

**A LITTLE BOOK OF TRIBUNE
VERSE; A NUMBER OF
HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED
POEMS, GRAVE AND GAY**

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A little book of Tribune verse; a number of hitherto uncollected poems, grave and gay by Eugene Field

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EUGENE FIELD

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THE BOOK OF
TRIBUNE VERSE



EUGENE FIELD

*A LITTLE BOOK OF
TRIBUNE VERSE*

A NUMBER OF HITHERTO UNCOLLECTED POEMS, GRAVE AND GAY

By *EUGENE FIELD*

COLLECTED AND EDITED BY JOSEPH G. BROWN



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Introduction.

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It is the purpose of this volume to present to the admirers of Eugene Field a collection of poems from a store wherein many of his richest gems of wit, humor and pathos have been buried for twenty years and forgotten, save by a few of those who were his intimate associates during his career in Denver.

These poems appeared at intervals from August, 1881, to August, 1883, in the columns of The Denver Tribune, of which paper Field was then associate editor. Their circulation in that journal was restricted and provincial and, being published anonymously, the knowledge of their authorship was confined to the few readers who were familiar with the quaint style and inimitable humor of the author. A number of these verses were copied into other journals, and so attained a wider circulation. But, whether honored by his contemporaries

or not, their creation was but ephemeral, for they have never before been collected and printed in accessible and enduring form.

Considering the anonymity of these poems it is interesting to read in "The Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac": "When a song is printed it is printed in small type, and the name of him who wrote it is appended thereunto in big type. If the song be meritorious it goes to the corners of the earth through the medium of the art preservative of arts, but the longer and the farther it travels the bigger does the type of the song become and the smaller becomes the type wherein the author's name is set.

"Then, finally, some inconsiderate hand, wielding the pen or shears, blots out or snips off the poet's name, and henceforth the song is anonymous. A great iconoclast—a royal old iconoclast—is Time: but he hath no terrors for those precious things which are embalmed in words, and the only fellow that shall surely escape him till the crack of doom is he whom men know by the name of Anonymous!"

Surely Field was an exception to his own statements, for while his poems are being printed in ever increasing sizes of type, his name grows in proportion, a fact that proves that his admirers love the poet as much as the poetry.

These poems cover the same wide range as his after life's work and embrace a number of subjects which subsequently became the sources of his greater fame. Four of them—"Christmas Treasurers," "Jim's Kids," "Pike's Peak Philosophic Burro" and "The Jaffa and Jerusalem R. R."—were revised by Field himself and, having been

published in his previous books, have helped to make him famous. But they have never before been republished in the form in which they first came from their author's brain. It is believed that students and lovers of Field will find sufficient interest in comparing the different versions to need no excuse for the slight repetition.

The poems are here arranged more or less according to their subject matter and the dates given are the dates of *The Denver Tribune*, in which they appeared. Field conducted a department on the editorial page of the paper, which was known among his associates as "The Nonpariel Column" from the fact that it was printed from nonpariel type. At first this column bore no heading, but later it was headed "Odd Gossip." Most of his poems appeared in this column, though some of them were found in other departments of the paper. It is believed that this collection contains all the verses contributed by him to the *Tribune* with the possible exception of a few from the authenticity of which it was found impossible to remove all doubt, a few of purely personal interest and one or two which have appeared in other books. In publishing these verses in book form it has been thought best to correct in the text a few errors and transpositions which were evidently due to the printer.

A number of the poems appeared in the paper over the signatures of well known Denver men, a form of humor of which Field was very fond and which he afterwards practiced in Chicago. To one who was familiar with the personality of these men the poems have a peculiar zest, but even deprived