

THE NATION BACK OF US, THE WORLD IN FRONT

OUT WEST

A MAGAZINE OF THE OLD PACIFIC AND THE NEW



A CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY OF FORTY-FIVE POEMS

SELECTED FROM OUT WEST

1902-1917

BRIAN KIM STEFANS, EDITOR

TEXT/TECH JOURNALS

Editor's Note

This volume isolates the forty-five *Out West* poems chosen for the combined critical anthology. The selection favors verbal precision, formal control, distinctiveness, historical importance, and a broad account of what the journal could do.

Landscape lyric and frontier ballad appear beside devotional, comic, civic, borderlands, Indigenous-mediated, and early modernist work. Some poems participate in the settler-colonial and racial vocabularies of their period; craft is recognized without treating those vocabularies as neutral.

Texts and editorial notes are inherited from the corrected combined edition. Original lineation, stanza spacing, signatures, and meaningful indentation are retained.

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The California Poppy

by Joaquin Miller

Out West, Vol. 16, February 1902; magazine p. 211; physical source PDF p. 58

Editorial note. *The poem's public rhetoric is balanced by a memorable floral image and a deft sense of color moving across the landscape.*

The golden poppy is God's gold,
The gold that lifts, nor weighs us down,
The gold that knows no miser's hold,
The gold that banks not in the town,
But singing, laughing, freely spills
Its hoard far up the happy hills;
Far up, far down, on every turn,
What beggar has not gold to burn!

The Hights, Oakland, Cal.

A Ballade of Wild Bees

by Eugene Manlove Rhodes

Out West, Vol. 16, March 1902; magazine p. 322; physical source PDF p. 13

Editorial note. *The elaborate form never stiffens the poem. Refrain, humor, and close observation keep the ballade alive and surprising.*

Afar, in a dim and lonely land,
Where desert breezes swoon and die,
She dwells, and waves of drifting sand
In league-long silence 'round her lie;
She hears the wild bees humming by
In drowsy minor melodies;
She calls them friends—yet scarce knows why—
My Lady of the Honey Bees!

She loves at eventide to stand
And watch the sunset flame and die.
Shading her clear eyes with her hand
She marks her cheerful comrades fly
Athwart the golden glory nigh;
She hears the night winds in the trees;
She joys in God's fair earth and sky,
My Lady of the Honey Bees!

Dear, have you learned to understand
The wild bees' lore and mystery?
The love that makes all labor grand,
The grateful heart, the patient eye,
That from a barren land and dry
Can gather sweets and song—like these
Your wise wee kin, whose courage high
Is yours—my Queen of Honey Bees!

L'ENVOI

Brave heart! Too strong for moan or sigh,
You shame us in our slothful ease;
Sing on! The grudging fates defy,
And learn life's lesson—from the bees!

Tularosa, N. Mex.

The Cactus Hedge

by Ina Coolbrith

Out West, Vol. 17, October 1902; magazine p. 616; physical source PDF p. 51

Editorial note. *The poem is vivid, compressed, and formally clean. Its beauty depends on the cactus remaining defensive, difficult, and materially present.*

Sharp are the thorns of the cactus path—
Ay, Felipe!
But sharper still is the madre's wrath!
The cactus-hedge is a blossomed flame—
Red star-blooms of the heart untame.
Listen! I hear the mock-bird's song.
Felipe, Felipe,
The day is long,
Is long!

The doors are fast, and the gates are barred,
Ay, Felipe!
The sky with a thousand lamps is starred.
Under the rose at the vineyard edge,
But a step to the thick of the cactus-hedge!
Listen, the ring-dove's cooing sweet!
Felipe, Felipe,
The night is fleet,
Is fleet!

The old California vineyards were frequently hedged with the "prickly-pear" cactus. See page 427.

San Francisco, Cal.

Mañana

by Julia Boynton Green

Out West, Vol. 17, November 1902; magazine p. 883; physical source PDF p. 130

Editorial note. *The repeated temporal hesitation is both musical and psychological. What could have been a regional cliché becomes a subtle poem about desire deferred.*

Though with light laugh we quote your word,
O dark-eyed brothers of the South,
We should be meek, we too have erred,
Your phrase is often in our mouth,
"Mañana."

Mañana! ah, the opulent hour!
Enriched with all heroic deeds,
And clothed upon with all the power
Today refuses to our needs,
Mañana.

Tomorrow we will start the book,
Will pay the debt; reform our ways;
We will seek pardon for the look
The word that gloomed a dear one's days,
Mañana.

Tomorrow comes, and is today;
Old habit's strong; our funds are low;
The muse is shy; the friends away;
The voice still whispers, soothing, slow,
Mañana.

Redlands, Cal.

To a Child's Moccasin

by Hartley Alexander

Out West, Vol. 18, February 1903; magazine p. 197. The source leaf is absent from the bound scan; restored from the author's *The Mid Earth Life* (1907), pp. 64–66.

Editorial note. *The poem's ceremonial tenderness and careful object-centered imagery are formally impressive, even as its cultural framing requires historical caution.*

Looted from the body of an Indian child killed at Wounded Knee. 'Twas complained that Indian women—some were killed—fought with the braves; which, indeed, they did.

A wild mother's patterned fancy—white beads, green and blue,
With here, like heart-stained arrows, scarlet zigzagged through,
Thy lining furry rabbit, little shoe!
How joyously she wrought thee, the long blue sunny day,
On the wind-stroked grass of the prairie, 'neath the willows' shady sway,
Singing the old song mothers sing alway:

Chaske, my little Chaske, Chaske my brave to be!
Fleet shall he run as the stallion, stand tall as the tall pine-tree,
As the storm be mighty and valiant,—Chaske my chief to be!

Stringing the beads in patterns, zigzag red and blue;
Sewing with thread of tendon the furry edges true;
Singing the song of mothers the blue day through.

II.

A hill-slope, a desolation; yonder the cordoned crest
Of glinting gun and sabre,—here, like mole in nest,
Trapped in the hill-crest's hollow, the huntsmen's quest.

A solitude of heaven high and sunny still
Above a breadth of desert,—sudden the locust shrill
Of bullets, then death, and sudden the war-whoop's thrill.

And here a wild squaw-mother—something dead at the breast,
Something live at the shoulder, spitting lead with the best,—
Singing a song of wild heart's cradle-rest:

Death, ye have taught me to mother! Death, I will mother well!
With red, red blood I will nourish, I will lull with the rifle's spell!
For ye have taught me to suckle and I will suckle them well!

Only a wild squaw-mother, bullet-stung at the start,
Quiet out there in the desert, something dead nigh the heart.
See! her quaint fancy's beading, zigzag art.

