

Chapter 1 : Editions of Mountain Idylls and Other Poems by Alfred Castner King

The rugged beauty of the San Juan Mountain Range and some captivating experiences of miners who rushed to Southwestern Colorado in the late s, are again made available to the public in this Western Reflections Publishing reprint of Alfred Castner King's Mountain Idylls and Other Poems.

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Of molten deluge, and volcanic flood;? Fracture and break, the silent stories tell? Of dire convulsion in the ages past;? And cataclysm of internal force. The trachyte wall, beseamed and battle scarred;? The porphyritic tower and citadel;? The granite ramparts and embattlements? Stand as a symbol of eternal strength,? And hurl a challenge to the elements! With caverns, vast and gloomy, which would seem? Meet for the haunt of centaur or of gnome;? The gorgon and the labyrinthodon;? The clumsy mammoth and the dinosaur;? Or all gigantic and unwieldy shapes? Which earth has seen in the mysterious past,? Would seem in more accord and harmony? With such surroundings than the puny form? Of insignificant, conceited man. And interspersed amid these solemn peaks? Lie many a pleasant vale and grassy slope,? Besprinkled with the drooping columbine,? And fragrant growths of all harmonious tints,? Whose variegated colors punctuate? In the forbidding shadow of the cliffs,?

Chapter 2 : Mountain Idylls

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When the above words were written by Solomon, King of Israel, about three thousand years ago, they were possibly inspired by the existence even at that early period of an extensive and probably overweighted literature. The same literary conditions are as true to-day as when the above truism emanated from that most wonderful of all human intellects. Every age and generation, as well as every changing religious or political condition, has brought with it its own peculiar and essentially differing current literature, which, as a rule, continued a brief season, and then vanished, perishing with the age and conditions which called it into being; leaving, however, an occasional volume, masterpiece, or even quotation, to become classic, and in the form of standard literature survive for generations, and in many instances for ages. Poetry has always occupied a unique position in literature; and though from a pecuniary stand-point usually unprofitable, it enjoys the decided advantage of longevity. The two most notable of these, the Iliad and the Odyssey, are believed to have been transmitted from generation to generation, orally, by the minstrels and minnisingers, until the introduction or inception of the Greek alphabet, when they were reduced to parchment, and, surviving all the vicissitudes of time and sequent political and religious change, still occupy a prominent place in literature. The Book of Job, generally accepted as the most ancient of writings, now extant, whether sacred or secular, was doubtless originally a primitive though sublime poetical effusion. The prose works contemporaneous with Chaucer, Spencer, and even with that most wonderful of literary epochs, the Elizabethan age, are now practically obsolete, while the poetical efforts remain in some instances with increased prominence. Someone, although just who is difficult to determine,â€”though it savors of the Greek School of Philosophy,â€” has delivered the following injunction: In fact, about the only emolument to be expected is the gratification of an inherent and indefinable impulse, which impels one to the task with equal force, whether the ultimate result be affluence or a dungeon. The author of this unpretentious volume has long questioned the advisability of adding a book to our already inflated and overloaded literature, unless it should contain something in the nature of a deviation from beaten literary paths. Whether the reading public will regard this as such or not is a question for the future to determine, as every book is a creature of circumstance, and at the date of its publication an algebraic unknown quantity. It was not the original intention of the author to publish any of his effusions in collective form until more mature years and riper judgment should better qualify him for the task of composition, and should enable him to still further pursue the important studies of etymology, rhetoric, Latin and Greek, and complete the education which youthful environment denied. On the 17th of March, A. At first further effort seemed useless, but as time meliorates in some degree even the most deplorable and distressing physical conditions, ambition slowly rallied, and while lying for several months a patient in various hospitals in an ineffectual attempt to regain even partial sight, the following ideas and efforts of past years were gradually recalled from the recesses of memory, and reduced to their present form, in which, with no small hesitation and misgiving, they are presented to the consideration of the reading public, which in the humble opinion of the author has frequently failed to receive and appreciate productions of vastly superior merit. Ouray, Colorado, March 15, Mountain Idylls and Other Poems Grandeur. Dedicated to the mountains of the San Juan district, Colorado, as seen from the summit of Mt. Below, outspread, A scene of such terrific grandeur lay That reeled the brain at what the eyes beheld; The hands would clench involuntarily And clutch from intuition for support; The eyes by instinct closed, nor dared to gaze On such an awful and inspiring sight. Majestic turrets, and the stately dome Which, ovaled by the slow but tireless hand Of eons of disintegrating time, Still with impressive aspect rears its brow Defiant of mutation and decay. And many a denuded avenue Of varying and considerable width, Cut through the growth of balsam, spruce and pine, Which stands erect and proud on either hand, Attests the swift and desolating force Of fearful, devastating avalanche. The mountain rill its pleasant music makes, As the descendant waters roll along, In rhythmic flow and dulcet cantabile, In various concord and harmonious pitch, Pursuant of its journey to the sea; The murmuring treble of the rivulet, Uniting with the deep and ponderous bass Of torrent wild and foaming cataract; The thunderous,

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reverberating tones And seething ebullition of the falls Are blended in one grand euphonious chord. Far in the hazy distance, as the eye With vague perceptive vision penetrates, Lie the vast mesas of ethereal hue, Stretched in a calm and sleepy quietude, Dreamy repose and blue tranquillity; The eye which rests upon the drowsy scene Beholds a dim horizon, which presents No line of demarcation or of bounds; A merging union, blurred and indistinct; Fuliginous confusion, that the eye In viewing gazes, but no more discerns Which is the earth, and which the azure sky. But mark the change!

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Alfred Castner King is the author of *Mountain Idylls and Other Poems* (avg rating, 4 ratings, 0 reviews, published), *The Passing of the Storm* an.

Chapter 8 : Alfred Castner King (Author of Mountain Idylls and Other Poems)

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queat hedto all succeeding time several of earth's n oblest epics, while the contemporaneous prose if any existed, has long lain buried in the inscrut able archives o f the remote past.