

# The Norwegian Emigrant's Song

*Broadsheet ballad from Helge Schultz's Printing House,  
Christiana; trans. Inger Lövkrona*

One day when I walked along the strand,  
I saw a steamer put out from land,  
Crowded with people, both women and men,  
Who aimed to go to America away  
To gather their gold  
— if fate was kind —  
With a pickax and a turf spade.

On the pier, the crowds were huge,  
Parents, beaus, sisters, and brothers,  
Their beloveds were on board the steamer's deck,  
They all might be gone away forever,  
They waved and cried farewell, with tears rolling down the cheeks,  
They waved and cried and tearfully said farewell  
With pale and quivering lips.

Every year many people go west,  
Those who believe the New World is the best,  
Those who think they will easily earn bread  
And live a comfortable life free from need.  
For some it comes true,  
A fortune to gain,  
But for some the poverty remains.

Stay at home and help to build up our country,  
I advise both women and men,  
It is not as poor as you think,  
And besides, it is the most beautiful country on the earth,  
With forest and mounts and green hills,  
With dancing creeks and majestic streaming waterfalls.

You who all the same choose to go to America away,  
And you who become a friend of good fortune,  
By learning the power of work,  
I hope in you will arise  
A desire to see the shores of home,  
And to give your strength to your beloved native country.