

## **Percy Bysshe Shelley**

***A Song: Men of England*** (written 1819 – published 1839)

Men of England, wherefore plough  
For the lords who lay ye low?  
Wherefore weave with toil and care  
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

Wherefore feed and clothe and save  
From the cradle to the grave  
Those ungrateful drones who would  
Drain your sweat – nay, drink your blood?

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge  
Many a weapon, chain and scourge,  
That these stingless drones may spoil  
The forced produce of your toil?

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,  
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?  
Or what is it ye buy so dear  
With your pain and with your fear?

The seed you sow, another reaps;  
The wealth ye find, another keeps;  
The robes ye weave, another wears;  
The arms ye forge, another bears.

Sow seed – but let no tyrant reap:  
Find wealth – let no impostor heap:  
Weave robes – let not the idle wear:  
Forge arms – in your defence to bear.

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells-  
In halls ye deck another dwells.  
Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see  
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

With plough and spade and hoe and loom  
Trace your grave and build your tomb  
And weave your winding-sheet – till fair  
England be your Sepulchre.