

Verse by Western Canadian Writers

LILACS

Time that in the evanescent sows
The seeds of loveliness, O stay the year
At lilac-time! Let me forever hear
The song of thrush from lilac-scented close.
Let sun and dew conspire to fashion still
Their opals, sapphires, diamonds, gemmed triune,
To hold the flowers in dawn's perfection till
This tranced planet wheels to crescent moon.
And holding thus the world let stars prick through
The twilight till the purple hours are drenched
And steeped with lilac-essence, lilac-dew,
And mortal's thirst for loveliness is quenched.
O stay the year at lilac-time and hold
The world in bonds of amethyst and gold!

—Alice M. Winlow.

* THE MIST

Through the mist, where grey vague forms are passing,
Like silent ghosts who must go home and rest,
I go. There is no light;
No point that I can see and follow;
Oh, do not hold me so!
Why must I walk, and walk,
And reach no star, nor light that I may have to lead
me?

I walk on-mist; I can no longer see
The stars, the moon, the dark blue velvet earth,
Which once were here, I know—
For I have seen them . . .
On and on. Dark and close and quiet.
Forever, forever, forever.
Oh! The hill-top! I see, I see!
White diamonds sparkling on blue velvet!
The stars and moon have come,
And I am free!
There is no mist, no dark. I journey looking up.
The stars are glad. I hear them saying so.
No mist. . . . No dark. . . .

—Frances Lucas.

* The above poem was awarded the prize for the most imaginative production, Crofton House School, 1925.

"PEACE"

The storm has ceased its long unreasoning strife,
Its loud complainings rise and fall no more,
But heavy seas still run with sullen force
To break upon the lonely, patient shore.

The rain has washed the blackened giants clean
That forest fires had burned remorselessly,
Stifling the song birds, soiling the fresh green,
Filling with murk the sky o'er land and sea.

Lo! a bright rim is showing in the west,
Beneath a heavy cloud whose lowering brow
Scowls disapproval but is lost in light,
A glowing radiance floods the waters now.

Like tear-washed eyes discerning light and hope
Across the night of cruel oppression dawn,
Where trembling faith and trust in shadows grope,
Gathering new strength to meet the stainless dawn.

Ray after ray bursts through the ragged gloom,
The gleam of golden crimson brighter grows,
Brave purple glories merged in softest pink,
And on the darkest cloud the rainbow shows.

O silent symbol! set in solitude,
Transcending all the glory of the sky,
Into a larger light of life we move,
And that which ever lived can never die.

Some vast great moments, silent Gratitude!
Above—the royal splendor of the sky,
Beneath—the dark green roll, the hurrying moan,
With glint of gold and purpling crimson dye.

Far out away, the threatening wind has ceased,
Cradling itself in troughs of roughened sea.
What hands has stayed its wild tempestuous mood?
It murmurs to the waters plaintively.

Now comes a listening sound within the wood
Where twilight shadows drape from solemn trees,
Drawing the curtains over Nature's brood,
Till morn shall stir with its fresh quickening
breeze.

Silence at last. So deep, so fraught with life,
Rests on the bosom of the Infinite.
Joy is interpreted with wondrous sounds,
But Peace in silence only can be felt.
—Lois H. Gilpin.

WHAT MAKES THE CHILDREN GO TO SCHOOL?

What makes the children go to school
To study all the day?
"It is because they love it so,"
The optimistic say.

What makes the children go to school
To learn their P's and Q's?
"Because they fear the teacher's wrath,"
The pessimists excuse.

What makes the children go to school
With laughing lips and eyes?
"Because they love their teacher so,"
The little kiddie cries.

What makes the children go to school
When play is better fun?
"It is because they tire of sport,"
The unambitious pun.

What makes the children go to school
Through sun, and wind, and snow?
"Because their parents they obey,"
The loving mothers show.

What makes the children go to school
To spoil their health and eyes?
"It gets my goat. Gee whiz! B'gosh!"
The truant boy replies.

What makes the children go to school
To cultivate their ways?
"Because they are the country's hope,"
The austere State conveys.

Now, what makes children go to school?
Can any tell us why?
"A sense of duty to themselves,"
The reader may reply.

—R. D. Cumming.