

'Stead of singing Te Deums, on ground-pressing knees,  
They were piously bawling songs, catches, and glee:  
Or, all speakers, no hearers, unceasing, untir'd,  
Each stoutly held forth, by the spirit inspir'd,  
Till the Abbot, who only the flock could controul,  
Exclaim'd: "Augustine! pr'ythee push round the bowl!"

The good brother obey'd; but, oh direful mishap!  
Threw its scalding contents in Jeronimo's lap!  
And o'er his bare feet as the boiling tide stream'd,  
Poor Augustine fretted, Jeronimo scream'd,  
While Pedro protested, it vex'd him infernally,  
To see such good beverage taken "externally!"

The Abbot, Francisco, then feelingly said:  
"Let that poor wounded devil be carried to bed:  
And let Augustine, who, I boldly advance,  
Is the whole and sole cause of this fatal mischance,  
If e'er to forgiveness he dare to aspire,  
Now bear to his cell the unfortunate friar."

He rose to obey, than a snail rather quicker,  
But, finding his strength much diminish'd by liquor,  
Declar'd, with a hiccup, he scarcely could stand,  
And begged brother Pedro to lend him a hand.

Brother Pedro consented, but all was not right,  
Till Nicholas offer'd to carry a light.

By the head and the feet then their victim they held,  
Who with pain and with fear most tremendously yell'd;  
And with one little lamp that scarce shone through the gloom,  
In path curvilinear march'd out of the room,  
And, unheeding the sound of the rain and the blast,  
Through the long dismal corridor fearlessly pass'd.

From the right to the left, from the left to the right  
Brother Nicholas reel'd, inconsiderate wight!  
For not seeing the stairs to the hall-floor that led,  
Instead of his heels he soon stood on his head:  
He rolls to the bottom, the lamp-flame expires,  
And darkness envelopes the wondering friars!

He squall'd, for the burning oil pour'd on his hand;  
Bewilder'd did Pedro and Augustine stand:  
Then loud roar'd the thunder, and Pedro in dread,  
Abandon'd his hold of Jeronimo's head,  
And Prone on the floor fell this son of the cowl,  
And howl'd, deeply-smarting, a terrible howl!

Poor Augustine's bosom with terror was cold,  
On finding his burthen thus slide from his hold:  
Then, cautiously stealing, and groping around,  
He felt himself suddenly struck to the ground;  
Yells, groans, and strange noises, were heard in the dark,  
And, trembling and sweating, he pray'd to St. Mark I

Meanwhile, the good Abbot was boosing about;  
When, a little alarm'd by the tumult without,  
Occasion'd by poor Brother Nich'las's fall  
From the corridor-stairs to the floor of the hall,  
Like a true jolly friend of good orderly laws,  
He serpentin'd out to discover the cause.

Bewilder'd by liquor, by haste, and by fright,  
He forgot that he stood in great need of a light;  
When hiccuping, reeling, and curving along,  
And humming a stave of a jolly old song,

He receiv'd a rude shock from an object unseen,  
For he came in full contact with Saint Augustine!

By Jeronimo's carcass tripp'd up unawares,  
He was instantly hurl'd down the corridor-stairs;  
Brother Nicholas there, from the floor cold and damp,  
Was rising with what yet remain'd of his lamp;  
And, the worthy superior's good supper to spoil,  
Regal'd his strange guest with a mouthful of oil!

Thence sprung the dire tumult, which, rising so near,  
Had fill'd Augustine with confusion and fear:  
But the sons of St. Mark, now appearing wit tapers,  
At once put an end to his pray'rs and his vapors;  
They reel'd back to their bowls, laugh'd at care and foul weather,  
And were shortly all under the table together.

Thomas Love Peacock

# The Morning Of Love

O! The spring-time of life is the season of blooming,  
And the morning of love is the season of joy;  
Ere noontide and summer, with radiance consuming,  
Look down on their beauty, to parch and destroy.  
O! faint are the blossoms life's pathway adorning,  
When the first magic glory of hope is withdrawn;  
For the flowers of the spring, and the light of the morning,  
Have no summer budding, and no second dawn.

Through meadows all sunshine, and verdure, and flowers  
The stream of the valley in purity flies;  
But mixed with the tides, where some proud city lowers,  
O! where is the sweetness that dwelt on its rise ?  
The rose withers fast-on the breast it first graces;  
Its beauty is fled ere the day be half done:--  
And life is that stream which its progress defaces,  
And love is that flower which can bloom but for one.

