



Thanks-

giving

Poetry

Lyrics of Life: “Thanksgiving”

1909, by Florence Earle Coates (1850-1927)

NOW gracious plenty rules the board,
And in the purse is gold;
By multitudes in glad accord
Thy giving is extolled.
Ah, suffer *me* to thank Thee, Lord,
For what thou dost withhold!

I thank Thee that howe'er we climb
There yet is something higher;
That though through all our reach of time
We to the stars aspire,
Still, still beyond us burns sublime
The pure sidereal fire!

I thank Thee for the unexplained,
The hope that lies before,
The victory that is not gained,—
O Father, more and more
I thank Thee for the unattained,
The good we hunger for!

I thank Thee for the voice that sings
To inner depths of being;
For all the spread and sweep of wings,
From earthly bondage freeing;
For mystery—the dream of things
Beyond our power of seeing!

A Thanksgiving Poem

1893, by Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

The sun hath shed its kindly light,
Our harvesting is gladly o'er
Our fields have felt no killing blight,
Our bins are filled with goodly store.

From pestilence, fire, flood, and sword
We have been spared by thy decree,
And now with humble hearts,
O Lord, We come to pay our thanks to thee.

We feel that had our merits been
The measure of thy gifts to us,
We erring children, born of sin,
Might not now be rejoicing thus.

No deed of ours hath brought us grace;
When thou were nigh our sight was dull,
We hid in trembling from thy face,
But thou, O God, wert merciful.

Thy mighty hand o'er all the land
Hath still been open to bestow
Those blessings which our wants demand
From heaven, whence all blessings flow.

Thou hast, with ever watchful eye,
Looked down on us with holy care,
And from thy storehouse in the sky
Hast scattered plenty everywhere.

Then lift we up our songs of praise
To thee, O Father, good and kind;
To thee we consecrate our days;
Be thine the temple of each mind.

With incense sweet our thanks ascend;
Before thy works our powers pall;
Though we should strive years without end,
We could not thank thee for them all.

The Thanksgiving in Boston Harbor

1630, by Hezekiah Butterworth (1836-1905)

JULY, 1630.

"Praise ye the Lord!" The psalm to-day
Still rises on our ears.
Borne from the hills of Boston Bay
Through five times fifty years.

When Winthrop's fleet from Yarmouth crept
Out to the open main,
And through the widening waters swept,
In April sun and rain.

"Pray to the Lord with fervent lips,"*
The leader shouted, "Pray";
And prayer arose from all the ships
As faded Yarmouth Bay.

They passed the Scilly Isles that day,
And May-days came, and June,
And thrice upon the ocean lay
The full orb of the moon.

And as that day, on Yarmouth Bay,
Ere England sunk from view,
While yet the rippling Solent lay
In April skies of blue,

"Pray to the Lord with fervent lips,"
Each morn was shouted, "Pray";
And prayer arose from all the ships,
As first in Yarmouth Bay.

Blew warm the breeze o'er Western seas,
Through Maytime morns, and June,
Till hailed these souls the Isles of Shoals,
Low 'neath the summer moon;

And as Cape Ann arose to view,
And Norman's Woe they passed,
The wood-doves came the white mists
through,
And circled round each mast.

"Pray to the Lord with fervent lips,"
Then called the leader, "Pray";
And prayer arose from all the ships,
As first in Yarmouth Bay.

Above the sea the hill-tops fair —
God's towers — began to rise,
And odors rare breathe through the air,
Like balms of Paradise.

Through burning skies the ospreys flew,
And near the pine-cooled shores
Danced airy boat and thin canoe,
To flash of sunlit oars.

"Pray to the Lord with fervent lips,"
The leader shouted, "Pray!"
Then prayer arose, and all the ships
Sailed into Boston Bay.

The white wings folded, anchors down,
The sea-worn fleet in line,
Fair rose the hills where Boston town
Should rise from clouds of pine;

Fair was the harbor, summit-walled,
And placid lay the sea.

"Praise ye the Lord," the leader called;
"Praise ye the Lord," spake he.

"Give thanks to God with fervent lips,
Give thanks to God to-day,"
The anthem rose from all the ships,
Safe moored in Boston Bay.

"Praise ye the Lord!" Primeval woods
First heard the ancient song,
And summer hills and solitudes
The echoes rolled along.

