

The Seven Ages Of Man - song lyrics

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THE SEVEN AGES OF MAN.

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Shakespeare tells us seven ages constitute the life of man,
Reck'ning up from earliest childhood till he ends his mortal span;
First we see him as an infant, lolling on his mother's lap,
Swaddled up in lengthy garments, howling hugely for his pap.
Next a knickerbocker'd urchin, frosty nose and down at heel,
Always seedy, always needy, always hungry for his meal;
Worst of scholars, wearing collars of a wondrous shape and size,
Readier far for fights than lessons, proud to carry two black eyes.

Refrain.

With a slouch like this to school he goes,
With stockings down and peeping toes;
Sometimes he'll stop to punch a nose,
And in a fight engages.
An orchard wall he'll gaily climb,
And thinks each petty crime sublime;
His is the grimiest, happiest time
In Shakespeare's seven ages.

Next observe him as a lover, sighing at a maiden's feet,
Blushing, flushing, spooning, gushing, of a love that's incomplete,
Won't you have me, love me only? such the simple noodle's pleas;
I've no money, still what matters? we can live on bread and cheese.
Then we see him in his manhood wed to England's sacred cause,
Strong and brave a British soldier, fighting to protect our shores;
Fighting in the heat of battle for his country and his queen,
Where the conflict fiercest rages, there his stalwart form is seen.

Refrain.

With a dauntless heart to war he goes,-
With kindling eyes he meets his foes;
His flashing sword doth ne'er repose
While bitter warfare rages.
He stands erect in manhood's prime,
Protecting England's fame sublime;
His is the bravest, the manliest time
In Shakespeare's seven ages.

Fifth upon the list I'm quoting, comes the prosperous city man,
Sleek and sly, clad in broad-cloth, grasping all the wealth he can;
Till by some rash speculation all his funds are swept away.
And a friendless, hopeless bankrupt he is found one luckless day.
The sixth age comes upon him, drinks the God to whom he'll turn,
Drink that makes his eyes more sunken and his every pulse to burn;
Staggering, reeling thro' the city, where he once so proudly strode,
Dissipated, ragged, wretched, see him sinking in the road.

Refrain.

With a drunken leer he onward goes,
So pale his check, so red his nose;
His hat knocked in and torn his clothes,
He falls by frequent stages.
"Here, bar-maid, let's have one more drink,
A "go" for gin and here's the chink;"
This is the wretchedest scene I think
In Shakespeare's seven ages.

See the aged grand-dad sitting 'mongst the ones who loved him long.
Proud tears in his orbs so sunken as the children round him throng;
Slinking limbs and failing accents, eyes that now can scarcely see,
Close upon the final chapter of his seventh age is he.
Tot'ring thro' the little village, leaning heavy on his stick,
Life for bin grows shorter, shorter, death is pressing on him quick;
He can see again the lassie he wooed on the Devon shore,
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She has died long years since, but they soon will meet once more.

Refrain.

With a falt'ring step his way he goes,
Each aged limb that needs repose;
More feeble and yet feebler grows,
His life nears its last pages.
One sob, one sigh, one bitter moan.
One glance and then his spirit's flown
So draw the veil, thus ends the tale
Of Shakespeare's seven ages.