

What Means This Glory Round Our Feet

James Lowell, 1884.

Gaetano Donizetti(1797-1848)

"What means this glory round our feet,"
The Magi mused, "more bright than morn!"
And voices chanted clear and sweet,
"Today the Prince of Peace is born!"
"What means this star," the shepherds said,
"That brightens through the rocky glen?"
And angels answering overhead,
Sang "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

'Tis now two thousand years, and more,
[originally 'Tis eighteen hundred years, and more]
Since those sweet oracles were dumb;
We wait for Him, like them of yore;
Alas! He seems so slow to come!
But it was said, in words of gold,
No time nor sorrow e'er shall dim,
That little children might be bold,
In perfect trust to come to Him.

All round about our feet shall shine
A light like that the wise men saw,
If we our loving wills incline
To that sweet life which is the law.
So shall we learn to understand
The simple faith of shepherds then,
And kindly clasping hand in hand,
Sing "Peace on earth, good will to men!"