

**POEMS FROM THE  
PACIFIC: THE  
WEST'S REPLY TO  
ENGLAND'S LAUREATE**

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Poems from the Pacific: The West's Reply to England's Laureate by Venier Voldo

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POEMS FROM  
THE PACIFIC

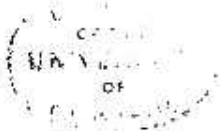
THE WEST'S REPLY TO ENGLAND'S LAUREATE

BY

VENIER VOLDO

AUTHOR OF "A SONG OF AMERICA" AND MINOR LYRICS

—  
SECOND EDITION.



SAN FRANCISCO  
THE BANCROFT COMPANY  
1888

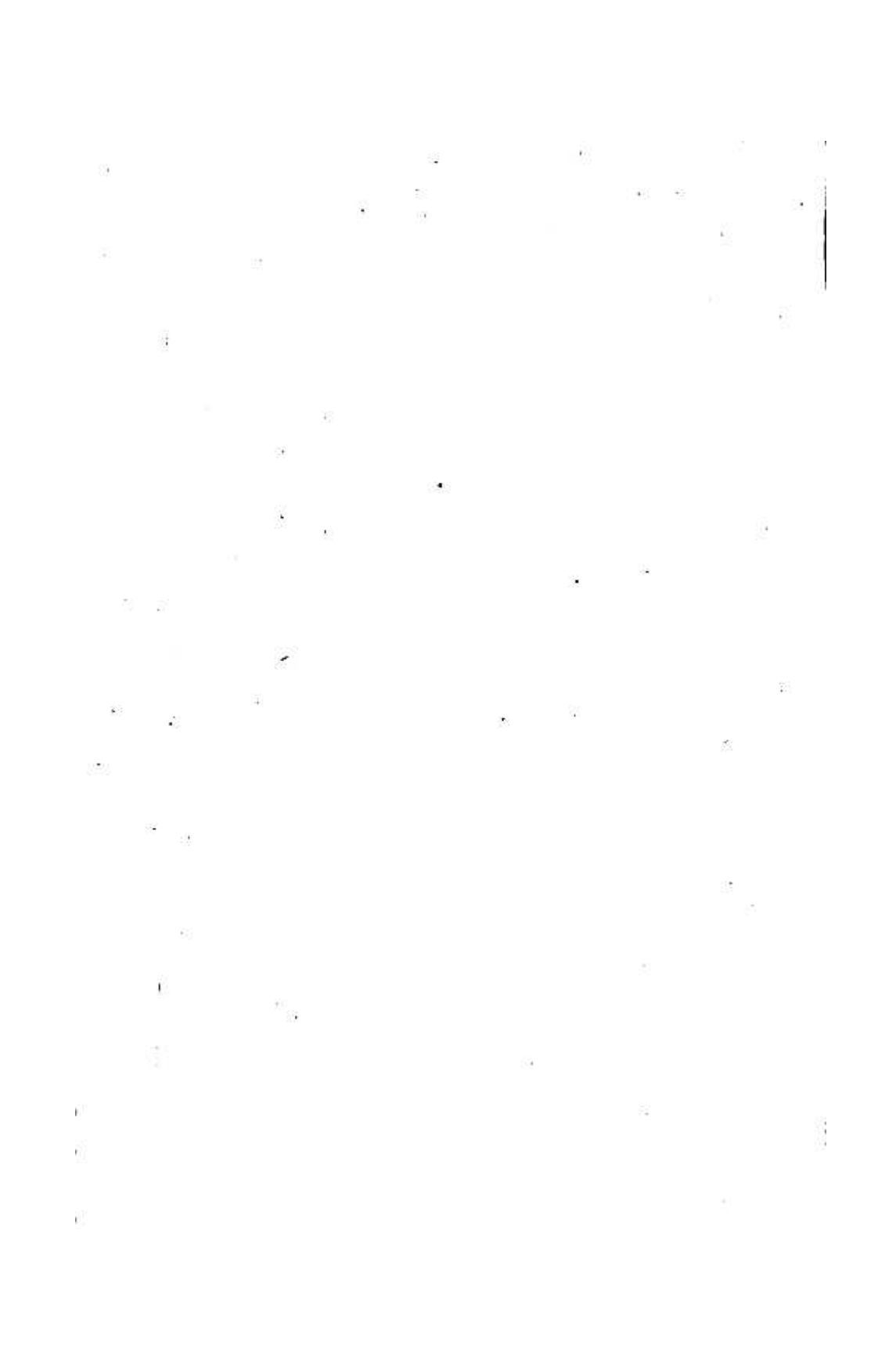
TO  
CLARA FOLTZ

THE PORTA OF THE PACIFIC

Who, filling many niches in the Pantheon of Life, has adorned  
them all with a lofty womanhood

THIS VOLUME IS ADMIRINGLY INSCRIBED

BY  
THE AUTHOR



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## PREFACE.

The writing of such a poem as the second Locksley Hall, is something more than a literary blunder; it is a sin against civilization. There were limits, it would seem, to the unprogressive dotage of even octogenarianhood; but the conservative cynicism of Carlyle and Tennyson proves that "reversion" may sometimes, indeed, "drag evolution in the mud." What muffled adieus are these as contrasted with the sublime farewells of Sophocles, Simonides, Chaucer, Goethe, and Longfellow?

In the work before us the author condemns a world he refuses to understand. The mighty facts that breathe and burn about us touch not a muse whose loftiest flight insults the spirit of the age. The light-bringers of the century bear no torch for him. Science is busy only with the new astronomy, which discovers the moon to be dead, but not with home-building for the living millions of the earth, nor with the new chemistry of human happiness. "Poor old history" finds good not in the present, where it is, but in the past, where it is not. The poet's later vision is all too narrow to perceive the glorious indices which are making history grander than itself; philanthropy, with love's lamp searching out the haunts of the wretched; legislation, seeking to be humane and just, protecting the weak, enlightening the dark, uplifting the oppressed; politics, exalting and expanding civilization; letters, reaching after hope, and strength, and joy; science, discovering the unity and completion of the race.

But not for the poet-peer to "live into a gentler time." For him no "suffrage of the plow," no "federation of the world." He forgets that social problems have always vexed, but that a brave age will solve them bravely. He perceives not that the present is a protest against "petrified old forms, tyranny, and the devil;" and that out of its seething and agitation new forms will arise into larger liberty, higher achievement, supream happiness.

The age, true enough, discovers shameful defaults, and man improves too slowly for his aspirations. But our laureate spends his force in idle lamenting, vain regret, wasteful blame. He denies remedy, libels liberty, denounces equal rights, debilitates courage, ignores the forward movement of the nations, discourages the onward hope of the world.

What has the race done to my Lord the Laureate, who like Seneca writes about poverty on tables of gold, and who with never a sorrow of his own, might better employ his muse in solacing and strengthening the world, rather than in deepening its shadows? The writer of these fragmentary lines—written in wide apart interludes of duty and always beneath the pall of torturesome care—might with far more consistency pose as a pessimist. Such a luckless Wandering Jew to whom life has denied even the privilege of finding out whether he could write verses or not, has earned some right to condemn the world and riot in its hopelessness. But how does such an one, deeply lettered in the iron alphabet of experience, find more to praise than to blame in the black earth, more to inspire a psalm than a lamentation? Life is largely what we make of it; and there is one cowardice to look back from the plow, and one heroism to look up and on. Verily, the world moves despite its laureates; and he who will not help it on with a word of brave cheer is its enemy and not its friend.

THE AUTHOR.