

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILD

YOU ask me why I loathe the drink,
Oh, friend, just pause awhile and think
How my path has been strewn with thorns and
tears,
Every hour in the day over-raided by fears.

Did I not watch by my dear mother's side
When she breathed her last on earth and died—
A poor crushed heart bowed down by cares,
Which only a drunkard's wife knows and bears.

Have I not held baby sister's hand,
And heard her little voice demand
"That sister would give her bread to eat?"
Ah, then, my misery hath been complete.

When my father staggers home at night,
His once bright eyes dimmed by that cursed blight,
And strikes his daughter a deadly blow,
Drink will not let him mercy bestow.

When the saloon keeper's child passes our way
With healthful cheeks and colors gay,
Then I look at baby's starved wee face,
I wrestle with God for help and grace.

Yes, my father will watch his baby die
While he spends every cent in the saloon close by;
I must sit and hear her sweet voice pleading
For the food that she is so sadly needing.

No, the curse has too strong a hold;
The grip of its arms will never unfold
Till the earth is free from this awful blight.
Oh, friend, lend a hand in this deadly fight.

Baby sister is laid by her mother in peace;
Her hunger and pain has forever ceased.
The two I loved have been starved unto death;
I will curse the drink till my latest breath.

Is this the same man who wooed and wed
That dear, gentle heart so long since dead?
Ah, no, 'tis a devil in the shape of drink
Who has dragged his soul to distraction's brink.

I wrestle with God on bended knee
That He will let me live to be
A member of that noble band
Who will sweep the drink from off the land.

You know, then, the reason, friend,
Why I will ever this cause defend.
I hate the drink in my inmost heart,
And to crush it is on earth my part.