The Red Cross flag of England blew
Above the fleet that day,
While Shawmut's triple peaks in view,
In amber hazes lay.

"Praise ye the Lord with fervent lips,
Praise ye the Lord to-day,"
The anthem rose from all the ships,
Safe moored in Boston Bay.

The Arabella leads the song —
The Mayflower sings below —
That erst the Pilgrims bore along
The Plymouth reefs of snow.

Oh! never be that psalm forgot,
That rose o'er Boston Bay,
When Winthrop sung, and Endicott,
And Saltonstall, that day.

"Praise ye the Lord with fervent lips,
Praise ye the Lord to-day";
And praise arose from all the ships,
Like prayers in Yarmouth Bay.

That psalm our fathers sung we sing,
That psalm of peace and wars,
While o'er our heads unfolds its wing
The flag of forty stars.

And while the nation finds a tongue
For nobler gifts to pray,
'Twill ever sing the song they sung
That first Thanksgiving Day:

"Praise ye the Lord with fervent lips,
Praise ye the Lord to-day";
So rose the song from all the ships,
Safe moored in Boston Bay.

Our fathers' prayers have changed to
psalms,
As David's treasures old
Turned, on the Temple's giant arms,
To lily-work of gold.

Ho! vanished ships from Yarmouth's tide,
Ho! ships of Boston Bay,
Your prayers have crossed the centuries
wide
To this Thanksgiving Day!

We pray to God with fervent lips,
We praise the Lord to-day,
As prayers arose from Yarmouth ships,
But psalms from Boston Bay.

A Thanksgiving

1910, by John Kendrick Bangs (1862-1922)

For summer rains, and winter's sun,
For autumn breezes crisp and sweet;
For labors doing, to be done,
And labors all complete;
For April, May, and lovely June,
For bud, and bird, and berried vine;
For joys of morning, night, and noon,
My thanks, dear Lord, are Thine!

For loving friends on every side;
For children full of joyous glee;
For all the blessed Heavens wide,
And for the sounding sea;
For mountains, valleys, forests deep;
For maple, oak, and lofty pine;
For rivers on their seaward sweep,
My thanks, dear Lord, are Thine!

For light and air, for sun and shade,
For merry laughter and for cheer;
For music and the glad parade
Of blessings through the year;
For all the fruitful earth's increase,
For home and life, and love divine,
For hope, and faith, and perfect peace,
My thanks, dear Lord, are Thine!

Johnny Appleseed's Grace (Song)

(Swedenborgian Hymn)

Oh, the Lord's been good to me.
And so I thank the Lord
For giving me the things I need:
The sun, the rain and the appleseed;
Oh, the Lord's been good to me.

Oh, and every seed I sow
Will grow into a tree.
And someday there'll be apples there
For everyone in the world to share.
Oh, the Lord is good to me.

Oh, here I am 'neath the blue, blue sky doing as I please.
Singing with my feathered friends, humming with the bees.

I wake up every day,
As happy as can be,
Because I know that with His care
My apple trees, they will still be there.
The Lord's been good to me.

I wake up every day
As happy as can be,
Because I know the Lord is there
Watchin' over all my friends and me
The Lord is good to me.

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Before 821 AD, by Theodulph of Orleans (760–821)

Refrain

All glory, laud and honor,
To Thee, Redeemer, King,
To Whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.

Thou art the King of Israel,
Thou David's royal Son,
Who in the Lord's Name comest,
The King and Blessèd One. (Refrain)

The company of angels
Are praising Thee on High,
And mortal men and all things
Created make reply. (Refrain)

The people of the Hebrews
With palms before Thee went;
Our prayer and praise and anthems
Before Thee we present. (Refrain)

To Thee, before Thy passion,
They sang their hymns of praise;
To Thee, now high exalted,
Our melody we raise. (Refrain)

Thou didst accept their praises;
Accept the prayers we bring,
Who in all good delightest,
Thou good and gracious King. (Refrain)

*The New-England Boy's Song about
Thanksgiving Day*

1844, by Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880)

Over the river and thru the wood,
To grandfather's house we go;
The horse knows the way
To carry the sleigh,
Thru the white and drifted snow, oh!
Over the river and thru the wood,
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes,
And bites the nose,
As over the ground we go.