William Keith

by Ina Coolbrith

Out West, Vol. 18, April 1903; magazine p. 432; physical source PDF p. 677

Editorial note. *This is an accomplished poem about painting because it thinks in visual relations: distance, atmosphere, color, and the human pressure behind landscape.*

Suggested by Lillie V. O’Ryan’s miniature portrait of the famous artist.

We read that under the far Indian skies,
The dusk magician with his mystic wand
Calls from the arid and unseeded sand,
Whereon the shadowless sun’s white fervor lies,
A perfect tree before our wondering eyes.
First its green shoot uplifts a tender hand;
Then trunk and spreading foliage expand
To flower and fruit; and then it droops and dies.
But he—our wizard of the tinted brush—
In God’s diviner necromancy skilled,
Gives to our vision Earth, in grandeur free!
Rose-gold of dawn and evening’s purple hush,
The Druid-woods with Nature’s worship filled,
The mountains and the everlasting sea.

This highly satisfactory miniature has just been completed by Miss O’Ryan, and is here reproduced for the first time.

Was It the Sea?

by Edward Salisbury Field

Out West, Vol. 18, June 1903; magazine p. 721; physical source PDF p. 1074

Editorial note. *The question organizes the whole poem, keeping memory and sound unresolved. Its ambiguity is unusually modern for the magazine.*

The song of the sea is in my ears—
The song of the sea, the song of the sea!
Souls that have lived in the bygone years,
Singing to me, singing to me!
Off to the west the dark sky clears;
A sea-gull circles, and wheels, and peers.
The cloud fleets sail to the southward—Hist!
Was it a voice that called to me—
A voice that I have not heard in years—
Or was it the sea?

My cheek is wet with a dash of spray—
A dash of spray, a dash of spray!
And into my heart come, creeping, fears;
And I look away, I look away!
And into my eyes there comes a mist,
A mist of spray—or is it tears?

Los Angeles, Cal.

The Santa Fé Trail

by Sharlot M. Hall

Out West, Vol. 19, July 1903; magazine pp. 3–4; physical source PDF pp. 32–33

Editorial note. Hall balances historical sweep with the repeated bodily facts of travel. The result is both public ballad and memorial.

This way walked Fate; and as she went, flung far the line of destiny
That bound an untracked continent to brotherhood from sea to sea—
That long, gray trail of dream and hope marked mile by mile with graves that keep
On every barren hill and slope some stout heart lost in dreamless sleep.
Patience and faith and fortitude were willed to it, and justified;
Stern, homely virtues, plain and rude; eternal as the sky and wide.
Nor ever Viking dared the sea in braver mood than these who went
Strong-armed to wrest from Mystery their birthright, half a continent.

Gay, hawk-eyed, dark-faced voyageurs, tired of the river's muddy tide,
Or drawn by whispered, golden lures, or beckoned by the prairies wide,
These first, and lightly down the wind their songs float backward as they pass;
So light they go, nor leave behind scarce one deep footprint on the grass.
And after them, lean, keen, and grim, one fit untrodden heights to scan;
The gray peak looking down on him knew something kindred in the man.
Half prophet, seer, his eyes could trace, in those lone wastes that seemed to wait,
The larger promise of his race, the germ of many an unborn State.

Then Frémont, passing not alone; beside him, silent, dim, unguessed,
Unheralded, to claim her own, the Soul of the Awakening West.
Behind, above the thundering herds of fear-swept bison, seemed to beat
A hymn prophetic without words, the trample of a million feet.
That long gray trail! That path of fate! For gain or loss, for life or death,
Driven by greed or hope or hate, it drew them to the latest breath:
It broke them to its mighty mold; it seared their weakness to the bone;
It stripped them stark to sun and cold, and mocked at whimperer and drone.

And they were Men who bore its mark; and they were Men its service made—
Strong-souled to face the utter dark, and watch with Fear still unafraid;
Stern school of heroes unconfessed; unweighed for meed of right or wrong;
By glib late-comers dispossessed of honors that to them belong:
As in the fire-tried furnace hour, strange, warring elements will fuse
To purpose, unity and power, to truer strength and nobler use;
Unconscious—save that here was life a man might live as manhood meant—
They wrought a nation from their strife, and shaped it with their discontent.

No pulseless, still-born hope was theirs; each man a later Argonaut,
Who from great dreams and ceaseless cares out-wove the Golden Fleece he sought;
And single-handed out of need made potent opportunity;

Nor shamed the hour with laggard deed, nor quailed from naked Destiny.
They touched the wilderness to flower; they gave the unvoiced solitudes
A tongue that spoke with trumpet power the message of their iron moods;
But ah! the cost! The hands that bled; The toll of heart-aches and of tears!
The stern, white faces of the dead that paved that highway through the years!

The long grass hides the rutted trail where tracked those mighty caravans
Whose far-lit camp-fires low and pale elude, howe'er the vision scans
That lost horizon, shrunk to fit the little roads that come and go,
By easy ways (of greatness quit), that any chance-drawn foot may know;
Light trails that traffic o'er the dust of them that were a braver breed,
Forgotten in the careless lust for larger gain and lesser deed.
Mother of all the roads that hold the power o'er men that makes or mars!
These lead to cities, lands, and gold; this led to the eternal stars!

Dewey, Ariz.

Mist

by Nora May French

Out West, Vol. 19, October 1903; magazine p. 395; physical source PDF p. 578

Editorial note. *This is one of the clearest examples of French's modernity: brief, atmospheric, psychologically exact, and unwilling to explain its final unease.*

Low-arched above me, as I moved, the hollowed air was clear;
Beyond was whiteness, dim and strange, and spectral shapes drew near.
Upon the little shore of brown that touched the misty sea,
Upon the shadowy borderland one paused and looked at me;
Then hurried on with greeting smile and sudden vivid face!
A friend had started into life within my magic space.
Into the world of ghosts again I watched him fade away—
First black he was, then dim he was, then merged in formless gray.

Los Angeles.

The Song of the Bow

by Mary Austin

Out West, Vol. 20, January 1904; magazine p. 55; physical source PDF p. 72

Editorial note. *The poem's tensile rhythm suits its subject. Sound, pressure, and release are organized with a formal intelligence stronger than its ethnographic framing.*

Red Morning came to the evergreen oak
And wove him a screen of boughs,
To lie in wait till the tall dun buck
Came over the hill to browse.

It was all in the time of tender leaves
And the blossoming hour of the vine,
The red fox barked in the cactus scrub
And he heard the wild bees whine.

It was all in the time of tender leaves
And poppies beginning to blow;
Red Morning sat in the evergreen oak
And made him a song of his bow.

The wood was the heart of a juniper tree
On a strong, sea-sloping hill,
And the things it learned in the young green bough
The bow remembered still;
For it learned of the wind, it learned of the sea
And it learned of the spotted snake,
And their threefold sting was loosed from the string
When the will of the bow would wake.

The cord of the bow is the will of the bow,
'Tis the twisted gut of the deer;
Red Morning fingered the feathered shaft
And drew the butt to his ear.

