

HOME INFLUENCE

A young man sat on a bench one night
In the driving sleet and snow,
His poor limbs ached, his face was white,
But he had nowhere else to go.

Gay shouts of laughter reached his ears;
Then he slowly turned around,
His weak frame trembled much with fear
As he listened to the sound.

The saloon lights shone out all aglow.
"Come, let us be merry," they say;
But the young man said, "I'll die in the snow
Rather than die that way."

He wandered around from street to street,
His limbs ached more and more,
Till he wandered back to the same old seat
In front of the saloon door.

He soon watched a man come out
Who tottered on the street,
Slowly wandered round about
Till he reached him on the seat.

He took more drink to still the crave;
He would curse and moan and weep.
This young man listened to him rave
Till his very flesh would creep.

As the lad started off to roam
To find some place of rest,
Thoughts of his poor old mother and home
With sadness filled his breast.

"The struggle to live is hard," he cried,
"But still I'll never give up,
For manhood's sake I'll never become
A slave of the drinking cup.

"With steady hand and balanced mind
I'll keep on in the fight;
Then some day I know I'll find
Reward for doing right."