

## WHO ARE VAGRANTS?

### And Shall They be Permitted to Take Possession of the Town?

City Ordinance No. 68, passed the 26th of February, 1883, and approved on the 27th, reads as follows: Section 1. "Every person (except a California Indian) without visible means of living, who has the physical ability to work and who does not for the space of ten days seek employment, nor labor when employment is offered him; every healthy beggar who solicits alms as a business; every person who roams about from place to place without any lawful business; every idle or dissolute person, or associate of known thieves, who wanders about the streets at late or unusual hours of the night, or who lodges in any barn, shed, shop, outhouse, vessel or place other than such as is kept for lodging purposes without permission of the owner or party entitled to the possession thereof, every lewd and dissolute person who lives in and about houses of ill-fame, and every common prostitute and common drunkard is a vagrant and punishable by imprisonment in the city jail not to exceed ninety days, or by a fine not to exceed ninety dollars, or by both such fine and imprisonment, and in case of sentence of imprisonment the Court may make it a part of the judgment and sentence that the person so sentenced shall perform labor in the chain-gang of said city during the time of said imprisonment."

It would seem that the ordinance is broad enough to cover the cases of the tramps and beggars who now infest the city. They march boldly up to the residences of our citizens and almost demand food or clothing. They stop you at night on every block of the city asking for money. It is clearly the duty of the police force to arrest every man whose case is defined by the ordinance, and it is just as clearly the duty of the court to punish every offender. A little vigorous action will teach the tramps to avoid this city. It is said that Oakland is entirely free from the annoyance and danger of tramps and beggars, because no case is allowed to escape, but every man convicted of such an offense is set to breaking stones on the reef. One lesson is generally sufficient, and after receiving it, the offender gives the city a wide berth. When will our city authorities take such action as to afford the citizens relief from the annoyance and danger from an army of vagrants?