For he was aware of an antlered buck
Come down by the stream to feed;
Red Morning loosened the cord of the bow
And sent him the stinging reed.

And all by night when the braves came in
And the children lay in the byre,
Red Morning sang his song of the bow
As he leaped by the leaping fire.

But the tall buck ranged on the hill no more
Nor belled to the tender doe,

For never a beast runs free in the wood
Who has harked to the song of the bow.

Independence, Cal.

Catalina Fog

by Blanche Trask

Out West, Vol. 20, February 1904; magazine p. 161; physical source PDF p. 232

Editorial note. *The fog is rendered with tactile and emotional precision. Trask's close knowledge of the island prevents the atmosphere from becoming generic.*

Round about the highest peak,
A mighty fog is furled—
He leans to look into the sea,
And shuts out all the world.

And I, who walk this mountain trail,
Have doubts of heaven above,
And listen to the hidden sea
Like voice of one I love.

E'en while I list, this mighty fog
Has torn himself in two,
To show me still that endlessness
Which 'bideth i' the blue!

Avalon, Cal.

Along the Track

by Nora May French

Out West, Vol. 20, March 1904; magazine p. 247; physical source PDF p. 370

Editorial note. *Railway motion gives the poem a broken, cinematic sequence of perceptions. The lineation keeps landscape and restlessness in productive tension.*

The track has led me out beyond the town
To follow day across the waning fields;
The crisping weeds and wastes of tender brown.

On either side the feathered tops are high,
A tracery of broken arabesques
Upon the sullen crimson of the sky.

Into the west the narrowing rails are sped.
They cut the crayon softness of the dusk
With thin converging gleams of bloody red.

Los Angeles.

Night Wind, Wake!

by Mary Austin

Out West, Vol. 20, April 1904; magazine p. 318; physical source PDF p. 489

Editorial note. *Incantation and physical landscape meet with remarkable energy. The repeated command makes the poem feel performed rather than merely described.*

Night Wind wake! now the cattle leave the trail for us,
Huddled on the hill slope by the stony water-scar,
Get you down along the steep
Where the moon-eyed gillias keep,
To go walking in the meadows—
Silver runnels in the meadows—
Where the blossoms star the shadows and the hidden waters are.

Night Wind wake! now the laden vine is calling us,
Calling with the incense of its green and misty blooms,
Now the milk-white alders quake
Where the dark lies like a lake
On the musky scented meadows,
On the many-lilied meadows,
On the chilly mountain meadows where the throaty hylas blooms.

Night Wind wake! I am coming up the trail to you,
Up and past the gullies where the midnight shadows lair,
Past the tangle by the creek
Where the trail is all to seek,
To the damp and dusky meadows,
To the willow-skirted meadows,
To go walking in the meadows with the pleasant Night Wind there.

Independence, Cal.

Among the White Sands

by Isabel Darling

Out West, Vol. 20, May 1904; magazine p. 453; physical source PDF p. 676

Editorial note. *The landscape is luminous but unstable. Darling's shifting scale and restrained music capture the strangeness of the dunes.*

Here lay an inland sea, heavy with bitterness,
Gnawing and clutching at its farther bounds,
Unreconciled, unshaded, fettered, dumb and lone.
The centuries, slow passing on their rounds,
Crept softly near and, in its fierce, defiant breath
Shriveled to moments, shrank affrighted by,
Dropping no token of their tenderness or late regret,
Weaving no mist to veil the burning sky.

In some unknown, uncounted past it had been one
With all the seas, for each remembering wave,
With helpless longing tortured, beat in rippling rage
Against its fellows; yet at length a cave,
With here and there a salty hollow on the plain,
Held scattered pools that, turning slowly gray,
Despairing, clinging, glaring hatred to the last,
Sank in the sands and they, too, passed away.

Waters to waters, dust to dust, each to its own!
As, through its long probation time of woe,
The sea was man's unconscious servant, grain by grain
Assorting, cleansing, tossing to and fro
The sullen, heavy sands, through age on patient age,
So swept the winds, with strong, uplifting grace,
Where neither tomb nor monument gave stony hope,
And lo! white peace shone on the desert's face.

Though Time, perchance, remember not that inland sea
Once pulsing with the ocean's throbbing heart,
And but these caustic crystals, dry as leprous grief,
Give token of its bitter life apart,
Here some crude Eden grew or some rank Sodom raged,
Here waits a Paradise; for, more and more,
The spade of industry is lifting dust from dust
Where lies the seed upon God's ancient threshing floor.

Dimond, Cal.

The Hymn of the Men That Fail

by Sharlot M. Hall

Out West, Vol. 20, May 1904; magazine p. 399; physical source PDF p. 622

Editorial note. *The rhetoric is direct but not easy. Its compassion for defeated lives gives the poem moral weight beyond its period conventions.*

Here we face the Weigher with our balance,
We who out of all our toil have won
Only hope forespent and ideals vanished,
Only scars and sweat beneath the sun.
All we dared, and joyed for love of daring,
Grasping as a hand that grasps a star,
Star-wise in its beauty and eluding,
Lies beyond us still as dim and far.

And the soul that panoplied for battle
Once rode bravely forth in Fortune's train,
Wiser now by futile march and foray,
Knows the high adventure was in vain.
We have gained no laurels of our striving,
Naught of praise from them that sit to judge—
Yet while there is room for new endeavor,
Life is all too full for fret or grudge.

We have failed,—and bitter was the failing;
Full the price we paid of faith and trust;
Still our hearts turn back unavailing
To the Gods thrown prostrate in the dust:
For we could not keep the sight of childhood,
And the Grail our hearts set out to seek,
It was but a vessel, empty, earthen—
Yet we had the joy of them that seek.

The Call of the Surf

by Juliette Estelle Mathis

Out West, Vol. 21, September 1904; magazine p. 261; physical source PDF p. 366

Editorial note. Mathis gives the surf both sensuous presence and psychological command. The recurring sound pulls the poem beyond decorative seaside verse.

Last night I longed for mountain trails
Through chaparral, where scented gales
Would touch my face with tenderness—
Renew the dream of Love's caress!

I thought the brown-eyed canon pool,
The whispered rushing of the cool
Swift rivulet as downward sent,
Would banish my hot discontent.

Today I thirst for ocean-spray,
Its foam and surge that cannot stay,
But, restless ever, comes and goes—
To kiss my mouth and give repose.

The sea's wild wooing calls to me,
Its voice is rife with witchery,
It offers peace—its broad, blue breast
Invites with promises of rest!

O bliss to be! The sweet, salt wave
My fevered eyes and limbs shall lave—
Such ecstasy as thrills the Sea
Shall bound, and beat, and throb in me!

