

The Sturdy Beggars

Hark, hark, the dogs do bark
The beggars are coming to town,
Some in rags, and some in tags,
And some in velvet gown.

Keynesian technique notwithstanding, our world is still threatened by unemployment, the penalty for this political crime being Communism or some other form of totalitarianism, or social degradation of some other kind. We are indebted to Mrs. Mabel L. Rees, of Brooklyn, U.S.A., for the following simple lesson in verse:—

THE BEGGARS STILL ARE MARCHING

The town was sleeping peacefully
Upon that wintry night,
When all the dogs began to bark
And I arose in fright.

On opening my casement wide,
And then on looking down,
I saw a ragged beggarman
Who wore a velvet gown.

Advancing from the shadows,
On shuffling feet and slow,
There followed him a wretched band,
With murmured sounds of woe.

Then leaning out in the moonlight,
I cried in a raucous voice:
"I'd think you'd be ashamed to *beg*,
Why not make *work* your choice?"

"Are there no fields that you can plough,
Has no one here a trade?
I know I'd gladly dig a ditch
Before I'd ask for aid."

"And so would we," the leader cried,
"If only you will show
Where we can use our strength and skill,
We'll all be glad to go."

At dawn I quickly took command,
Resolved to demonstrate
That all this talk about no work
Had always been a fake!

'Tis true we passed much vacant land,
Held out of use for gain,
But all our pleas to plant or build
Were everywhere in vain.

Full many a month has come and gone
Since I began this quest,
And now, alas, I have become
A *Beggar* like the rest.

All hope had died within my breast,
Until I heard, one day,
There is a plan to end this wrong,
That's called the *Georgist* way.

But now the watch-dogs bark again,
And onward we must go,
While jeering townsmen cry aloud,
"You ought to *work* you know!"