Over the river and thru the wood,
To have a first-rate play;
Oh, hear the bell ring,
"Ting-a-ling-ling!"
Hurrah for Thanksgiving Day-ay!
Over the river and thru the wood,
Trot fast my dapple gray!
Spring over the ground,
Like a hunting hound!
For this is Thanksgiving Day.

Now Thank We All Our God

1636, by Martin Rinkart (1586-1649); 1855, translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)

Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed;
And free us from all ills, in this world and the next!

All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given;
The Son and Him who reigns with Them in highest Heaven;
The one eternal God, whom earth and Heaven adore;
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

For Each New Morning Thanksgiving Prayer

Before 1882, by Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

For each new morning with its light,
For rest and shelter of the night,
For health and food, for love and friends,
For everything Thy goodness sends.

Thanksgiving Song

1904, by John Marion Dye (1875-1957)

We would thank Thee, heav'nly Father,
For the blessings of our past days;
And our hearts today o'erflow with gladness,
Unto Thee, we render grateful praise.

Refrain

Praise Him, ever praise Him,
And His love proclaim;
Glory, praise and honor
Be unto His name.

We would thank Thee for Thy guidance,
Thou hast kept us from day to day;
For our common good, dear Lord, we thank Thee,
Thou wilt ever be our shield and stay.

Refrain

We would thank Thee, gracious Father,
Life and health we still possess;
Now accept the tribute, Lord, we bring Thee,
We Thy holy name with praises bless.

Refrain

The Old Fashioned Thanksgiving Day

1917, by Edgar Guest (1881-1959)

It may be I am getting old and like too much to dwell
Upon the days of bygone years, the days I loved so well;
But thinking of them now I wish somehow that I could know
A simple old Thanksgiving Day, like those of long ago,
When all the family gathered round a table richly spread,
With little Jamie at the foot and grandpa at the head,
The youngest of us all to greet the oldest with a smile,
With mother running in and out and laughing all the while.

It may be I'm old-fashioned, but it seems to me to-day
We're too much bent on having fun to take the time to pray;
Each little family grows up with fashions of its own;
It lives within a world itself and wants to be alone.
It has its special pleasures, its circle, too, of friends;
There are no get-together days; each one his journey wends,
Pursuing what he likes the best in his particular way,
Letting the others do the same upon Thanksgiving Day.

I like the olden way the best, when relatives were glad
To meet the way they used to do when I was but a lad;
The old home was a rendezvous for all our kith and kin,
And whether living far or near they all came trooping in
With shouts of "Hello, daddy!" as they fairly stormed the place
And made a rush for mother, who would stop to wipe her face
Upon her gingham apron before she kissed them all,
Hugging them proudly to her breast, the grownups and the small.

Then laughter rang throughout the home, and, Oh, the jokes they told; From
Boston, Frank brought new ones, but father sprang the old;
All afternoon we chatted, telling what we hoped to do,
The struggles we were making and the hardships we'd gone through;
We gathered round the fireside. How fast the hours would fly--
It seemed before we'd settled down 'twas time to say good-bye.
Those were the glad Thanksgivings, the old-time families knew
When relatives could still be friends and every heart was true.

Rejoice, the Lord is King

1744, by Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore;
Mortals give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Jesus, the Savior, reigns, the God of truth and love;
When He had purged our stains He took His seat above;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His kingdom cannot fail, He rules o'er earth and Heav'n,
The keys of death and hell are to our Jesus giv'n;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

He sits at God's right hand till all His foes submit,
And bow to His command, and fall beneath His feet:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

He all His foes shall quell, shall all our sins destroy,
And every bosom swell with pure seraphic joy;
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice,
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Rejoice in glorious hope! Jesus the Judge shall come,
And take His servants up to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear th'archangel's voice;
The trump of God shall sound, rejoice!

The Pumpkin

1866, by John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

Oh, greenly and fair in the lands of the sun,
The vines of the gourd and the rich melon run,
And the rock and the tree and the cottage enfold,
With broad leaves all greenness and blossoms all gold,
Like that which o'er Nineveh's prophet once grew,
While he waited to know that his warning was true,
And longed for the storm-cloud, and listened in vain
For the rush of the whirlwind and red fire-rain.

On the banks of the Xenil the dark Spanish maiden
Comes up with the fruit of the tangled vine laden;
And the Creole of Cuba laughs out to behold
Through orange-leaves shining the broad spheres of gold;
Yet with dearer delight from his home in the North,
On the fields of his harvest the Yankee looks forth,
Where crook-necks are coiling and yellow fruit shines,
And the sun of September melts down on his vines.

