

Ruin'd of life nor rescued by the grave,  
Robb'd of their priceless legacy of toil  
For self-dependence and their country's worth,  
Fall'n from the ranks they watch the tide press on,  
Left by the way all desolate to bide  
The pittance bare a prosper'd land affords  
Her sons who gave their all to save her need.  
Struck out of strength and action they must bear  
The mocking brutes who make their torture's throe  
A mummer's jest, or raise the mimic's jeer,  
And penalize the cripple for his pains,  
That he who suffers most must feel the more;  
Save where sweet mercy sheds her silent glow  
To light their darkness through the lonely day  
Till death shall wake the dawn of work anew.  
What peace can clear thee of these crumpled lives  
Thy sin hath wronged more foully than the dead?  
Broken, disfigur'd, blind, unnerved, insane,  
Dislimb'd, unfeatured, they shall haunt thy brain;  
By day the flesh, by night a phantom host,  
Drawn from a dozen lands all steep'd in blood  
At thy behest, shall crowd in phalanx deep  
To stack their sharded members o'er thy bed  
Till, palace-high, their grim and ghastly pile  
Makes for all time the fitting monument  
For thine imperial fame. Well mayst thou shriek  
For death's cold mercy in thy smother'd dream!

But art thou sure of peace beyond the tomb!  
Are the wise fools of earth's academy  
Faultless of sight, who hold the cluster'd heav'ns  
Barren of life,—God but the priestcraft name  
Thy feigning lip spat forth in falsehood pray'r?  
Ponder it well;—perchance yon stream of blood  
May sluice the wheel that mills thy grinding fate  
Where God's great quern shall husk thy soul of sin,  
If aught be left when thou art winnow'd through!  
Death puts no finis to a foul-play'd tale;