

46. Warner, p. 710.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 710-711.
48. Joseph Pope, *Memoirs of the Right Honourable Sir John Alexander Macdonald* (Ottawa, 1935), p. 58.
49. Creighton, *Dominion of the North*, p. 316.
50. Stanley, *Louis Riel*, pp. 78-99.

## IF WE SHOULD MEET OUR INNOCENCE

*Alice Mackenzie Swain*

If we should meet our innocence again  
at midday on a strange deserted road,  
would we destroy it as we did before,  
terrified by its beauty, and distraught  
by the white heat of its consuming flame?  
Or would we walk with it a little while,  
trying to charm it with dark subtle words  
or using devious blandishments to beguile  
it into shapes, less awesome and accusing?  
Would we corrode it slowly till it flaked  
away into a staining pile of rust,  
then wonder why no water ever slaked  
our conscience-fever of its murder thirst?  
Or would we slay, all swift and unbelieving  
That any act of ours could be accursed?