The Windward Road

by Aldis Dunbar

Out West, Vol. 21, December 1904; magazine p. 534; physical source PDF p. 795

Editorial note. *The poem's clean momentum and refusal of comfort make it a persuasive road lyric. Its music feels earned by exertion.*

Oh, smoother winds the valley trail,
More softly stirs the air
(With never hint of storm or gale),
Than where the mountain gusts prevail,
And grass and shade are there.

But who would know and prove his soul,
And gain the strength bestowed
Through strife maintained—the self-control—
Who straight and swift would reach the goal
Shall choose the windward road.

Erie, Pa.

The Dream of the Pine

by *Blanche Trask*

Out West, Vol. 22, February 1905; magazine p. 119; physical source PDF p. 188

Editorial note. *The pine's imagined memory of the sea is a striking conceit, sustained through scent, elevation, and deep sound.*

In the alpine meadow, dull and brown,
The gold of the oak comes shimmering down!

The scent of the fern on the withered stem
Clings to the garment's sleeve and hem.

While a sound as deep as the song of the sea
Is borne from the heart of the pine—to me!

For ships still "plough the furrowed main"
But if it be joy or if it be pain

We dwell so high that we may not know
How the white sails fill, or the great winds blow!

For the stars are agleam in the taper trees,
Which bear in their hearts this dream of the seas!

Idyllwild, San Jacinto Mts.

The Song of Days

by Hartley Alexander

Out West, Vol. 22, February 1905; magazine pp. 112-113; physical source PDF pp. 181-182

Editorial note. *Alexander risks a large mythic voice and largely earns it. Recurring stanza forms make deep time feel sung rather than summarized.*

A fable! How one sultry summer's night
I walked the prairies; black, flame-riven clouds
And scant, reluctant drops of scalding rain
Tenting the thirsting fields and crisped corn.
Afar, coyotes wailing and the long sigh
Of tomb-a-wearied spirits, cradle-rock
Of Earth's old rhythms, and like a lullaby
Crooned in her witch's breast—the Song of Days:

"I am the Eater of Times—
I, the primordial Earth!
Unto what creatures I willed
I gave birth:
Drank their heart's blood till it filled
My Heart's dearth!

"Tomed in my bosom, they bide
Where first they were suckled and kissed;
A chant to their spirits I raise,
Nor desist
Singing the Song of their Days
As I list!

"I feel the warm surge of the primitive sea,
Hear its refrain:
Breathe the fragrance the ashes of blossoms for aye
Ever retain:
Quiver with loves of lovers long free
From their love's pain!

"I throb to the rushing of cattle that thrill
To the storm's rod:
Laugh the wild laughter the prairie-wolves shrill,
Hopeless to God:
Hear the fierce battle-cry echoing still
Under the sod!

"I am Eater of Times;
I am the Future and Past!
None from my holding shall part:

All at last
In the wide house of my heart
I chain fast!
"Tomb'd in my bosom they bide,
Where first they suckled and kissed:
A chant to their spirits I raise,
Nor desist
Singing the Song of their Days
As I list!"

Boston, Mass.

The Wind and the Tree

by Rose Trumbull

Out West, Vol. 22, February 1905; magazine p. 112; physical source PDF p. 181

Editorial note. *The poem's repeated inset rhymes mimic pressure moving through branches. Its Gothic intensity grows from an exact acoustic design.*

When the wind crept into the cottonwood tree
 With a whispered word
 Which I almost heard
As it stole its way past me,

Then the night-hushed tree from its silence stirred—
 For each tiny leaf,
 With a sudden grief,
Trembled at what it heard.

Then the branches moved as in secret pain,
 And I heard a moan
 That was half a groan,
Like the breath of the battle-slain.

Then the long boughs scourged themselves in despair
 Till a shriek and a crash
 Told of death 'neath the lash,
And sobs shook the quivering air.

Thus the night wore on, and the cottonwood tree
 With its piteous wails
 Made me think of the tales
Of a lost soul's agony.

Now the wind crept forth at the sun's first ray,
 And the cottonwood tree
 Hid its agony
In silence before the day.

But what was the whisper of wind and tree.
 Aye, what was the word
 Which I almost heard
As the wind, it stole past me?

Scottsdale, Ariz.

Fog

by Neeta Marquis

Out West, Vol. 22, March 1905; magazine p. 180; physical source PDF p. 301

Editorial note. *Marquis uses obscurity with unusual control: the poem remains visually exact even as streets, distances, and certainties disappear.*

Cool and gray and spirit-soft,
To sick flowers tossed in fever-heat,
I come, a night-nurse from the sea
With quiet treading feet.

I lay calm fingers on each pulse;
I gently wet the parched lips,
And give them drink from mist distilled
That off the palm-tree drips.

To poppy, rose and heliotrope,
Each in her little garden bed,
I glide refreshingly in turn
And ease each aching head.

What time the breeze of day must rest,
I thus my healing vigil keep,
And when she stirs again at morn,
I steal away to sleep.

Los Angeles.

Rain

by Nora May French

Out West, Vol. 22, March 1905; magazine p. 212; physical source PDF p. 333

Editorial note. *The rain is heard as much as seen. French's subtle repetitions create an interior weather without forcing a symbolic conclusion.*

The rain was grey before it fell,
And through a world where light had died,
There ran a mournful little wind
That shook the trees and cried.

The rain was brown upon the earth,
In turbid stream and tiny seas;
In swift and slender shafts that beat
The flowers to their knees.

The rain is mirror to the sky—
Oh, passing words, a blue so dear!
And drifting in the shining pools
The clouds are white and near.

Los Angeles, Cal.

An Adobe Ruin

by Neeta Marquis

Out West, Vol. 23, July 1905; magazine p. 40; physical source PDF p. 63

Editorial note. *The ruin is neither picturesque prop nor simple elegy. Texture and weather carry a more complicated meditation on historical survival.*

Dead labor of the brown untutored hands
That reared thy walk of day against a night,
Unlike the toilers swart who spent their night
To mass the quarried pile on Egypt's sands,

Linking their labor to eternity
With bonds unbroke by tempest-blasts amain,
Whilst thou, rude shelter from the wind and rain,
Unknown to art, dost perish wretchedly.

How like unto that other house of earth
Wherein thy builder's spirit dwelt and yearned
For beauty unattained; like thee, returned
So soon unto the dust that gave it birth.

Los Angeles.

The Constant Ones

by Nora May French

Out West, Vol. 23, October 1905; magazine p. 357; physical source PDF p. 532

Editorial note. *Its irony is quiet but decisive. The poem tests permanence against mortality and lets the final image carry the argument.*

The tossing trees had every flag unfurled
To hail their chief, but now the sun is set,
And in this sweet new quiet on the world
The king is dead, the fickle leaves forget.

A placid earth, an air serene and still,
In misty blue the gradual smoke is thinned—
Only the grasses, leaning to his will,
The grasses hold a memory of wind.

