

# THE GODS OF THE *Copybook Headings*

RUDYARD KIPLING

AS I PASS through my incarnations in every age and race,  
I make my proper prostrations to the Gods of the Market Place.  
Peering through reverent fingers I watch them flourish and fall,  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings, I notice, outlast them all.

We were living in trees when they met us. They showed us each in turn  
That Water would certainly wet us, as Fire would certainly burn:  
But we found them lacking in Uplift, Vision and Breadth of Mind,  
So we left them to teach the Gorillas while we followed the March  
of Mankind.

We moved as the Spirit listed. *They* never altered their pace,  
Being neither cloud nor wind-borne like the Gods of the Market Place,  
But they always caught up with our progress, and presently word  
would come  
That a tribe had been wiped off its icefield, or the lights had  
gone out in Rome.

With the Hopes that our World is built on they were utterly out of  
touch,  
They denied that the Moon was Stilton; they denied she was even  
Dutch;  
They denied that Wishes were Horses; they denied that a Pig had  
Wings;  
So we worshipped the Gods of the Market Who promised these  
beautiful things.

When the Cambrian measures were forming, They promised perpetual peace.

They swore, if we gave them our weapons, that the wars of the tribes would cease.

And when we disarmed They sold us and delivered us bound to our foe,  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings said: "*Stick to the Devil you know.*"

On the first Feminian Sandstones we were promised the Fuller Life  
(Which started by loving our neighbour and ended by loving his wife)  
Till our women had no more children and the men lost reason and faith,  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings said: "*The Wages of Sin is Death.*"

In the Carboniferous Epoch we were promised abundance for all,  
By robbing selected Peter to pay for collective Paul;  
But, though we had plenty of money, there was nothing our money could buy,  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings said: "*If you don't work you die.*"

Then the Gods of the Market tumbled, and their smooth-tongued wizards withdrew,  
And the hearts of the meanest were humbled and began to believe it was true  
That All is not Gold that Glitters, and Two and Two make Four —  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings limped up to explain it once more.

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As it will be in the future, it was at the birth of Man —  
There are only four things certain since Social Progress began: —  
That the Dog returns to his Vomit and the Sow returns to her Mire,  
And the burnt Fool's bandaged finger goes wabbling back to the Fire;

And that after this is accomplished, and the brave new world begins  
When all men are paid for existing and no man must pay for his sins,  
As surely as Water will wet us, as surely as Fire will burn,  
The Gods of the Copybook Headings with terror and slaughter return!

**WHO'S**

**FORGOTTEN**

**NOW?**

GEORGE M. CLARK

"THE FORGOTTEN MAN," first described by Professor William Graham Sumner in the 1880's, was the hard-working taxpayer. A half century later, "the forgotten man" of the New Deal meant a person of low income — the "underprivileged" and "neglected."

The New Deal sprang from the premise that a free economic system favors some and forgets others, and that it is the duty of the government to right this alleged wrong. Reasoning that one of the best ways to help the poor is to take from the rich, New Deal theorists concluded that this could be done most effectively through a steeply progressive income tax.

Now that this idea has been implemented on a large scale in America for nearly a quarter of a century, it is time to ask what its repercussions have been. Has it really benefited — remembered — the so-called forgotten man?

The superficial answer has to be "Yes." The "national income" is at an all-time high, even after due allowance for inflated dollars. Most people today, including the New Deal's "forgotten man," are somewhat better off in a material sense — they have more actual purchasing power than before. Tangible evidence includes cars, homes, washing machines, refrigerators — and better food inside the refrigerators.

Acknowledging such economic progress for the once "forgotten man," one nevertheless may ask: Is this *because* of the change we have made — because of the trend toward paternalistic government with huge subsidies and steeply progressive taxation — or *in spite of it*? And the answer seems clear to me that if we had pursued an opposite course, toward less government intervention and lower taxes, all of us — including the so-called common man — would be more prosperous than we are now.

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