Thomas Love Peacock

# The Sundial

The ivy o'er the mouldering wall  
Spreads like a tree, the growth of years:  
The wild wind through the doorless hall  
A melancholy music rears,  
A solitary voice, that sighs  
O'er man's forgotten pageantries.  
Above the central gate, the clock,  
Through clustering ivy dimly seen,  
Seems, like the ghost of Time, to mock  
The wrecks of power that once has been.  
The hands are rusted on its face;  
Even where they ceased, in years gone by,  
To keep the flying moments pace;  
Fixing, in Fancy's thoughtful eye,  
A point of ages passed away,  
A speck of time, that owns no tie  
With aught that lives and breathes to-day.  
But 'mid the rank and towering grass,  
Where breezes wave, in mournful sport,  
The weeds that choke the ruined court,  
The careless hours that circling pass,  
Still trace upon the dialled brass  
The shade of their unvarying way:  
And evermore, with every ray  
That breaks the clouds and gilds the air,  
Time's stealthy steps are imaged there:  
Even as the long-revolving years  
In self-reflecting circles flow,  
From the first bud the hedge-row bears,  
To wintry Nature's robe of snow.  
The changeful forms of mortal things  
Decay and pass; and art and power  
Oppose in vain the doom that flings  
Oblivion on their closing hour:  
While still, to every woodland vale,  
New blooms, new fruits, the seasons bring,  
For other eyes and lips to hail  
With looks and sounds of welcoming:  
As where some stream light-eddying roves

By sunny meads and shadowy groves,  
Wave following wave departs for ever,  
But still flows on the eternal river.

Thomas Love Peacock

# The Tomb Of Love

By the mossy weed-flowered column,  
Where the setting moonbeam's glance  
Streams a radiance cold and solemn  
On the haunts of old romance:  
Know'st thou what those shafts betoken,  
Scattered on that tablet lone,  
Where the ivory bow lies broken  
By the monumental stone?

When true knighthood's shield, neglected,  
Mouldered in the empty hall;  
When the charms that shield protected  
Slept in death's eternal thrall;  
When chivalric glory perished  
Like the pageant of a dream,  
Love in vain its memory cherished,  
Fired in vain the minstrel's theme.

Falsehood to an elvish minion  
Did the form of Love impart:  
Cunning plumed its vampire pinion;  
Avarice tipped its golden dart.  
Love, the hideous phantom flying,  
Hither came, no more to rove:  
There his broken bow is Iying  
On that stone the tomb of Love!

Thomas Love Peacock

# The War Song Of Dinas Vawr

The mountain sheep are sweeter,  
But the valley sheep are fatter;  
We therefore deemed it meeter  
To carry off the latter.  
We made an expedition;  
We met a host, and quelled it;  
We forced a strong position,  
And killed the men who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley,  
Where herds of kine were browsing,  
We made a mighty sally,  
To furnish our carousing.  
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us;  
We met them, and o'erthrew them:  
They struggled hard to beat us;  
But we conquered them, and slew them.

As we drove our prize at leisure,  
The king marched forth to catch us:  
His rage surpassed all measure,  
But his people could not match us.  
He fled to his hall-pillars;  
And, ere our force we led off,  
Some sacked his house and cellars,  
While others cut his head off.

We there, in strife bewild'ring,  
Spilt blood enough to swim in:  
We orphaned many children,  
And widowed many women.  
The eagles and the ravens  
We glutted with our foemen;  
The heroes and the cravens,  
The spearmen and the bowmen.

We brought away from battle,  
And much their land bemoaned them,  
Two thousand head of cattle,



And the head of him who owned them:  
Ednyfed, king of Dyfed,  
His head was borne before us;  
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,  
And his overthrow, our chorus.

Thomas Love Peacock

# The War-Song Of Dinas Vawr

The mountain sheep are sweeter,  
But the valley sheep are fatter;  
We therefore deemed it meeter  
To carry off the latter.  
We made an expedition;  
We met a host, and quelled it;  
We forced a strong position,  
And killed the men who held it.

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Thomas Love Peacock

# Three Men Of Gotham

SEAMEN three! What men be ye?  
Gotham's three wise men we be.  
Whither in your bowl so free?  
To rake the moon from out the sea.  
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.  
And our ballast is old wine.--  
And your ballast is old wine.

Who art thou, so fast adrift?  
I am he they call Old Care.  
Here on board we will thee lift.  
No: I may not enter there.  
Wherefore so? 'Tis Jove's decree,  
In a bowl Care may not be.--  
In a bowl Care may not be.

Fear ye not the waves that roll?  
No: in charmed bowl we swim.  
What the charm that floats the bowl?  
Water may not pass the brim.  
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.  
And our ballast is old wine.--  
And your ballast is old wine.

Thomas Love Peacock