

# **A Bill for the Better Promotion of Oppression on the Sabbath D**

Thomas Love Peacock

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FORASMUCH as the Canter's and Fanatic's Lord  
Sayeth peace and joy are by me abhorred;  
And would fill each Sunday with gloom and pain  
For all too poor his regard to obtain;  
And forasmuch as the laws heretofore  
Have not sufficiently squeezed the poor  
Be it therefore enacted by Commons, King  
And Lords, a crime for any thing  
To be done on the Sabbath by any rank  
Excepting the rich. No beer may be drank,  
Food eaten, rest taken, away from home,  
And each House shall a Sunday prison become;  
And spies and jailers must carefully see,  
Under severest penalty,  
None stirs but to conventicle,  
Thrice a day at toll of bell.  
And each sickly cit who dare engage  
His place by steamer, fly or stage,  
With owner thereof shall by this said bill,  
Be punished with fine, imprisonment or treadmill.  
But nothing herein is designed to discourage  
Priest, noble or squire from the use of his carriage.  
No ship shall move however it blow,  
The Devil a bit shall said ship go  
Whether the winds will let it or no;  
And, as winds and weather we cannot imprison,  
Owners, Captain and sailors we therefore shall seize on,  
And whereas oxen, lambs and sheep  
About the roads and lanes will creep,  
And cocks and hens and ducks and geese  
Will not on Sunday hold their peace,  
Be it enacted that foresaid beasts,  
If not belonging to gentry or priests,  
Be caught and whipped and pounded on Sunday,  
And sold to pay expences on Monday.  
The drunkard, who paid five shillings before,  
Shall now pay twenty shillings more,  
And mine host, if on Sabbath he dare unloose

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A bolt, shall be fined and his licence lose.  
All oranges, cakes & lollypop  
Shall be sized; & every open shop  
Shall be fined a pound an hour till it stop.  
Till nine the milkman may ply his trade,  
For pious breakfasts must be made  
At the risk of his soul. And the bakers at last,  
When the poor man's dinner is clearly past,  
Must set to work, the godly scorning  
Stale rolls and bread on a Monday morning.  
That Justices may have less to do,  
'Tis enacted they may convict on view,  
And shall, if they think the cause more drastic  
Transfer to Courts Ecclesiastic.  
All informers shall pass scot free,  
However false their averments may be;  
And witnesses who have no mind  
To convict shall be imprisoned and fined.  
And whereas from this act's operation  
Are exempted the following ranks in this nation:  
The rich man's servants – they cannot be spared  
(In spite of Scripture) from working hard –;  
Milkmen in the morning; at evening the bakers,  
With constables, doctors, thieves, parsons, tollmakers;  
And parties for music, gambling or dinners  
Are hereby exempt, when the rich are the sinners;  
For no party whatever has aught to fear  
From said act who has more than £500 a year.