

## IN THE WORKHOUSE

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“Do you think I will take your bounty,  
And let you smile and think  
You’re doing a noble action  
With the parish’s meat and drink?  
Where is my wife, you traitors—  
The poor old wife you slew?  
Yes, by the God above us,  
My Nance was killed by you!

“Last winter my wife lay dying,  
Starved in a filthy den;  
I had never been to the parish,—  
I came to the parish then.  
I swallowed my pride in coming,  
For, ere the ruin came,  
I held up my head as a trader,  
And I bore a spotless name.

“I came to the parish, craving  
Bread for a starving wife,  
Bread for the woman who’d loved me  
Through fifty years of life;  
And what do you think they told me,  
Mocking my awful grief?  
That ‘the House’ was open to us,  
But they wouldn’t give ‘out relief.’