

## An mein Vaterland

Kein Baum gehörte mir von deinen Wäldern,  
 mein war kein Salm auf deinen Roggenfeldern;  
 und schutzlos hast du mich hinausgetrieben,  
 weil ich in meiner Jugend nicht verstand  
 dich weniger und mehr mich selbst zu lieben —  
 und dennoch lieb ich dich, mein Vaterland!

Land meiner Väter — länger nicht das meine —  
 so heilig ist kein Boden wie der deine!  
 Nie wird dein Bild aus meiner Seele schwinden.  
 Und knüpfte mich an dich kein lebend Band,  
 es würden mich die Toten an dich binden,  
 die deine Erde deckt, mein Vaterland!

O würden jene, die zu Hause blieben,  
 wie deine Fortgewanderten dich lieben,  
 bald würdest du zu einem Reiche werden,  
 und deine Kinder gingen Hand in Hand  
 und machten dich zum größten Land auf Erden,  
 wie du das beste bist, o Vaterland!

(„Aus Wisikonjin“ 1869)

## TO MY FATHERLAND

Mine was no tree within thy forests old,  
 Mine not a sheaf of all thy grain fields gold.  
 And without pity thou didst bid me go,  
     The unprotected, to a foreign strand—  
 Because for thee my soul, and not for self did glow--  
     And yet I love thee, O my Fatherland!

Beats there a heart, that of the youthful dream,  
 Its first sweet love, does not retain a gleam?  
 Ah! holier was the flame within my breast  
     Than lovers e'er with ardor fanned;  
 Ne'er bride, nor bridegroom e'er so blest,  
     Held faith like mine, dear Fatherland!

No "manna" heaven poured on thee, I know,  
 Yet many were the gifts it did bestow:  
 I saw the wonders of a Southern clime  
     Since last I on thy soil did stand,  
 Yet fairer seemed to me than palm and lime,  
     The apple blossom of my Fatherland!

Land of my fathers! though no longer mine,  
 If any soil is sacred it is thine!  
 Thy image, always bright, is in my mind,  
     And if no tie were wrought by living hand,  
 My cherished dead would me to thee still bind--  
 Thy holy graves--O thou, my Fatherland!

O, if thy children all, who stayed at home,  
 Did love thee like the ones thou badest roam,  
 A Union soon, an empire would have birth,  
     And thou woudst see thy children hand in hand  
 Make thee the mightiest land on earth,  
     As thou'rt the best, my Fatherland!

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

The above poem was included by Konrad Krez (1828-1897) in his collection of poetry *Aus Wiskonsin* (1869). The English translation is by Wilhelm Otto Soubron, a contemporary of Krez who was also a talented German-American writer.

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