Ah! on Thanksgiving day, when from East and from West,
From North and from South comes the pilgrim and guest;
When the gray-haired New Englander sees round his board
The old broken links of affection restored;
When the care-wearied man seeks his mother once more,
And the worn matron smiles where the girl smiled before;
What moistens the lip and what brightens the eye,
What calls back the past, like the rich Pumpkin pie?

Oh, fruit loved of boyhood! the old days recalling,
When wood-grapes were purpling and brown nuts were falling!
When wild, ugly faces we carved in its skin,
Glaring out through the dark with a candle within!
When we laughed round the corn-heap, with hearts all in tune,
Our chair a broad pumpkin, — our lantern the moon,
Telling tales of the fairy who travelled like steam
In a pumpkin-shell coach, with two rats for her team!

Then thanks for thy present! none sweeter or better
E'er smoked from an oven or circled a platter!
Fairer hands never wrought at a pastry more fine,
Brighter eyes never watched o'er its baking, than thine!
And the prayer, which my mouth is too full to express,
Swells my heart that thy shadow may never be less,
That the days of thy lot may be lengthened below,
And the fame of thy worth like a pumpkin-vine grow,

And thy life be as sweet, and its last sunset sky
Golden-tinted and fair as thy own Pumpkin pie!

The Harvest Moon

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 1807–1882

It is the Harvest Moon! On gilded vanes
And roofs of villages, on woodland crests
And their aerial neighborhoods of nests
Deserted, on the curtained window-panes

Of rooms where children sleep, on country lanes
And harvest-fields, its mystic splendor rests!
Gone are the birds that were our summer guests,
With the last sheaves return the laboring wains!

All things are symbols: the external shows
Of Nature have their image in the mind,
As flowers and fruits and falling of the leaves;

The song-birds leave us at the summer's close,
Only the empty nests are left behind,
And pipings of the quail among the sheaves.

Now We Sing a Song for the Harvest
1871, by John W. Chadwick (1849-1904)

Now sing we a song for the harvest;
Thanksgiving and honor and praise,
For all that the bountiful Giver
Hath given to gladden our days.

For grasses of upland and lowland,
For fruits of the garden and field,
For gold which the mine and furrow
To delver and husbandman yield.

And thanks for the harvest of beauty,
For that which the hands cannot hold;
The harvest, eyes only can gather,
And only our hearts can enfold.

We reap it on mountain and moorland,
We glean it from meadow and lea,
We garner it from the cloud-land,
We bind it in sheaves from the sea.

But now we sing deeper and higher,
Of harvests the eye cannot see;
They ripen on mountains of duty,
Are reaped by the brave and the free.

O Thou who art Lord of the harvest,
The Giver who gladdens our days,
Our hearts are forever repeating,
Thanksgiving, and honor, and praise!

Gratefulness

Before 1633, by George Herbert (1593- 1633)

Thou that hast given so much to me,
Give one thing more, a grateful heart.
See how thy beggar works on thee by art.

He makes thy gifts occasion more,
And says, If he in this be crossed,
All thou hast given him heretofore is lost.

But thou didst reckon, when at first
Thy word our hearts and hands did crave,
What it would come to at the worst to save.

Perpetual knockings at thy door,
Tears sullyng thy transparent rooms,
Gift upon gift, much would have more, nd comes.

This not withstanding, thou wenst on,
And didst allow us all our noise:
Nay thou hast made a sigh and groan
Thy joys.

Not that thou hast not still above
Much better tunes, than groans can make;
But that these country-airs thy love
Did take.

Wherefore I cry, and cry again;
And in no quiet canst thou be,
Till I a thankful heart obtain
Of thee:

Not thankful, when it pleaseth me;
As if thy blessings had spare days:
But such a heart, whose pulse may be
Thy praise.

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

1680, by Joachim Neander (1650-1680). 1863, translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1828)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!
Come, all who hear; now to his temple draw near,
join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, above all things so wondrously reigning;
sheltering you under his wings, and so gently sustaining!
Have you not seen all that is needful has been
sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you;
surely his goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,
if with his love he befriends you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.
Let the Amen sound from his people again;
gladly forever adore him.

Part in Peace: Is Day Before Us?

