

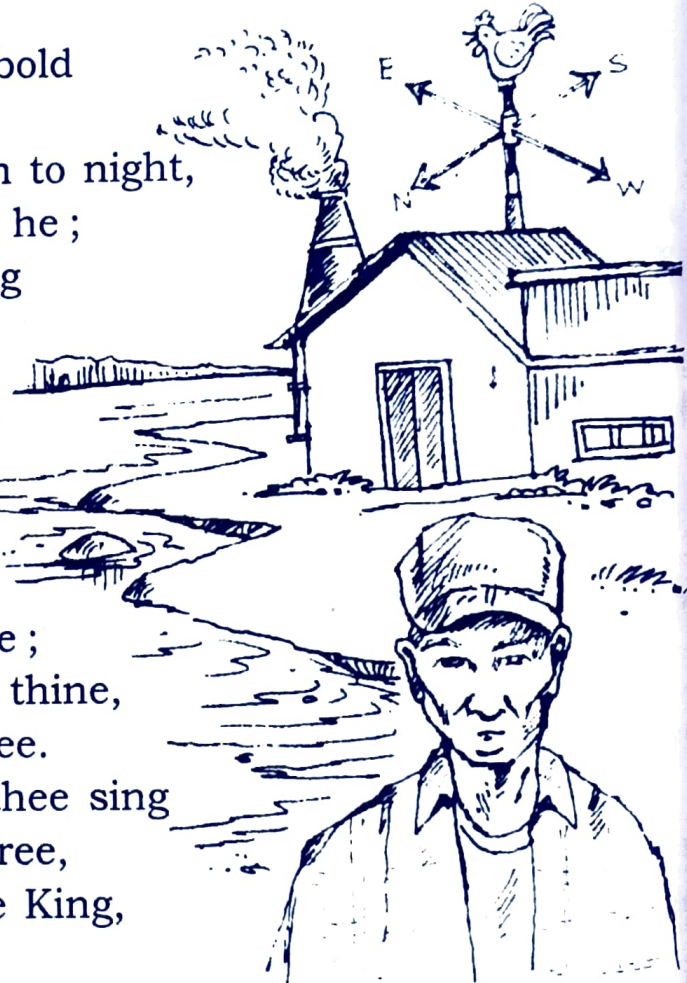
Lesson 2

The Miller of the Dee

[**Charles Mackay** was born in 1814 in Perth, Scotland. He made his literary reputation in 1846 with a collection of poem, 'Voices from the Crowd', and achieved popular success in the same year with the hit songs 'Cheer, Boys Cheer' and 'The Good Time Coming'. He had a doctorate in literature and was a successful journalist, poet and lyricist of 19th century. He died in 1889.]

There dwelt a miller hale and bold
Beside the river Dee ;
He worked and sang from morn to night,
No lark more blithe than he ;
And this the burden of his song
For ever used to be,-
"I envy nobody : no, not I,
And nobody envies me !"

"Thou'rt wrong, my friend !"
Said old King Hal,
"Thou'rt wrong as wrong can be ;
For could my heart be light as thine,
I'd gladly change with thee.
And tell me now what makes thee sing
With voice so loud and free,
While I am sad, though I'm the King,
Beside the river Dee ?"



The miller smiled and doff'd his cap :
 "I earn my bread," quoth he ;
"I love my wife, I love my friend,
 I love my children three ;
I owe no penny I cannot pay ;—
 I thank the river Dee
That turns the mill that grinds the corn,
 To feed my babes and me."

"Good friend ! said Hal, and sigh'd the while,
 "Farewell ! and happy be ;
But say no more, if thou'dst be true,
 That no one envies thee.
Thy mealy cap is worth my crown,—
 Thy mill my kingdom's fee !
Such men as thou are England's boast,
 O miller of the Dee !"

The poem : In this poem the poet tells about a miller who lived a happy and contented life. One day the king met him and was surprised to see that a humble miller was so happy whereas he himself was unhappy. But the miller explained that he performed every duty of his simple life sincerely and that kept him happy. The king realised that the miller's humble life was more desirable than his royal life.

Wordnote

miller	:	a person who owns or is in charge of a mill
Dee	:	a river in England.
hale	:	healthy and strong
lark	:	skylark
blithe	:	happy

burden	:	a heavy load that one carries ; a difficult duty or responsibility
envy	:	dissatisfy with other's belongings
thou'rt	:	thou art – old English, meaning–you are
thine	:	your
doff'd	:	removed the cap to show respect
quoth	:	old English– meaning said
penny	:	the smallest unit of money in Britain
grinds	:	makes smaller pieces
thou'dst	:	Old English, meaning– you would
mealy	:	dry and powdery
boast	:	pride

EXERCISE

1. Name one collection of poetry by Charles Mackay. 1
2. Where did the miller live ? 1
3. Why did the king want to exchange his heart with miller ? 2
4. What makes the miller sing so loud and free ? 3
5. Explain with reference to the context. 4
 “Such men as thou are England’s boast
 O miller of the Dee !”
6. Find out four words from the poem that rhyme with ‘Dee’.

$$\frac{1}{2} \times 4 = 2$$