Los Angeles

The Stream

by Robinson Jeffers

Out West, Vol. 23, October 1905; magazine p. 331; physical source PDF p. 506

Editorial note. *The early Jeffers voice is already recognizable in its hard landscape, impersonal movement, and distrust of merely human scale.*

There is a stream far up the mountains,
Thro' slumbrous cañon solitudes,
That flows unnamed from unknown fountains
Beneath the eternal peaks it passes,
Sweet with sharp scent of tall spiced grasses,
Making low laughter in the woods.

Great fronded ferns soft-steeped in slumber
Lean on its edge, to stay and cumber,
Their lustrous lang'rous leaves half furled;
Higher and higher, far above it,
The ancient mountains know not of it,
Unmoved, remote, beyond the world.

Thro' summer noontides hot and glowing,
Beside the lonely waters flowing,
Spring's coolness lingers with fair shade;
And in the midnight's heavy vastness
The stream sings down its rocky fastness,
And makes sweet music, unafraid.

At dawn with ghostly flags and horses
Like some old king's long-buried forces,
The silent mists go up the vale:
The great grey winds blow calmness thither,
And there are flowers that never wither,
And smooth small leaves that never fail.

So when the plain glooms dull and dreary,
And when one's heart is sadly weary
With the day's heat and the day's fret,
One might seek peace and find her yonder,
Where waters wild and wet winds wander,
And having found, one might forget.

Manhattan Beach, Cal.

The Mirage

by Theresa Russell

Out West, Vol. 23, December 1905; magazine p. 550; physical source PDF p. 833

Editorial note. *Russell keeps the phenomenon materially specific while allowing perception and desire to become inseparable. The poem is exact without becoming clinical.*

Misted green and silver bright,
Gleaming through the arid light,
Be thy intent to deceive us
Or from dullness to relieve us
Fair thou art to wistful sight.

E'en though thou be as false as fair,
Aphrodite of the air,
Sprung from Hope-deluded vision,
Smiling, mocking in derision,
Luring trust to black despair—

Yet shine on, oh phantom dear;
Joys are sweeter far than near.
All thy empty, vain effulgence
Wins our pardoning indulgence—
Lacking thee, the waste were drear.

The Prayer of the Bound

by Ethel Griffith

Out West, Vol. 23, December 1905; magazine p. 538; physical source PDF p. 821

Editorial note. *The devotional address is powered by a physical hunger for open space. Its urgency exceeds the conventions of the prayer poem.*

Father of All, grant me this single plea:
God of the Open Sky,
Let me go free!
As wide as mighty winds Thy earth around,
O Lord, the loosened throat;
The soul unbound!
To me the rugged heart of mountains bare;
The hoar strength of Thy hills,
God of the Open Air!
Unchecked and wild Thy mighty waves drive free;
Grant me my course as they,
Lord of the Untamed Sea!
Father of All, grant me this single plea:
God of the Open Sky,
Let me go free!

Arizona

by Sharlot M. Hall

Out West, Vol. 24, February 1906; magazine pp. 67-69; physical source PDF pp. 162-164

Editorial note. *The poem's civic ambition is matched by strong stanzaic control. Hall makes regional identity emerge from labor, conflict, weather, and scale.*

No beggar she in the mighty hall where her bay-crowned sisters wait,
No empty-handed pleader for the right of a free-born state,
No child, with a child's insistence, demanding a gilded toy,
But a fair-browed, queenly woman, strong to create or destroy—
Wise for the need of the sons she has bred in the school where weaklings fail,
Where cunning is less than manhood, and deeds, not words, avail—
With the high, unswerving purpose that measures and overcomes,
And the faith in the Farthest Vision that builded her hard-won homes.

Link her, in her clean-proved fitness, in her right to stand alone—
Secure for whatever future in the strength that her past has won—
Link her, in her morning beauty, with another, however fair?
And open your jealous portal and bid her enter there
With shackles on wrist and ankle, and dust on her stately head,
And her proud eyes dim with weeping? No! Bar your doors instead
And seal them fast forever! but let her go her way—
Uncrowned if you will, but unshackled, to wait for a larger day.

Ay! Let her go bare-handed, bound with no grudging gift,
Back to her own free spaces where her rock-ribbed mountains lift
Their walls like a sheltering fortress—back to her house and blood.
And we of her blood will go our way and reckon your judgment good.
We will wait outside your sullen door till the stars you wear grow dim
As the pale dawn-stars that swim and fade o'er our mighty Cañon's rim.
We will lift no hand for the bays ye wear, nor covet your robes of state—
But ah! by the skies above us all, we will shame ye while we wait!

We will make ye the mold of an empire here in the land ye scorn,
While ye drowse and dream in your well-housed ease that States at your nod are born.
Ye have blotted your own beginnings, and taught your sons to forget
That ye did not spring fat-fed and old from the powers that bear and beget.
But the while ye follow your smooth-made roads to a fireside safe of fears,
Shall come a voice from a land still young, to sing in your age-dulled ears
The hero song of a strife as fine as your fathers' fathers knew,
When they dared the rivers of unmapped wilds at the will of a bark canoe—
The song of the deed in the doing, of the work still hot from the hand;
Of the yoke of man laid friendly-wise on the neck of a tameless land.

While your merchandise is weighing, we will bit and bridle and rein

The floods of the storm-rocked mountains and lead them down to the plain;
And the foam-ribbed, dark-hued waters, tired from that mighty race,
Shall lie at the feet of palm and vine and know their appointed place;
And out of that subtle union, desert and mountain-flood,
Shall be homes for a nation's choosing, where no home else had stood.

We will match the gold of your minting, with its mint-stamp dulled and marred
By the tears and blood that have stained it and the hands that have clutched too hard,
With the gold that no man has lied for—the gold no woman has made
The price of her truth and honor, plying a shameless trade—
The clean, pure gold of the mountains, straight from the strong, dark earth,
With no tang or taint upon it from the hour of its primal birth.
The trick of the money-changer, shifting his coins as he wills,
Ye may keep—no Christ was bartered for the wealth of our lavish hills.

"Yet we are a little people—too weak for the cares of state!"
Let us go our way! When ye look again, ye shall find us, mayhap, too great.
Cities we lack—and gutters where children snatch for bread;
Numbers—and hordes of starvelings, toiling but never fed.
Spare pains that would make us greater in the pattern that ye have set;
We hold to the larger measure of the men that ye forget—
The men who, from trackless forests and prairies lone and far,
Hewed out the land where ye sit at ease and grudge us our fair-won star.

"There yet be men, my masters," though the net that the trickster flings
Lies wide on the land to its bitter shame, and his cunning parleyings
Have deafened the ears of Justice, that was blind and slow of old.
Yet time, the last Great Judge, is not bought, or bribed, or sold;
And Time and the Race shall judge us—not a league of trafficking men,
Selling the trust of the people, to barter it back again;
Palming the lives of millions as a handful of easy coin,
With a single heart to the narrow verge where craft and statecraft join.

