

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;