1841, by Sarah Flower Adams (1805-1848)

Part in peace: is day before us?
Praise His Name for life and light;
Are the shadows lengthening o'er us?
Bless His care Who guards the night.

Part in peace: with deep thanksgiving,
Rendering, as we homeward tread,
Gracious service to the living,
Tranquil memory to the dead.

Part in peace: such are the praises
God our Maker loveth best;
Such the worship that upraises
Human hearts to heavenly rest.

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow (Doxology)

1674, by Thomas Ken (1637-1711)

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Thanksgiving

1917, by Edgar Guest (1882-1959)

Gettin' together to smile an' rejoice,
An' eatin' an' laughin' with folks of your choice;
An' kissin' the girls an' declarin' that they
Are growin more beautiful day after day;
Chattin' an' braggin' a bit with the men,
Buildin' the old family circle again;
Livin' the wholesome an' old-fashioned cheer,
Just for awhile at the end of the year.

Greetings fly fast as we crowd through the door
And under the old roof we gather once more
Just as we did when the youngsters were small;
Mother's a little bit grayer, that's all.
Father's a little bit older, but still
Ready to romp an' to laugh with a will.
Here we are back at the table again
Tellin' our stories as women an men.

Bowed are our heads for a moment in prayer;
Oh, but we're grateful an' glad to be there.
Home from the east land an' home from the west,
Home with the folks that are dearest an' best.
Out of the sham of the cities afar
We've come for a time to be just what we are.
Here we can talk of ourselves an' be frank,
Forgettin' position an' station an' rank.

Give me the end of the year an' its fun
When most of the plannin' an' toilin' is done;
Bring all the wanderers home to the nest,
Let me sit down with the ones I love best,
Hear the old voices still ringin' with song,
See the old faces unblemished by wrong,
See the old table with all of its chairs
An I'll put soul in my Thanksgivin' prayers.

Thanksgiving

1902 by Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850-1919)

We walk on starry fields of white
And do not see the daisies;
For blessings common in our sight
We rarely offer praises.
We sigh for some supreme delight
To crown our lives with splendor,
And quite ignore our daily store
Of pleasures sweet and tender.

Our cares are bold and push their
way
Upon our thought and feeling.
They hang about us all the day,
Our time from pleasure stealing.
So unobtrusive many a joy
We pass by and forget it,
But worry strives to own our lives
And conquers if we let it.

There's not a day in all the year
But holds some hidden pleasure,
And looking back, joys oft appear
To brim the past's wide measure.
But blessings are like friends, I
hold,
Who love and labor near us.
We ought to raise our notes of praise
While living hearts can hear us.

Full many a blessing wears the guise
Of worry or of trouble.
Farseeing is the soul and wise
Who knows the mask is double.
But he who has the faith and strength
To thank his God for sorrow
Has found a joy without alloy
To gladden every morrow.

We ought to make the moments notes
Of happy, glad Thanksgiving;
The hours and days a silent phrase
Of music we are living.
And so the theme should swell and
grow
As weeks and months pass o'er us,
And rise sublime at this good time,
A grand Thanksgiving chorus.

A Thanksgiving Hymn: “We Gather Together”

1597 by Adrianus Valerius (c. 1575 – 1625),

1894 translated into English by Theodore Baker (1851-1934)

We gather together to ask the Lord’s blessing;
He chastens and hastens His will to make known.
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing.
Sing praises to His Name; He forgets not His own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning;
Thou, Lord, were at our side, all glory be Thine!

We all do extol Thee, Thou Leader triumphant,
And pray that Thou still our Defender will be.
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation;
Thy Name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England

1826, by Felicia D. Hemans - (1793-1835)

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted, came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame:

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
And their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods
rang
To the anthem of the free.

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest
roared,
This was their welcome home.

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim-band:
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely
high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod;
They have left unstained what there
they found,
Freedom to worship God.

Come Ye Thankful People Come

1844, by Henry Alford (1819-1871), Music 1856 by George Elvey (1816-1893)

Come, ye thankful people, come,
raise the song of harvest home;
all is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storms begin.
God our Maker doth provide
for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.

All the world is God's own field,
fruit as praise to God we yield;
wheat and tares together sown
are to joy or sorrow grown;
first the blade and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear;
Lord of harvest, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.

