

As the King Passed By

As the king passed by, thro' the narrow street,
With a thousand menials¹ in his train,*
Ready to catch the downcast rein
Or lie in the dust at his princely feet,
A peasant sat in his lowly door,
And the sunshine lay on his cottage floor,
As the king passed by.

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And unto himself the peasant said
As he caught the shimmer of purple and gold
And saw the menials young and old
Attend each turn of the royal head:
"How enviable a man is he—
A life of ease and of minstrelsy!"²
As the king passed by.

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As the king passed by, his eyes beheld
The peasant sitting by his door,
And the golden sunlight on his floor.
And 'neath the purple his weary heart swelled,
And he sighed: "What were it worth to be

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