

**A LITTLE BOOK OF
MISSOURI VERSE: CHOICE
SELECTIONS FROM
MISSOURI VERSE-WRITERS**

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A Little Book of Missouri Verse: Choice Selections from Missouri Verse-Writers by J. S. Snooddy
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J. S. SNOODY & PERRY S. RADER

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A LITTLE BOOK
OF
MISSOURI VERSE

CHOICE SELECTIONS FROM MISSOURI
VERSE-WRITERS.

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INTRODUCTION.

It has been my desire for a decade that the people of Missouri become more homogeneous. I am of the opinion that we do not as a people rely enough on ourselves. Clannishness is not needed or desired; but we do need to believe that among Missourians there are to be found those who, with proper encouragement at home, may become authors equal to any in America.

We shall have more self-respect, a higher regard for our State, more love for the inhabitants of our commonwealth, and a livelier interest in each other, and hence a stronger, because a more confident, citizenship, if we will take a greater interest in Missouri authors, buy and read more of their books, and otherwise encourage them to believe that we are their friends.

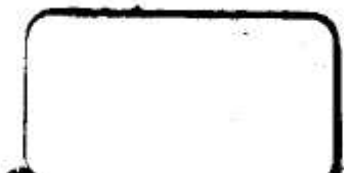
The people of Missouri have a common destiny. They should so unite as to make this commonwealth the brightest and best in the constellation of States. This cannot be done if they have a higher regard for the statesmen, authors, orators, and musicians of other States than for those of our own.

We have not prized our writers highly enough. We have fallen into the habit of going to other States and other countries for our books. The merit of an author in the estimation of Missourians, it has often seemed to me, has increased about as the square of the distance of his residence from Missouri. Somehow

we seem to have concluded that no Missourian can write a book or a good poem. This ought not to be. We are doing ourselves great harm by this practice. A great writer or a genuine poet is of far greater value to a commonwealth, even in a material way, than a gold mine or a railroad. Take from Massachusetts the books she has made, and there remains little to attract the attention of the American people. To forever borrow from other States our ideas, our intellectual food, indicates a general mental weakness; it is also to invite the constant criticism and sneers of other States. We must have more Missouri books. There is no lack of native talent of sufficient brilliancy to write them; we also have a population that appreciates polished prose and beautiful verse. We need only to rely on one another, to encourage one another.

If this volume is favorably received, it will encourage better verse. The persons who have written the verses to be found within these lids have, through their efforts, brought brightness to many a household. As a native Missourian, who is proud of his State and believes in her people and her future, I desire to express the hope that these literary efforts may arouse among our people a greater interest in Missouri writers.

PERRY S. RADER.



EDITOR'S NOTE.

Missouri has never had a great poet. We can not, as yet, claim for any of our verse-writers a place among the immortals; yet some of them have almost touched shoulders with genius, and many of the verses produced by these writers possess such merit as to deserve preservation. Very few books or pamphlets of verse written by Missourians have been preserved in the libraries of our State; and, as far as I have been able to ascertain, no one has made a collection of their works with the view of preserving them. During the past two years, with the assistance of some of my pupils who have been interested in the study of local literature, I have made a small collection of Missouri verse. From this collection I have endeavored to select and present in book form a number of such specimens as would afford the reader a general view of the attainments and merits of our writers. It would be impossible to include all the meritorious verse in these selections; much, as worthy as any selected, has necessarily been omitted; many are too long, and all the worthy short ones could not be contained in "a little book." No comment is made on the verses selected; the field of criticism I leave to others.

The biographical notes are chiefly to vindicate my claims that the writers whose verses I have used are Missouri writers. For this reason I have confined my remarks to matter-of-fact statements rather than eulogies.

I take pleasure in acknowledging my obligations to those writers who have granted me free use of their copyrighted works, and especially to Mr. William M. Paxton, of Platte City, who has cheerfully allowed me to use a number of books from his private library. My thanks are due to publishers who have kindly given me permission to make extracts from their publications. Among them are *G. P. Putnam's Sons*, *The Peter Paul Book Company*, *Charles Scribner's Sons*, *The Ennis Press Company*, the publishers of *The New York Independent*, *The Lotus*, *Midland Monthly*, *Chaperone Magazine*, and others whose publications are mentioned in the table of contents.

J. S. SNODDY.

Woodson Institute, Richmond, Mo.

June 29, 1897.