For the Lord our God shall come,
and shall take the harvest home;
from the field shall in that day
all offenses purge away,
giving angels charge at last in the
fire the tares to cast; but the fruitful
ears to store in the garner evermore.
Even so, Lord, quickly come,
bring thy final harvest home;
gather thou thy people in,
free from sorrow, free from sin,
there, forever purified,
in thy presence to abide;
come, with all thine angels,
come, raise the glorious harvest home.

A Thanksgiving to God, for His House

1648, by Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Lord, Thou hast given me a cell
 Wherein to dwell,
A little house, whose humble roof
 Is weather-proof:
Under the spars of which I lie
 Both soft, and dry;
Where Thou my chamber for to ward
 Hast set a guard
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and
keep
 Me, while I sleep.
Low is my porch, as is my fate,
 Both void of state;
And yet the threshold of my door
 Is worn by th' poor,
Who thither come and freely get
 Good words, or meat.
Like as my parlour, so my hall
 And kitchen's small;
A little buttery, and therein
 A little bin,
Which keeps my little loaf of bread
 Unchipp'd, unflead;
Some brittle sticks of thorn or briar
 Make me a fire,
Close by whose living coal I sit,
 And glow like it.
Lord, I confess too, when I dine,
 The pulse is Thine,
And all those other bits, that be
 There plac'd by Thee;

The worts, the purslain, and the mess
 Of water-cress,
Which of Thy kindness Thou hast
sent;
 And my content
Makes those, and my beloved beet,
 To be more sweet.
'Tis Thou that crown'st my glittering
hearth
 With guiltless mirth;
And giv'st me wassail-bowls to drink,
 Spic'd to the brink.
Lord, 'tis Thy plenty-dropping hand
 That soils my land;
And giv'st me, for my bushel sown,
 Twice ten for one;
Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay
 Her egg each day;
Besides my healthful ewes to bear
 Me twins each year;
The while the conduits of my kine
 Run cream, for wine.
All these, and better, Thou dost send
 Me, to this end,
That I should render, for my part,
 A thankful heart,
Which, fir'd with incense, I resign,
 As wholly Thine;
But the acceptance, that must be,
 My Christ, by Thee.

My Triumph

by John Greenleaf Whittier

The autumn-time has come;
On woods that dream of bloom,
And over purpling vines,
The low sun fainter shines.

The aster-flower is failing,
The hazel's gold is paling;
Yet overhead more near
The eternal stars appear!

And present gratitude
Insures the future's good,
And for the things I see
I trust the things to be;

That in the paths untrod,
And the long days of God,
My feet shall still be led,
My heart be comforted.

O living friends who love me!
O dear ones gone above me!
Careless of other fame,
I leave to you my name.

Hide it from idle praises,
Save it from evil phrases:
Why, when dear lips that spake it
Are dumb, should strangers wake it?

Let the thick curtain fall;
I better know than all
How little I have gained,
How vast the unattained.

Not by the page word-painted
Let life be banned or sainted:
Deeper than written scroll
The colors of the soul.

Sweeter than any sung
My songs that found no tongue;
Nobler than any fact
My wish that failed of act.

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win.

What matter, I or they?
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said
And life the sweeter made?

Hail to the coming singers!
Hail to the brave light-bringers!
Forward I reach and share
All that they sing and dare.

The airs of heaven blow o'er me;
A glory shines before me
Of what mankind shall be,—
Pure, generous, brave, and free.

A dream of man and woman
Diviner but still human,
Solving the riddle old,
Shaping the Age of Gold!

The love of God and neighbor;
An equal-handed labor;
The richer life, where beauty
Walks hand in hand with duty.

Ring, bells in unrequited steeples,
The joy of unborn peoples!
Sound, trumpets far off blown,
Your triumph is my own!

Parcel and part of all,
I keep the festival,
Fore-reach the good to be,
And share the victory.

I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward,
And take, by faith, while living,
My freehold of thanksgiving.

God Our Fathers

1876, by Daniel C. Roberts (1841- 1907)

God of our fathers, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies
Our grateful songs before Thy throne arise.

Thy love divine hath led us in the past,
In this free land by Thee our lot is cast,
Be Thou our Ruler, Guardian, Guide and Stay,
Thy Word our law, Thy paths our chosen way.

From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
Be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense;
Thy true religion in our hearts increase,
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh Thy people on their toilsome way,
Lead us from night to never ending day;
Fill all our lives with love and grace divine,
And glory, laud, and praise be ever Thine.