Dewey, Arizona

The Lone Trail

by Nellie Suydam

Out West, Vol. 24, March 1906; magazine p. 207; physical source PDF p. 380

Editorial note. *The trail is rendered through solitude, distance, and bodily motion. The poem's directness gives its regional imagery unusual authority.*

He knew the round-up trails that swing
O'er sunny plains where faint winds drift,
Up through the cañon's dusky rift
To some hill-meadow's moss-rimmed spring;

The trails that plod through wind-smoothed sands,
When lips are black and canteens clank,
From bitter spring and dust-filled tank,
Toward dim sky lines of lonely lands;

Trails drifted deep with snows that fall,
When the last daylight flickers out,
And, on the peaks, the storm-winds shout
Among the pines: we knew them all.

O Love, the trail today you ride
Too fearful is for me to tread—
The Lonely Pathway of the Dead,
It leads across the Great Divine.

Martinez, Arizona.

The Mass of Mangas

by Sharlot M. Hall

Out West, Vol. 24, March 1906; magazine pp. 169-173; physical source PDF pp. 342-346

Editorial note. *This is one of Hall's most ambitious historical poems. Ritual structure and recurring voices create a complex, troubling act of remembrance.*

Years had the Mission stood alone,
Its silent chapels bat-tenanted;
On its altars the gray owl nested her young,
And the ground squirrels burrowed above the dead
By the western wall, nor stirred their sleep;
Bare lay the fields, sun-scorched and white:
As scatter from black hawks the timorous quail,
Padre and soldier and neophyte

Scattered before the Apache hordes
That swept the valley with death and flame.
Now back at last, like quail to their nests,
Timorous, fearing, they slowly came,
Priest and people—to wring anew
From the sullen desert a grudging chance
For scanty food and room to toil,
Or a quick-won end on a blood-stained lance.

With fragrant branches of gray mesquite,
And waxen yuccas fair and tall—
Lifting their bells like hands in prayer,
Slender and snowy and virginal—
And desert lilies as frail as hope,
They wreathed the altars, and lit once more
The long-dead tapers, and set the rood
Over the arrow-bitten door.

The pale Christ leaned from the ironwood cross,
High in its niche deep-walled and gray;
And under his feet, in order set,
Censer and chalice in rough-wrought clay,
Where once was silver shaped in Spain—
Now spoil of fight to the savage foe,
And bandied from careless hand to hand,
Unblest uses and lips to know.

The tapers flickered; and tenderly
The last words whispered and echoed up
To the painted saints in the dusk above,

As the padre lifted the earthen cup
 And the blessed wine—but crash it fell,
 Staining the floor with a crimson tide,
 Unseen of the startled worshippers.
 For look—where the door unbarred swings wide!

Somber and splendid in paint and plume,
 With claws of eagle and puma skin,
 Mangas, the dread Apache chief,
 And a hundred braves at his back crowd in!
 He swept the shards of the cup aside
 And its silver mate on the altar set:
 "Padre, the boy you stopped to draw
 From the lion's jaws makes good his debt.

"With Death hot-heel on your track you turned
 To save a child of the enemy;
 Let these, beloved of your Hidden God,
 Be bond of peace for mine and me!
 And this in thanks for that other day!"
 Censer and chalice, he set them down,
 And bared his arms of their turquoise bands,
 And stripped the robe from his shoulders brown.

Man by man his men heaped up
 The pile, till it grew to the Virgin's feet:
 Skin and blanket, and beads that hung
 Like jewelled buds in the pale mesquite.
 Then, swift as they came, they went, again.
 But, so 'tis writ in the Mission rolls;
 With wine and incense the Padre straight
 Said holy mass for their heathen souls,

And held them saved to the Mother Church;
 For a grateful heart is a thing indeed
 That, weighed in the palm of the Savior's hand,
 Out-values penance and prayer and creed.
 And year by year, when the yucca bells,
 Like flags of truce swung tall and white,
 The name of Mangas was blessed anew
 With bell and taper and solemn rite.

Dewey, Arizona

The Desert

by Theresa Russell

Out West, Vol. 24, April 1906; magazine p. 310; physical source PDF p. 563

Editorial note. *The severe imagery and measured rhetoric give the desert genuine otherness. It is not asked to become simply beautiful or consoling.*

"God must have made thee in His anger, and forgot." Not in His anger, no, but in a mood
Of pure creative power, by any need
Or law unfettered, uncompelled to heed
Necessity, by Beauty wholly woo'd.

In other portions of His earth He placed
Fair gardens, teeming fields, abounding streams,
Deep sombre forests lit with mellow gleams,
Song-filled and fragrant, panoplied and graced.

In wisdom and in sympathy He made
These things for men, His children, that they should
Be clothed and nourished, dowered with every good,
And never feel their lives mocked or betrayed.

This gracious deed accomplished He was free
To fashion what He would for His own joy,
To wield Infinite power without alloy,
To please Himself—then, Desert, He made thee.

He made thy sands and flooded them with light—
Thy sun's hot-hearted passion never faints;
With brush of fine and jeweled hues He paints
Thy skies and rocks and blossoms—e'en thy night.

So dost thou glow and quiver; yet the spell
Of Silence is upon thee, for He willed
The voice of pain and anguish to be stilled
And mirth hushed. Smites His ear nor chime nor knell.

Thus all thy life is silent. Here the snake
And lizard glide; slow circle birds of prey;
The scorpion crawls; wolf and coyote grey
Move stealthily—and none that silence break.

In silence and in mystery thou'rt made,
But thy God loves thee; in thy spaces shrined
He has His dwelling where who seek may find,
Though thy still vastness makes the heart afraid.

Stanford University.

Death Valley

by Robinson Jeffers

Out West, Vol. 26, May 1907; magazine p. 443; physical source PDF p. 740

Editorial note. *This spare early poem strips the desert of picturesque reassurance. Its severity anticipates the uncompromising landscape ethics of Jeffers's mature work.*

Here is the term of life that lives by breath.
Lo, here Death's place!—yet not by darkening night
Made terrible, but clothed in glaring light
Deadlier than darkness. Fiercely from beneath
And from above, the heat, aflame with death,
Strikes like some desert reptile coiled and white,
Hideous, that carries death within its bite,
And madness in the hollow of its teeth.

There is a Fate that sways this deadly land—
A silent Fate that smiles and is accurst,
Bearing strange gifts for men in each hand's hold.
Loose on the open palm of the right hand
Are death and madness and a hell of thirst—
But in the tight-clenched left is yellow gold.

Manhattan Beach, Cal.

