



BRASSWORK  
or  
THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER'S LAMENT

Oh what is the bane of a lightkeeper's life  
That causes him worry, struggle and strife,  
That makes him use cuss words, and beat his wife?

It's Brasswork.

What makes him look ghastly consumptive and thin,  
What robs him of health, of vigor and vim,  
And causes despair and drives him to sin?

It's Brasswork.

The devil himself could never invent,  
A material causing more worldwide lament,  
And in Uncle Sam's service about ninety percent

Is Brasswork.

The lamp in the tower, reflector and shade,  
The tools and reflectors pass in parade  
As a matter of fact the whole outfit is made

Of Brasswork

The oil containers I polish until,  
My poor back is broken, aching, and still  
Each gallon and quart, each pint and gill

Is Brasswork.

I lay down to slumber all weary and sore,  
I walk in my sleep, I awake with a snore  
And I'm shining the knob on my bedchamber door.

That's Brasswork

From pillar to post rags and polish I tote  
I'm never without them, for you will please note  
That even the buttons I wear on my coat

Are Brasswork

The machinery, clockwork, and fog signal bell  
The coal hods, the dust pans, the pump in the well  
Now I'll leave it to you mates, if this isn't well

Brasswork.

I dig, scrub and polish, and work with a might,  
And just when I get it all shining and bright,  
In comes the fog like a thief in the night;

Good-bye Brasswork.

I start the next day and when noontime draws near,  
A boatload of Summer visitors appear,  
For no other purpose, then to smooth and besmear

My Brasswork.

So it goes all the Summer, and along in the Fall,  
Comes the district machinist to overhaul  
and rub dirty and greasy paws over all

My Brasswork.

And again in the Spring, if perchance it may be,  
An efficiency star is awarded to me  
I open the package and what do I see?

More Brasswork.

Oh why should the spirit of mortal be proud,  
In the short span of life that he is allowed  
If all the lining in every dark cloud

Is Brasswork.

And when I have polished until I am cold  
And I'm taken aloft to the Heavenly fold  
Will my harp and my crown be made of pure gold?

No, Brasswork.

By Fred Morong