

Encouraged by Thy Word

John Newton, 1779.

Joseph Barnby, 1889.

Encouraged by Thy word

Of promise to the poor;

Behold, a beggar, Lord,

Waits at Thy mercy's door!

No hand, no heart, O Lord, but Thine,

Can help or pity wants like mine.

The beggar's usual plea

Relief from men to gain,

If offered unto Thee,

I know Thou would'st disdain:

And pleas which move Thy gracious ear,

Are such as men would scorn to hear.

I have no right to say

That though I now am poor,

Yet once there was a day

When I possessed more:

Thou know'st that from my very birth,

I've been the poorest wretch on earth.

Nor can I dare profess,

As beggars often do,

Though great is my distress,

My wants have been but few:

If Thou shouldst leave my soul to starve,

It would be what I well deserve.

'Twere folly to pretend

I never begged before;

Or if Thou now befriend,

I'll trouble Thee no more:

Thou often hast relieved my pain,

And often I must come again.

Though crumbs are much too good

For such a dog as I;

No less than children's food

My soul can satisfy:

O do not frown and bid me go,

I must have all Thou canst bestow.

Nor can I willing be

Thy bounty to conceal

From others, who like me,

Their wants and hunger feel:

I'll tell them of Thy mercy's store,

And try to send a thousand more.

Thy thoughts, Thou only wise!

Our thoughts and ways transcend,

Far as the arched skies

Above the earth extend:

Such pleas as mine men would not bear,

But God receives a beggar's prayer.