

For the Bugle.

BURY ME IN A FREE LAND.

BY FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS.

You may make my grave wherever you will,
In a lowly vale or a lofty hill;
You may make it among earth's humblest
graves,
But not in a land where men are slaves.

I could not sleep if around my grave
I heard the steps of a trembling slave;
His shadow above my silent tomb
Would make it a place of fearful gloom.

I could not rest if I heard the tread
Of a coffin-gang to the shambles led,
And the mother's shriek of wild despair
Rise like a curse on the trembling air.

I could not rest if I heard the lash
Drinking her blood at each fearful gash,
And I saw her babes torn from her breast
Like trembling doves from their parent nest.

I'd shudder and start, if I heard the bay
Of the bloodhounds seizing their human
prey;
If I heard the captive plead in vain
As they tightened afresh his galling chain.

If I saw young girls, from their mothers' arms
Bartered and sold for their youthful charms
My eye would flash with a mournful flame,
My death-paled cheek grow red with shame.

I would sleep, dear friends, where bloated
might
Can rob no man of his dearest right;
My rest shall be calm in any grave.
Where none calls his brother a slave.

I ask no monument proud and high
To arrest the gaze of passers by;
All that my spirit yearning craves,
Is—bury me not in the land of slaves.—

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