



## Life in Prairie Land (1846)

*Eliza Wood Farnham*

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## **Life in Prairie Land (1846)** Eliza Wood Farnham

Eliza Farnham (1815 –1864) was a famous 19th-century American author of books on the Far West, including “Life in Prairie Land.”

Farnham’s book will be found a work of unusual interest, and one that addresses itself to almost every class of readers. Its intrinsic value, aside from the high reputation of the authoress, must give it a wide circulation. It is made up of a series of charming and lifelike pictures of a personal residence in the Far West—perfect daguerreotypes of a settler’s daily habits, customs, methods of husbandry, &c.; together with graphic sketches of travel in various sections of that far spreading and fertile country. The work is enlivened by a rich vein of irresistible humor, interwoven among passages of great power and eloquent beauty, immensely impressive and suggestive. Mrs. Farnham has already acquired no unenviable degree of reputation or the distinguished ability. The author of “Life in Prairie Land,” has for some years past contributed largely to many of our leading periodicals. We advise all who would laugh heartily over passages of keen satire, or be charmed with glowing and beautiful descriptions, who would shed a tear over some of the most touching and thrilling incidents they have ever yet perused, to read this volume.

Miss Farnham's book has all the charm of entire novelty. It conveys a graphic, and probably true picture of western life, possibly here and there a little exaggerated, but taken as a whole full of interest, rich and racy. It has a few faults—what book has not? But where there exists so much to praise we are not disposed to cavil at minor defects. Miss Farnham enters into the business and enjoyments of western life with a heartiness that cannot fail to lend interest to her book.

This is one of the most readable books of the season. It is so rich in graphic descriptions of character and scenery,—in well told anecdotes, and lively pictures of domestic life, that the reader who takes it up for a few moment's amusement, will hardly be able to lay it down until the book is finished. There is a clearness, a distinctness, a "coming to the point," in all the writings of Mrs. Farnham, which we greatly admire. Her conceptions, both of abstract truths, and of things visible and tangible, seem always to be distinct and vivid, hence the pictures she draws have all the life, like coloring and freshness of reality. There is much likewise, in the subject of this work to recommend it, particularly to city readers. It is surely worth something for "stay at home travelers" to have such a companion and guide through the prairies and forests of the Far West, as the writer of this volume has proved herself to be. Many of them doubtless, after reading it, will prefer the comforts of their present lot, to actual experience of Prairie Lite, though for ourselves, we confess, the perusal of this book has only strengthened our desire for emigration.

We predict for this book what we most certainly wish it, a very wide circulation among the reading community. It has all the exciting interest of fiction, combined with the charm of truth—and we rejoice in the evidence it furnishes, that the philanthropic labors which press so heavily on the gifted writer, have not tamed her buoyant spirits, or diminished her intellectual acumen and power.

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