

1834

ABOU BEN ADHEM

Leigh Hunt

Hunt (James Henry) Leigh (1784-1859) - English essayist, poet, and political radical who was once imprisoned for publishing an article in "The Examiner" (one of many journals he edited) attacking the future George IV. He was an early champion of Keats and Shelley, and was briefly associated with Byron.

Abou Ben Adhem (1834) - One of Hunt's memorable short poems. Opening lines: Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase) / Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace.

ABOU BEN ADHEM**(may his tribe increase)**

Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw- within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom
An angel, writing in a book of gold.

Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou?'- The vision raised its head,
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,

Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still, and said, 'I pray thee, then,

Write me as one that loves his fellow men.'
The angel wrote, and vanish'd. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

THE END