

## *The Shunter*

*The engine bars are splashed and starr'd  
They've killed a shunter in the yard.*

"He never seen how he was struck,  
And he died sudden," someone said.  
The driver coughed—"That flamin' truck  
Come on the slant and struck him dead."  
The fireman choked and growled "Hard luck!"  
As he was carried to the shed.

The engine whistles short and low  
(His blood is on her "catcher-bars").  
We had to let his young wife know  
His soul had passed beyond the stars,  
Where he will hear no engines blow,  
Nor listen for the coming cars.

She stared and stared—until he came,  
On four men's shoulders, up the hill.  
She sobbed and laughed and called his name,  
And shivered when he lay so still—  
She had no cruel words of blame—  
She bore no one of us ill-will.

They've washed the rails and sprinkled sand.  
(Oh! hear the mail go roaring on!)  
And he was just a railway hand—  
A hidden star that never shone—  
And no one seems to understand—  
Her heart is broken! He is gone!

*The engine-bars are cold and hard—  
They've killed a shunter in the yard.*

Will Lawson

*Published in The Bulletin, 1903.*