

SONGS OF THE SIERRAS

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Songs of the Sierras by Joaquin Miller

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JOAQUIN MILLER

**SONGS OF
THE SIERRAS**

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first Canadian
Edition

SONGS OF THE SIERRAS.

SONGS OF THE SIERRAS.

BY
JOAQUIN MILLER.



TORONTO:
THE CANADIAN NEWS AND PUBLISHING CO.

1871.

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ARIZONIAN.

*Because the skies were blue, because,
The sun in fringes of the sea
Was tangled, and delightfully
Kept dancing on as in a waltz,
And tropic trees bow'd to the seas,
And bloom'd and bore, years through and through,
And birds in blended gold and blue
Were thick and sweet as swarming bees,
And sang as if in paradise,
And all that paradise was spring—
Did I too sing with lifted eyes,
Because I could not choose but sing.*

*With garments full of sea-winds blown
From isles beyond of spice and balm,
Beside the sea, beneath her palm,
She waits as true as chisell'd stone.
My childhood's child! my June in May!
So wiser than thy father is,
These lines, these leaves, and all of this
Are thine,—a loose, uncouth bouquet.
So wait and watch for sail and sign:
A ship shall mount the hallow seas,
Blown to thy place of blossom'd trees,
And birds, and song, and summer-shine.*

*I throw a kiss across the sea,
I drink the winds as drinking wine,
And dream they all are blown from thee:
I catch the whisper'd kisses of thine.
Shall I return with lifted face,
Or head held down as in disgrace,
To hold thy two brown hands in mine?*

ENGLAND, 1871.

SONGS OF THE SIERRAS.

ARIZONIAN.

“**A**ND I have said, and I say it ever,
As the years go on and the world goes over,
’Twere better to be content and clever
In tending of cattle and tossing of clover,
In the grazing of cattle and the growing of grain,
Than a strong man striving for fame or gain ;
Be even as kine in the red-tipp’d clover ;
For they lie down and their rests are rests,
And the days are theirs, come sun come rain,
To lie, rise up, and repose again ;
While we wish, yearn, and do pray in vain,
And hope to ride on the billows of bosoms,
And hope to rest in the haven of breasts,
Till the heart is sicken’d and the fair hope dead ;
Be even as clover with its crown of blossoms,
Even as blossoms are the bloom is shed,
Kiss’d by kine and the brown sweet bee —
For these have the sun, and moon, and air,
And never a bit of the burthen of care ;
And with all of our caring what more have we ?
I would court content like a lover lonely,
I would woo her, win her, and wear her only,
And never go over this white sea wall
For gold or glory or for aught at all.”

He said these things as he stood with the Squire
By the river’s rim in the fields of clover,
While the stream flow’d under and the clouds flew over,

With the sun tangled in and the fringes afire,
 So the Squire lean'd with a kind desire
 To humor his guest, and to hear his story ;
 For his guest had gold, and he yet was clever,
 And mild of manner ; and, what was more, he,
 In the morning's ramble, had praised the kine,
 The clover's reach and the meadows fine,
 And so made the Squire his friend for ever.

His brow was brown'd by the sun and weather,
 And touch'd by the terrible hand of time ;
 His rich black beard had a fringe of rime,
 As silk and silver inwove together.
 There were hoops of gold all over his hands,
 And across his breast, in chains and bands,
 Broad and massive as belts of leather.
 And the belts of gold were bright in the sun,
 But brighter than gold his black eyes shone
 From their sad face-setting so swarth and dun,
 Brighter than beautiful Santan stone,
 Brighter even than balls of fire,
 As he said, hot-faced, in the face of the Squire :—

“ The pines bow'd over, the stream bent under
 The cabin cover'd with thatches of palm,
 Down in a canon so cleft asunder
 By sabre-stroke in the young world's prime,
 It look'd as broken by bolts of thunder,
 And bursted asunder and rent and riven
 By earthquakes, driven, the turbulent time
 A red cross lifted red hands to heaven.
 And this in the land where the sun goes down,
 And gold is gather'd by tide and by stream,
 And maidens are brown as the cocoa brown,
 And a life is a love and a love is a dream ;
 Where the winds come in from the far Cathay
 With odor of spices and balm and bay,
 And summer abideth for aye and aye,