

The Shanty By the Way

Dr Percy Jones collected this song in New Zealand from a man who heard two old diggers singing it. They had learnt it from a miner on the west coast who had come from Australia in the 19th century. It is derived from an E J Overbury poem (1865)

Verse

1 It's in a first - rate bus - iness sec - tion where four bush - roads cross and meet.

4 It stands in a qui - et and neat di - rec - tion to rest the wear - y trav - el - lers' feet.

9 Ker - o - sene lamps are shin - ing bright - ly; cards and lo the bil - liard balls:

13 Men and maids are danc - ing light - ly to the mus - ic in - side those walls.

Chorus

17 Rows of bot - tles stand - ing up - right, label - led with bright blue and gold,

21 Beer's so cold it needs no ic - ing from the cel - lar's drear dark hold.

There's quoits and games and bagatelle, all to suit your fancy—oh;
 But better far behind the bar stands smiling darling Nancy—oh.
 Nancy's smiles are quite beguiling to make some fun she's willing—oh.
 You give a rap she turns the tap and thanks you for your shilling—oh.

Landlord stands with smiling face, He likes to see your cash forked out.
 Landlord stands with smiling face, Sometimes he will stand a shout.
 Landlord shouting is uncommon. He's kidding you to dance and play.
 How the devil can a man keep sober in the shanty by the way?

When you wake up in the morning In your thirst without a mag
 You cast around a sad reflection As you shoulder up your swag.
 Penniless you'll have to wander for many a long and weary day
 Till you earn another cheque to squander in the shanty by the way.