The City's Voice

by Eleanor F. Lewis

Out West, Vol. 27, July 1907; magazine p. 56; physical source PDF p. 73

Editorial note. *The civic personification has real dramatic force. Disaster, endurance, and defiance are compressed into a voice that feels public without becoming hollow.*

From far-off verdant heights you gaze on me—
My ruins, with their hue of tragic age.
Ay, look you well!—for slow, insistently,
I cover up all trace of Nature's rage.

Deep in the night you hear the distant beat
Of mighty pulse that knows not sleep nor rest
Sounding—in clang of hammers, tramp of feet—
The heart that throbs unconquered in my breast
Though seven times seven the fiery holocaust
Consumeth all the sordid world holds great,
I rise—nor counting what is gone and lost—
Fling my defiance in the teeth of Fate!

San Francisco.

Night-Fall

by Neeta Marquis

Out West, Vol. 27, August 1907; magazine p. 175; physical source PDF p. 234

Editorial note. *The lyric is modest in scale but beautifully paced. Each darkening image arrives as part of a single, continuous change.*

Misty gray has quenched the smoldering west
Like sprinkled ashes, and the deeper sky
Is yet unwarmed with stars. The clouds, once high,
Have lowered to the tree-tops, where they rest.

A ghost-wind gasps and starts, as one oppressed
With guilty burden, one that may not die
And let the vexed world pass unnoted by,
But must live on by memory obsessed.

Now is the lonesome hour of all the day
When cheerful toil is over. From the street
That quick last sound of homeward-hasting feet
Within some fire-lit hush has died away.

The lonesome hour—day past, the night to come—
God guide his steps who has no waiting home!

Los Angeles.

The Landward Call o' the Sea

by Ethel Griffith

Out West, Vol. 27, August 1907; magazine pp. 125-126; physical source PDF pp. 184, 186

Editorial note. Long lines, repeated appeals, and deliberate overflow create a restless music. The poem turns wandering into an argument with settled life.

The swinging flank of a marching Sea;
The strong command of the tide;
And borne on the night's great symphony,
Like cavalry hosts to a martial air,
The storm-flung breakers ride.
The strong attack! The swift retreat!
The stinging breath of the Sea—
And over the salt brine, bitter-sweet,
Comes the call o' thy Love to thee!
The call o' thy Love to Ye-o'-the-Land,
For he hath sought ye long;
To you the kiss of the salt-wet sand,
And the Sea's brave marching song!

"Captain and Lord-of-Myself am I,
With none to say me nay:
Master of Fate and the Iron Gate
That swings for my Destiny.
Czar and King of mine own brave Soul,
Strong in a warrior's right."
To hearts that be free, "Reveille!" chants the Sea,
"Awake and arise in thy Soul's great might!"
But heavy of sleep ye have drowsed ye long,
The dull, deep swoon o' the Land,
And hardly ye dared to dream ye heard
The call of His Marching Song.

The strong attack! The swift retreat!
The stinging breath of the Sea—
And over the salt brine, bitter-sweet,
Comes the call o' thy Love to thee!
The call o' thy Love to Ye-o'-the-Land,
For he hath sought ye long;
To you the kiss of the salt-wet sand,
And the Sea's brave marching song!

National City, Cal.

Boot Hill

by Sharlot M. Hall

Out West, Vol. 27, November 1907; magazine p. 391; physical source PDF p. 610

Editorial note. *The ballad compresses violence, anonymity, and frontier myth into a hard, memorable sequence. Its humor never entirely cancels its bleakness.*

In the old days of the Frontier, the cemetery in every town and mining-camp was called "Boot Hill," because many of its inmates died, literally, "with their boots on." Today these graveyards, with their sunken, half-obliterated graves, are all that is left of many a once-thriving camp. Their nameless dead are the drift that mark forgotten channels where once the tide of human life flowed full and strong.

Go softly, you whose careless feet
Would crush the sage-brush, pungent, sweet,
And brush the rabbit-weed aside
From burrows where ground-squirrels hide
And prairie-dog his watch-tower keeps
Among the ragged gravel heaps.
Year long the wind blows up and down
Each lessening mound, and drifts the brown
Dried wander-weed there at their feet—
Who no more wander, slow or fleet.
Sun-bleached, rain-warped, the head boards hold
One story, all too quickly told;
That here some wild heart takes its rest
From spent desire and fruitless quest.

Here in the greasewood's scanty shade
How many a daring soul was laid!
Boots on, full-garbed as when he died;
The pistol belted at his side;
The worn sombrero on his breast—
To prove another man the best.
Arrow, or knife, or quick-drawn gun—
The glad, mad, fearless game was done.
A life for stakes—play slow or fast—
Win, lose—yet Death was trumps at last.

On the Road to Nogales

by Nellie Suydam

Out West, Vol. 27, December 1907; magazine p. 507; physical source PDF p. 772

Editorial note. *This is a vivid border-road poem with an alert eye for changing terrain. Its narrative movement keeps every image in transit.*

From the road's wind-swept niche,
High up the mountain range,
We peer into the depths
Of valleys lone and strange;
Of valleys strange as those
Which shadow the wan moon—
A land whose silence chills
At flood-tide of the noon,
Across the dark'ning gulf
Pale, flame-scarred mountains stand—
The forge on which were shaped
The vast beams of this land.

Beyond those distant peaks
Of ashen blue and red,
Nor lamp nor fire is lit,
Nor candle for the dead.

No cowboys ride the range;
There is no camping place—
Only the starless depths
Of chill, eternal space.

Glendora, Cal.

Sea Mist

by Arthur Guiterman

Out West, Vol. 28, March 1908; magazine p. 231; physical source PDF p. 324

Editorial note. *Its short lines and dissolving visual field are perfectly matched. The poem understands mist as a change in perception, not merely weather.*

On wings bronze-dappled, swings through heaven's dome
An eagle, far above the rugged comb
Whereon we stand to gaze where bursts of foam
Are flung, white wreath on wreath, against the brow
Of that long cliff. The cedar-forests bow,
For landward drives a dripping wind; and now,
Sun-kissed, the mist in amethyst and gold,
A phantom dragon, rolling fold on fold,
Engulfs the wondrous peaks of mountains old.

New York.

The Death of the Old Hunter

by Sharlot M. Hall

Out West, Vol. 28, May 1908; magazine p. 355; physical source PDF p. 526

Editorial note. *Hall's elegy is strongest in its concrete knowledge of work, age, and terrain. The poem grieves without polishing away the life it records.*

Out! Carry me out! I choke in these cabin walls!
Lay me down on the earth under the wide night sky;
Straight on the strong, clean earth—no idle blanket between;
Cheek to cheek with the dust I will watch my last lean hour go by.

Farther! Push back that bough till I face the stars;
North star—Dipper—Pointer that still sets true;
Many a night ye have led—through storm and wind-whipped cloud;
Lead still, old guides—I line my last long course by you.

