

A MOTHER'S APPEAL

THE twilight hour was fading and the sun had sunk in
the west,
The birds had ceased from singing and the children
were at rest.
With aching limbs and burdened soul I sat and mused alone
And wondered if God controlled this earth from His
heavenly throne.

My baby had gone to bed crying he was hungry, for he
told me so.
Why could I not give him more food to eat?—that's what
he wanted to know.
"Do you not love me, mamma?" my darling baby had said;
"Why does dada not kiss me now before I go to bed?"

What could I do but hug my child and kiss his tears away,
And tell him that God would teach dada to love him some
day.
E'en as I prayed the devil mocked, my heart stood still
with fear,
For the heavy tread of drunken feet fell on my listening
ear.

As I gazed on that bloated face my soul was stricken dumb;
I knew that every good impulse in that man's heart was
numb.
He is baby's father—what language its terrors can tell,
It sinks my soul in despair as deep as the caverns of hell.

Friend, do you know what it is to mourn bound down by
this curse?
A starving child tender and mild, an empty heart and purse.
Have you ever sat in the shadow, friendless and alone,
With the wild cries of your child chilling your blood to
the bone.

Have you been thrust from Eden's garden where once
your heart did dwell,
By the hands of him you worshipped into the gates of Hell?
Oh, tell me is it real to you, or does it only seem
The babbling of a burdened soul or a meaningless dream?

'Tis true God knows it—I repeat it with heart that must
bleed,
Whene'er I think of my baby and of his soul's deep need.
Fathers, mothers, I pray you, fight at all costs for the right;
Drink is the curse of the country—clear the earth of this
blight.