

POEMS AND SONGS OF AMERICA

WHILE manifestations of patriotism and love of country are lauded, perhaps more in America than in any other country, many Americans fear that our manifestations reflect too much an outward display and too little of the deeper emotions, the language of the heart. This, perhaps, is the reason for the deplorable fact that so few Americans find any interest in reading and studying the Declaration of Independence, the American Constitution, gems of America's glorious history, the matchless deeds of her illustrious makers and the songs and poems that have come from the hearts of Americans who laid their all before sweet Liberty's shrine—all of which contain soul-stirring appeals to loyalty, patriotism and service.

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How regrettable, yet true, that so few Americans have taken the time and trouble to learn by heart the words of our national songs, particularly our National Anthem. Only a small proportion in the average American audience are able to sing, in a spirited manner beyond the first stanza of this stirring song.

A great truth was once expressed by the man who said: "Give me the making of the songs of a people and I care not who makes its laws."

The spirit of a people's patriotism is best expressed in the songs of their country. The people of America should sing their national songs with a full heart, such as no people ever before gave expression for their love of country in their songs. To do this, one must necessarily learn the words. By frequently repeating the words, they will eventually be indelibly written on the page of memory. There is triumph and victory written in every line of the songs of America. Begin to interpret the spirit of these songs.

If you are an American at heart, learn to sing America's songs. Let the words be your words, the language, line for line, the language of your own heart and you will sense a new patriotism, the patriotism that wells from the soul.

The Western American will dedicate this page to poems and songs of America. You may know some of them. Read them again and again. You may find something new in them that you never discovered before. To

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Words by Francis Scott Key.

Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming;
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there!
Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

On the shore, dimly seen thro' the mist of the deep
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam, of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected, now shines in the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner, Oh! long may it wave,
While the land of the free is the home of the brave!

And where is that band, who so vauntingly swore,
'Mid the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a country they'd leave us no more?
Their blood has wash'd out ther foul footsteps' pollution;
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave.
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Oh, thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their loved home and the war's desolation;
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heaven-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation,
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto, "In God is our trust,"
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave,
While the land of the free, is the home of the brave.

When our land is illumined with Liberty's smile,
If a foe from within strike a blow at her glory,
Down, down with the traitor that dares to defile
The flag of her stars and the page of her story!
By the millions unchained, when our birthday was gained,
We will keep her bright blazon forever unstained!
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
While the land of the free is the home of the brave.

know them better will probably help to make you a better citizen. In their company your idle hours may possibly be made more pleasant. And when you are in an American audience called upon to sing a song of our country, you will no longer feel so thoroughly embarrassed and out of place because you don't know the words.

The spirit of America has been beautifully fashioned into her songs. Put America's songs in your yeart and home, in your work and in your play and your citizenship will begin to have a new meaning to yourself

and to your friends and acquaintances.

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A brief story of the Star-Spangled Banner will be found on another page. Perhaps you know it or think you know it. Look is up and refresh your memory on the subject. It is just a fragment of our history. Read the nation's anthem through and through, then turn to the page that briefly tells the story of the song.

Learn the words of the song and tell its story among your friends in your own way. It might help to make someone a better American.