

To America

By Aleister Crowley

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THOU fair Republic oversea afar,
Where long blue ripples lap the fertile land,
Whose manifest dominion, like a star,
Fixed by the iron hands and swords of war,*
Now must for aye, a constellation, stand—
Thou new strong nation! as the eagle aspires
To match the sun's own fires,
Children of our land, hear the children of your sires!

We stretch out hands to-day when the white wings
Of peace are spread beneath you and your foe.
O race of man that slay the slaves of kings!
We, whom the foam-crowned ocean still enrings,
We, whose strong freedom never brooked a blow,
Hail you now victors, hail you of the sword
Proved in the west the lord,
Hail you, and bid you sound quick friendship and accord.

The eagle of your emblem would not stoop
To the proud threats of that outrageous wing
That Bismark reared, and strengthened, and bade swoop
Fierce upon France, whose pallid pinions droop
To own an Emperor where she mocked a king:
Their challenge you hurled back across the foam:
Vienna and tall Rome
Trembled for their ally: You stirred our hearts at home.

* This poem was first written at the conclusion of the Spanish-American War.

The fire of love no waters shall devour;
The faith of friendship stands the shocks of time;
Seal with your voice the triumph of this hour,
Your glory to our glory and our power,
Alliance of one tongue, one faith, one clime!
Seal and clasp hands; and let the sea proclaim
Friendship of righteous fame,
And lordship of two worlds that time can never tame.

White slaves shall look up and behold a light
Grow in the islands of the sacred sea,
And on the land whose forehead kisses night
And has the dawn upon its wings, whose might
Is mightier for the lips of Liberty
Presses on its new-born cheek, when Church and State
Drove forth to baffle Fate
Our sires and yours, whose fame is grown this year so great.

That morning of deliverance is at hand;
The world requickens, and all folk rejoice,
Seeing our kingdom look toward your land,
And both catch hands, a nuptial Heaven-planned
Because of Earth's free peoples the free choice.
Your winds that wrought wild wreckage on our shore
Shall sink and be no more,
Or waft your barks, with wheat gold-laden, swiftly o'er.

Our foamcaps, that your rocks disdainful flung
Back to the waves that left our beaten coast,
Shall be like echoes of sweet songs unsung,
And all the ocean noises find a tongue
To voice the clamour of a righteous boast—
That friendship and dominion shall be wrought
Out of the womb of thought,
And all bygone days be held for things of naught.

What matter though our fathers did you wrong?
Though brave sons brake our bitter yoke? Though we
Strove, steel on steel, encountered, thong to thong?

What, though the stronger did defeat the strong?
Both, wild and patient as the steep strong sea?
What matter that some strive to waken hate?
Traitors to either state,
Hang them in chains! Our way to Freedom cannot wait!

The petty partisans of party war,
The hireling quillmen, and the jingo crowd,
The well-paid patriots, scenting from afar
Silence, their doom—shall they eclipse the star
Now crescent in the sky, whose music loud
Rejoices humble hearts and true men all,
And sounds the funeral
Dirge of slave, tyrant, priest, that snarl, and snarling fall?

These we forget—remembering only this:
Ye are blood-brothers, and our tongues are one;
Our hopes and conquests in one splendid kiss
Unite and struggle not for empire. Is
Our land and yours too little for the sun
To gladden, to illumine, to bid increase,
Bound by two mighty seas
In one fraternal clasp of admirable peace?

Ye are our brothers; ye have spurned the power
That bound the islands of your eastern shore
Ye have restored to freedom that fair flower,
Cuba, in her most agonizing hour,
And east and west have thundered with red war.
We freed us from the slavery of Spain,
And laid upon the main
Our hand three centuries back—and ye have struck again.

Priestcraft and tyranny in this defeat
Shake, and the walls of hell with fear resound;
The sun laughs gladlier on the heavier wheat,
Because the fates must weave a winding-sheet
At last for Fear. Deliverers are found
Who will deliver. Mountain, stream, and brake,

Lone wood, and sleepy lake,
Are peopled with bright shapes that sing for freedom's sake.

Rocks, and pale fountains, and tall trees that quiver,
And all the clouds that deck the sunset sky
Move like the music of a mighty river
Where ripples break, and rapids gleam and shiver,
And calm rebuilds her empire bye-and-bye
For joy of this alliance all the earth
Forgets her day of dearth,
In her new birth forgets, and madness into mirth.

The stars swing censers of pale gold to God,
Whose incense is the love-song of the free;
Angels with mercy and with beauty shod
Move in the mazes of an Eden, trod
Not by the seemly spirits of the sea,
But by brave men built wholly of desire
And freedom's mystic fire,
To clothe its habitants with glorious attire.

Clasp hands, O fair republic of the west,
And leave the kingdoms to their sudden fate.
With new-born love and ardour unrepressed,
Let Lethe steep in its unquiet rest
The old years whose red hands have made us great.
O fair republic, strong and swift, unbind
The shackles of thy mind!
More than our kin ye are; henceforth not less than kind!

Bind on the splendid sandals, and unloose
The burning horses, and fling wide the reins!
From Danzig's ice to sunny Syracuse
Europe shall see and tremble and ask truce,
And new blood pour through Asia's wasted veins.
Our Empire from Guiana to Hong Kong,
In your new love made strong,
Shall last while earth is glad because of sun and song.

