

## THE ROSE OF A NATION'S THANKS.

A welcome? O yes, 'tis a kindly word, but why will they plan and praise  
Of feasting and speeches and such small things, while the wives and  
mothers wait?

Plan as ye will, and do as ye will; but think of the hunger and thirst  
In the hearts that wait, and do as ye will, but lend us our laddies first!  
Why, what would ye have? There's not a lad who treads in the gal-  
lant ranks

Who does not already bear on his breast the Rose of a Nation's Thanks.  
A Welcome? Why what do you mean by that, when the very stones  
must sing

As our men march on to their home again—the walls of the city ring  
With the thunder of throats and the tramp and tread of feet that  
rush and run—

I think in my heart that the very trees must shout for the bold work  
done!

Why what would ye have? There's not a lad who treads in the gallant  
ranks

Who do-s not already bear on his breast the Rose of a Nation's Thanks.  
A welcome? There's not a babe at the breast won't spring at the roll  
of the drum

That heralds them home—the keen long cry in the air of "They come!"  
"They come!"

And what of it all if ye bade them wade knee deep in a wave of wine--  
And tossed tall torches and arched the town in garlands of maple and  
pine!

All dust in the wind of a woman's cry as she snatches from the ranks  
Her boy who wears on his bold young breast the Rose of a Nation's  
thanks!

A welcome? There's a doubt if the lads would stand like stone in the  
steady line

While a babe held high in a dear wife's hand or the stars that swim  
and shine

In a sweetheart's eyes or a mother's smile flashed far in a welded  
crowd,

Or a father's proud voice, half sob and half cheer, cried on a son aloud.  
O, the billows of waiting hearts that swelled would sweep from the  
martial ranks

The gallant boys who wear on their breast the Rose of a Nation's  
Thanks.

A welcome? O joy can they stay your feet or measure the wine of  
your bliss!

O joy—let them leave you alone today—a day with a pulse like this!  
A welcome? Yes, 'tis a tender thought—a green laurel that laps the  
sword—

But joy has the wing of a wild white swan and the song of a free  
wild bird.

She must beat the air with her wings at will—at will must her song  
be driven

From her heaving heart and tremulous throat through the awful arch  
of Heaven.

And what would ye have? There's not a lad will burst from the shout-  
ing ranks

But bears like a star on his faded coat the Rose of a Nation's thanks.