

The Common Touch

I would not be too wise—so very wise
That I must sneer at simple songs and creeds,
And let the glare of wisdom blind my eyes
To humble people and their humble needs.
I would not care to climb so high that I
Could never hear the children at their play,
Could only see the people passing by,
Yet never hear the cheering words they say.
I would not know too much—too much to smile
At trivial errors of the heart and hand,
Nor be too proud to play the friend the while,
And cease to help and know and understand.
I would not care to sit upon a throne,
Or build my house upon a mountain-top.
Where I must dwell in glory all alone
And never friend come in or poor man stop.
God grant that I may live upon this earth
And face the tasks which every morning brings,
And never lose the glory and the worth
Of humble service and the simple things.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)