

THE MEANEST MAN

What has this to do with my offer?
Be patient, my dear Sarah Ann,
If you'd listened a minute longer
You'd have caught a glimpse of the man.

For right there all creaking and groaning,
Beneath some rough limbs meant for wood,
In front of the door of the cottage
Old Abner Green's big waggon stood.

An' Abner came in without knocking,
A-nodding to her, an' to me,
"What, two of us here! well there's nothin'
Like havin' good neighbors," said he.

"Now, I've heard you're mazin' poor, Missus,
An' I reckon it must be true,
Speak out to us fully and freely,
It maybe I can help you through."

She told him—I sat there and listened
To a story of hopes and fears,
Of poverty, sorrow, and heartbreak,
Till I scarce could see for the tears.

She talked of the home of her childhood,
Of parents and friends kind and true,
Of seasons o'erflowing with pleasure,
Of skies that were cloudless and blue,