And O! ye desert places of the sea,
Ye plains and mountains rugged with the wind,
And all ye hollow caverns whence there flee
Foam-heads and blustering waves, give ear to me,
And O thou thunder, follow hard behind!
O womb of night, reverberate these chords,
Ye clouds, ye stormy lords,
With clamour and shrill voice as of ten thousand swords:—

Swords that clang sharp on heaven's anvil, white
With heat of God's own forehead that beholds
The building broken that is made of might,
Nor builded firm on justice' iron height,
Nor is not cast in mercy's silver mould:—
Swords sharp to slay, when vengeance must its fill
Drink of the bloody rill
Wherein men lave their mouths, arise and smite and kill!

Listen, all lands, and wonder! For the night
Rolls back her beaten iron, and the day
Breaks, and the passionate heralds of the light,
Armoured with love for panoply of might,
Rush on the portals of the falling way.
The lamps of heaven are dim while swords strike fire
From rocks whose crests burn higher:
At their assault hell's dogs gasp, totter, and expire.

All the gold gates are open of the East;
The rugged columns of the hills uphold
A dome of changeless turquoise, and they feast,
The sun's lips, on the woods that have increased
Since dawn with store of unimagined gold.
The steam of many exhalations rare
Sweetens the midday air;
Earth's oriflamme advanced, Heaven's silver spears aflare!

The broad Pacific brightens into blue,
And coral isles are white with beating flame
Of living water on their strand, live through

With million flames candescent as the dew,
Red flowers too queenly for a mortal name!
The sea is pregnant with green stars; the land,
The sky, like lovers stand
With kiss half-consciously exchanged, hand fast in hand.

O lovers fair and free, the wings of peace
Bear this voice onward; linger as you will
By moon-wrought glades, and softly murmuring seas,
Lands white with summer, and the quiet leas!
Linger, and let no word of music thrill
Your hearts; young love is all the harp ye need:
Your kiss in very deed
Is keen to echo song well tuned from Milton's reed.

O lovers, and ye happy groves that hear
Their whispers, and ye vales that know their feet,
And all ye mountains that incline your ear
To the wise whisper of the love-lorn sphere,
And all ye caves their murmurs who repeat;
Your music throbs in unison with mine;
The world is flushed with wine
Bubbling from Freedom's well, warm, luminous, divine.

Burn, changeful purple of the vine's cool stream!
Burn, like the sunset of a stormy sky
When white winds gather, and white horses gleam
Upon the ocean, and the meadows steam
With haze of thunder, when the crimson eye
Dips, and deep darkness falls and lies, and breaks
In lightning's fearful flakes,
When thunder unto thunder calls, and the storm awakes.

With maddening hoofs, ye coursers of the sun,
Spurn the reverberant air, and paw the day!
Make east and west indissolubly one!
Strike down the darkness, its dominion done,
And bid light gird its sword to thigh, display
The shield of heaven's blue, and call the deep

To watch the warrior sleep
Of two fast friends that wake only if brave men weep!

Wake, western land so fair, and this shall be!
Speak and accomplish! Let no ardour slip.
A sullen hound, slink sly and shamefully
To Hell's heel, storm exacerbate the sea,
And spoil a perfect kiss from the free land's lip
O fair free sister country, for our sake,
Who at thy side would break
All bars, all bonds, and bid the very dead awake!

Are not your veins made purple with our blood,
And our dominions touch they not afield?
Pours not the sea its long exultant flood
On either's coast? The rose has one same bud,
And the vine's heart one purple pledge doth yield.
Are we not weary of the fanged pen?
Are we not friends, and men?
Let us look frankly face to face—and quarrel then!

Oh! By the groves of green and quiet ways,
And on the windy reaches of the river,
In moonlit night and blue unbroken days,
And where the cold ice breaks in pallid bays,
And where dim dawns in frosty forest shiver,
Where India burns and far Australia glows,
Where cactus blooms, where rose,
Let our hearts' beat be heard, to lighten many woes!

Sister and daughter of our loyal isle,
Our hands reach out to you, our lips are fain
To wreath with yours in one delicious smile
Of budding love, to grow a kiss awhile,
And laugh like bride and groom, and kiss again!
Let our alliance like a marriage stand,
Supreme from strand to strand,
The likeness of our love, the clasp of hand in hand.

And men who come behind us yet unborn,
Nor dimly guessed at down the brook of time,
Shall celebrate the brave undying morn
When the free nations put aside their scorn
For friendship, rock no sundering surge may climb,
When their strong hands gripped hard across the sea,
Flushed with fresh victory,
Lands royal, leal, and great, vast, beautiful, and free.

Our children's children shall unsheathe the sword
Against the envy of some tyrant power;
The leader of your people and our lord
Shall join to wrest from slavery abhorred
Some other race, a fair storm-ruined flower!
O fair republic, lover and sweet friend,
Your loyal hand extend!
Let freedom, peace and faith grow stronger to the end!

O child of freedom, thou art very fair!
Thou hast white roses on thy eager breast;
The scent of all the South in thy hair;
Thy lips are fragrant with the blossoms rare
Blown under sea waves when the white wings rest!
Come to our warrior breast, where victory
Sits passionate and free—
Ring out the wild salute! Our sister over sea!