

**SONGS OF
THE SAND HILLS**

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Songs of the Sand Hills by Walking Hiller

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BY WALKING HILLER.



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1878.

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PREFACE.

It was not originally intended, by the author of this little book, to give it publicity further than a few copies to distribute among his acquaintance; but, on consultation, concluded to print more copies, and commit them to the public. If, perchance, some of the within productions should engage the attention of the influential, so as to become in favor with the good people of San Francisco, then will the author feel convinced that he has not made a mistake in printing the within; and that his natural element in that direction is not a mistake, but is worth further cultivation, and he will endeavor to produce something more elaborate than this little experiment.

If it meets with favor at all, of course it will be in San Francisco, as most of the references are local, and pertain to San Francisco, of which the author is an old resident; who, if it had been his lot to have been cast in a more romantic part of this State, or among her hills and valleys, which is so inspiring for poetry, and where the wild birds' chorus wakes up the single note of the less favored birds of song. If such a part of the State of California had been his home, the result might have been an earlier application to the natural inspiration which has dictated this effort. But as an old sand-hill resident, being long engaged in helping the first run, or first spread of the wings, of civilization over our sand-hills, as a working man, and made subject to the summer winds and the sand-hills' bequests, together with all the many other anti-poetical insinuations, too numerous to mention; such as all old settlers have been subjected to in San Francisco, which is everything but that to inspire poetry, or inspire poetical ambition.

Volunteer Book Co., 7 Feb. 1929

And consequently poetry, in the author, was as the notes of the bird, made long silent by the cheerless aspect of a long winter, until the spring time in life has well nigh stole away, before the effort to produce pro-rhymical verse was made by him. But the desire to put words together in rhyme, as is said in California, would once in a while crop out; until spare time was offered by the author becoming indisposed for a time, and which gave him an opportunity which suggested the chance to put together whatever poetical effusions are herein contained. The author will say, that, whatever style of versification he chanced to commence with, or adopt, such is observed strictly to the end of each particular production; and the rhyme being found more frequent than is general, as correct rhyming tends to lead the mind, he has endeavored that the measure and rhyme should be correct, and that the peculiar style of versification of each particular piece be harmoniously continued the same from beginning to the end of each piece. The wording will be found to be familiar and simple, and running smoothly, so that the mind will not get tripped, or thrown from the thread of narration, by either long or unfamiliar words or untoward irregular measure, after the mind is made up to follow a certain style of measure and verse; and, as these few natural rhymes were produced as a fountain stream which bursts forth in the desert, as an outlet or relief to a bounteous supply, so it is with the author, and if this little beginning is appreciated, there is an abundant supply from whence it came.

SONGS OF THE SAND HILLS.

SAN FRANCISCO, OR THE SAND-HILL CITY.

FOR a city to make far out West,
Of the ocean's foundation and crest,
In long years past away,
'Neath the ocean's white spray,
To throw up in a heap
From the great vasty deep,
Rolling out, rolling in, then was planned,
To make mountains and valleys of sand.

Was laid up by the ocean to save,
Which she washed out from many a cave,
In laborious toil,
And sometimes in turmoil,
To lay out a place
Which time would not efface,
For a city to build of her own,
And which would be quite large when 'tis grown.

With what diligence ocean was blest,
And to never as much as want rest
To accomplish her will;
Keeping on to fulfill,
And still cheerful with song,
Through all time now so long;
Through each century's roll as they pass,
Making up all those sand-hills so vast.

And the wind must have lent her a hand,
For to carry away o'er the land,
 To fill up and to make,
 Both upon them did take
 For a city to build;
 For that purpose they filled,
For foundation to make and to lay,
Up the space between her and the bay.

With no limit of time to complete,
Nor with anything else to compete,
 Long and last they got through,
 And had no more to do
 But to level the drifts
 O'er the hills, which uplifts
Up so high, sending forth their bequest,
Left for mankind to do all the rest.

Now her mountains and hills looking bare,
And her channel, for nothing was there,
 On her bay, so remote,
 Nothing on there did float;
 On that channel so wide
 For all shipping to ride;
On that beautiful wide-spreading bay
Where the ships of all nations could lay,

But for man it was far from elate,
Isolated, and nought did invite
 Him that place to possess;
 But, yet, nevertheless,
 To this place they did come,
 From their kindred and home,
And in ship loads they entered the bay,
From their homes, which they left far away.

For the gold, which the placers did fill,
And which shin'd from the race of that mill,
 And in rivers was found,
 Soon was rumored all round,

From that place near beside
To the worlds so wide,
Causing men from all nations to appear,
From the distance so far and so near.

And to level the sand-hills they went,
And commenced was the building of tent;
And in cabins to stay,
While from homes far away,
Was their buildings so rude
For the miners so crude,
Made of lumber sent far from the East
Was their homes, while on beans they did feast.

Then the place for this city to be,
And made land from the wind and the sea ;
On its desert like frown
Their had sprung up a town,
And with plenty of gold
Soon began for to mould
Into streets for that city to make,
Now was planned and laid out with some stake.

In her infancy now she was born,
Yet, in distance, and looking forlorn,
Growing sportive and wild,
Or the same as a child
With the savage in wood
It partakes of their moods;
Cut from civilization so far,
Or alone as the western star.

Then what wonder in strong ale or beer,
The report of a pistol would hear;
As the world sent forth
All her fast ones by birth
In adventurous throng,
There would some be among
Which no check or forbearance did awe,
For at first, there was nothing like law.