

## SAVIOR OF MOTHERS

We thank you, Ignaz Semmelweis, who taught against the tide  
That in the obstetrician's hands diseases often hide.  
You made your student doctors scrub with chlorinated lime,  
And puerperal-fever deaths occurred one-twelfth the time.

You saved so many mothers, yet your proud and godlike peers  
Did not applaud your methods, tried to drown your voice with jeers.  
You wrote and lectured zealously defending what was true,  
And forced the world of medicine to face the facts you knew.

But pride insists on being right—it fears when proven wrong. . . .  
So you were crushed, dear Semmelweis, before tradition's throng.  
The medical establishment had knowledge far above  
The precepts we today obey when slipping on the glove.

They crucified your reputation, slapped you in the heart,  
Returned to killing mothers with their dirty-handed art.  
The mental pain and breakdown you endured was not in vain,  
Although you died dejected in a house for souls insane.

Ironic, “mother's savior,” how a wound upon your hand,  
Infected with the fever you had fought throughout your land,  
Would take you like a martyr from a world that soon would turn  
To build upon the principles you made your students learn.

— *David L. Hatton 3/3/1992*