

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## Idlers and Skivers (Knocking at the Door)

Idlers and Skivers (Knocking at the Door)

(Keith Marsden)

We're the idlers, we're the skivers, we're the undeserving poor  
See how prettily we curtsy and we bow?  
See us stand with cap in hand again outside the rich man's door  
For the new Victorian age is dawning now  
And we mind our manners as before, we watch our Q's and P's  
We're grateful for the handouts and we always try to please  
And we will not raise our heads when they prefer us on our knees  
For we're only idle undeserving poor

cho: But we're knocking at the door, we're knocking at the door  
And a penny in the poor man's hat will no longer do  
You'd better open wide and let us come in inside  
For the knocking's nearly over and the door's coming through

We were jumped up little oiks and erks, the undeserving poor  
When we found ourselves the masters for a day  
For we'd fought and bled and died a lot to win the second war  
And we thought we'd earned the right to have our say  
So we sang of New Jerusalem, they didn't like the song  
They threw their spanners in the works and laughed when all went wrong  
And we should have known they'd never let us be the masters long  
Not the jumped up oiks, the undeserving poor

Then they taught us to be selfish, never had it so good poor  
And they dangled such a tempting, juicy fly  
And we saw their shabby goodies in an 'I'm Alright Jack' store  
And we couldn't wait to rush inside and buy  
For then money was the godhead and the only gospel greed  
We sold our gains to fill the ad-man's non-existent need  
With a mess of tatty trinkets and a pile of plastic beads  
And we stayed the idle, undeserving poor

Still we trusted in their promises, we undeserving poor  
When they said we marched toward some sunlit plain  
All the dark times were behind us, only golden days before  
But it turned into the same old lies again  
For they gave the rope we asked for and we didn't have a care

As they showed us to the scaffold, and we blithely climbed the stair  
Then they kicked away the trap and left us hanging in the air  
And we're hanging still, the undeserving poor

And if you've not yet enlisted in the army of the poor  
Never fear, you've call-up papers on the way  
Or perhaps you think you're fireproof, well you'd better think some more  
For your turn is coming soon some future day  
They don't need you on the land now or on the factory floor  
They won't even need you when they go and start the final war  
Best be ready when they start to ask what do they need you for  
When you're only idle, undeserving poor

But you haven't done your duty when you've sung about the poor  
If you never raise a hand to ease their plight  
If you sing the chorus louder, it might ease your conscience more  
But pious thoughts do not excuse you from the fight  
For the times are getting harder and we haven't seen the worse  
They still foul the wells of plenty while so many die of thirst  
So we will rebuild Jerusalem but clean the temple first  
And they'll wish they'd taken pity on the poor.

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