

King Cotton

See how the lint flies over the moorland
See how the smoke to the valley clings
See how the slate roofs shine in the drizzle
This is the valley where cotton is king.

See how the houses cling to the hillside
Hear how the streets of children sing
Wake to the scream of the factory hooter
This is the valley where cotton is king.

See how hunger has eaten the faces
Tired flesh to the bones just clings
There's dust in the lungs and the bodies are twisted
This is the valley where cotton is king.

Sleep is washed from the broken faces
Morning clogs on the cobbles ring
Off to the mill the weavers hurry
This is the valley where cotton is king.

Work all day to the looms' hard rhythm
Scrabble and toil till your tired bones sing
Then you crawl back home as the gas lights flicker
This is the valley where cotton is king.

This is the land where children labour
Where life and death mean the self-same thing
Where the many must work that the few might prosper
This is the valley where cotton is king.