Hark! The night wind sweeps through the crackling grass,
Nosing the thin, sere weeds that hide in the prairie swale;
Rattling the hunted reeds that shiver and shrink in the marsh,
With a whimper and snarl and whine like a hound that bays on the trail.

Lift me up! My soul hunts with you tonight,
Old mate of a hundred trails—speed on the lagging pack!
There was never a road ye knew too wild for my feet to take—
Tonight they will keep the way when even ye turn back.

Lift me up—to my feet! A hand-clasp each!
May your trail be long as mine—knife keen—and powder dry—
Eye true to the bead! Now go—quick—while I keep my feet!
I die as I lived—alone with the wind and the stars and the sky.

Dewey, Arizona.

November Poplars

by Neeta Marquis

Out West, Vol. 32, February 1910; physical source PDF p. 44

Editorial note. *Color, vertical movement, and seasonal loss are handled with painterly economy. The poem knows exactly when to stop.*

Erect brown poplars, slender and unleafed,
Like tall masts rise against the evening gray,
As if a company of wind-spent ships
Had come to anchor in a friendly bay.

When March returns, their rustling sails will spread
With eager swell and buoyant fluttering
To catch the breeze of earth's new wonderment
And ride the blue, aerial deeps of Spring.

Los Angeles, Cal.

The Zahuaro

by Marion Cummings Stanley

Out West, Vol. 32, March 1910; physical source PDF p. 95

Editorial note. Stanley's philosophical intelligence is grounded in a single desert form. The cactus becomes monumental without losing its botanical specificity.

There is a forest where no cooling shade
Falls ever through the long, still summer day,
There is a tree whose boughs have never made
A harp whereon the wandering winds may play.

Go where across the desert's blanching sand
The tall Zahuaro's fluted columns rise:
Gaunt warders of the waste you see them stand
Dark etched against the burning sapphire skies.

Silent they stand, though fiercest winds may beat,
The desert winds, keen-lashing, wild and free,
Unshaken still though all around their feet
The shifting sands drift like the surging sea;

Else on some barren mountain's shattered slope
'Midst ruin of rocks far scattered, huge as hurled
By Titan's hand, their slender columns stand
As though memorial of an earlier world.

Or like those storied broken shafts that rise
Far hence beneath another desert sun,
To mark where ancient Egypt buried lies,
Beneath the drifting sand's oblivion.

Yet these bear witness not of death, as those,
Here, rather, fortified in the fluted green,
Triumphant life her lifted banner shows,
And makes a mock of death in death's demesne.

For though these wear no leafy garlanding,
Nor ever feel the blight of winter snow,
Yet once a year the angel of the Spring
With lighted torch far-flown descends, and lo,

The waste is as an altar side whereon
A thousand branched candles sudden shine,
For every spire is tipped with flowered fire,
Yea lit with Spring's white flower flame divine.

Tucson, Ariz.

The Immutable God

by Lannie Haynes Martin

Out West, Vol. 3 New Series, March 1912; physical source PDF p. 3

Editorial note. *Martin gives metaphysical argument a firm stanzaic body. The poem's skepticism and devotion remain productively unresolved.*

The Great God is not falling. He stands sure. The parallax
Is man's general resurrection from the sepulcher of creeds.
The renaissance, strong re-ligioning of humanity to
God,
Breaking hideous, graven image of oblique theology;
Pointing from tradition's idol to a self-revealing Power;
Teaching Love with Love's own impulse, not with
Fear's debasing force;
Teaching joyousness in labor and in prayer, humility;
Ending sacrilegious promptings we, presumptuous, made to God;
Ending caviling dissensions over forms, inconsequent;—
This, the coming of the spirit which makes perfect, which sets free!
This the coming of the kingdom—works and will made one on earth.
And “that in part shall pass away,” the fulness of His power
Shall manifest unto His own this never-changing Truth:
Love abides, abounds, forever, Love creates and Love is
God.

God at the Cabaret

by Lannie Haynes Martin

Out West, Vol. 44, August 1916; physical source PDF p. 23

Editorial note. *The collision of sacred vocabulary and urban entertainment is bold, witty, and more morally complicated than the title first suggests.*

The sad God standing by the door went in;
He heard the sobbing violin that wailed
The “Humoresque”; He saw the tired eyes
Of painted girls whose wan and wistful smiles
Kept sorry measure with their dancing feet ;
He saw the women gulp Martinis down
To medicine the misery of their souls;
He heard their piteous, high-pitched, rasping laugh
That echoed all their aching loneliness;
He saw men’s roving eyes that longed and sought
For comradeship; then bowed His head and wept.
A passing churchman stopped, looked in and gasped :
“You look respectable! What brings you here?”
“You teach that I am everywhere,” God said,
“But fear and hate have barred me from that place
You call my ‘House’.
I, too, am desolate
And long, like these, for fellowship with men.
They knew my face as Love before your creeds
Distorted all their vision; now they seek
Through revelry—a magic they can buy—
The half-remembered God you never knew!”

The Variant

by Lannie Haynes Martin

Out West, Vol. 44, November 1916; physical source PDF p. 4

Editorial note. *This is an unusually sharp poem about deviation and social judgment. Its compressed form lets the final turn register cleanly.*

Some days I see men come and go
Like marionettes in puppet show
And all they do, or seem to feel,
Is but some grotesque dream, unreal;
Ah! then the whole of life to me
Is one great, cruel comedy!
Some days it seems that only I
Am shadow-creature floating by
A place where every one I see
Possesses Life's reality:
And then existence is for me
Grim, diabolic tragedy.
But there are times when I have been
Sojourner for a day within
The very heart of Life and knew
I lived and loved as all men do!
And this was given me to see:
I stand in balanced harmony
With Life when I can know I send
Conviction to the heart of friend
That I am true—then Heav'n *with* me—
And earth breathes lyric poetry!

Verses: Inadequacy; Freedom

by Lannie Haynes Martin

Out West, Vol. 44, December 1916; physical source PDF p. 26

Editorial note. *The paired pieces work through self-doubt and release without inflated consolation. Their brevity gives the abstractions edge.*

Freedom

No slave is he who labors long and hard
With hand or brain, if, working, he project
His inner vision, crystallized in form;
No slave is he, though fetters bind his hands
If he his thought in freedom can express;
But he whose mind is gyved by Force or Fear—
However subtly gilded be the chains
By creed, convention or commodity—
Is bond-slave to a monster. Freedom cries:
“Defiance or dependence!” “Crush or cringe!”

Inadequacy

O mighty Bards, with all thy potent spell
Of word-enchantment, why didst not thou tell
How Love would speak when first she came to me?
That I might know this wide infinity
Of anguish as her voice! That I might bring
To her some worthy offering!
Thine epic chant, thy lyrical refrain,
Thy thunder-song of music all one vain
And stammering attempt to put in speech
That which the lips of God alone can teach!