**“Hello, Free Latvia!”** (*„Sveika, brīvā Latvija!”*) by Rainis (1919)

The collection of poetry “Hello, Free Latvia!” was published in 1919. Rainis remembered how the verses were created: “they were written in Castagnola, already in 1918 and even earlier waiting for Latvia’s independence and freedom. So they still belong to the exile poems, but their contents are full with the ideas about returning home, about the life at home, the last fights and the tasks and works still ahead. The soul is no more living the life of an exile, but its whole being is radiating hopes, longings and the new, future life — independent and free.” A part of the collection’s poems later have seeped into other works. Twelve poems have made it into the dramatic poem “Daugava”, but a part of the poems in 1923 were included in the book of prologues and dedications “The Muse at Home” (*„Mūza mājās”*). This is also the reason why the poem collection “Hello, Free Latvia!” didn’t get published for a second time.