

# **THE VOICES OF SONG**

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The voices of song by James W. Foley

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**JAMES W. FOLEY**

**THE VOICES OF  
SONG**



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To

MY FRIEND

MRS. ROBERT J. BURDETTE

WHOSE CHEER HAS BEEN CONSTANT AND

WHOSE COUNSEL WISE

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## *INTRODUCTORY NOTE*

It is now thirty-five years since I struck the Little Missouri, not long after it had been reached by the Northern Pacific Railroad. For a dozen years I owned a ranch, and at one time two ranches, on the river. At that time the country was in every respect a typical region of the old West—the west of the cattlemen; the west of Remington's pictures and Wister's tales. Indeed, as regards many of the old-timers there was a strong flavor of Bret Harte about them: I remember well a cowboy ball where in the lancers I stood opposite a lady whose partner, with whom she "danced down the middle," was "the man who shot Sandy McGee."

Among the friends I made was the father of the author of this volume. Mr. Foley was one of the comparatively few men of that time



### *INTRODUCTORY NOTE*

and region who was devoted to reading and to books. Now and then, after six or eight weeks on the range with valued friends who were distinctly of a non-literary type, I would come in to spend an evening with Mr. Foley for the especial purpose of again listening to speech about books. At that time the present poet was one of the small Foley boys, and seemed far more likely to develop into a cow-puncher than a literary man. At different times he and his brothers worked for me and with me.

I think it was the author himself who, on one occasion in my absence, joined with my foreman Sylvane Ferris in improvising, out of my rather large collection of somewhat uncertain-tempered horses, a pair which it was deemed possible to harness to a wagon in order to take a certain Eastern college professor and his wife out to see the Bad Lands. The team, which was driven by "Foley's boy," ran away, and the unfortunate professor broke his leg. Sylvane Ferris related the incident to me, explaining that he had called on the professor—who was then undergoing convalescence in the very unattractive local hotel—and had

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

told him that in view of the accident he would not charge him anything for the rig. The professor retorted with some acerbity that he was glad some consideration was shown him, for he had begun to believe that the runaway team had been given him on purpose. "By George!" said Sylvane, "it made me hot to call that a runaway team. Why, one of them horses never could have run away before! He had never been druv but twice! As for the other horse, maybe he'd run away a few times; but there were lots of times he *hadn't* run away!"—which last statement Sylvane considered a guarantee of gentleness sufficient to please the most exacting.

So I can testify from personal knowledge that Mr. Foley writes his Western sketches not out of books, but out of his own ample experience, and as an old friend of the Little Missouri days I wish him well.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

SAGAMORE HILL,  
*July 4, 1916.*

