

Living Monuments

Our children are our monuments,
The little ones we leave behind,
If they are good and brave and kind,
And labor here with true intents,
Our lives and work perpetuate
Far more than marble tablets great.

Far rather would I pass away
And leave a sturdy son of mine,
Whom I had taught to love the fine,
The just and honest; in his day
To serve the world with courage bold,
Than have my life on granite told.

I'd rather feel when death is near
That in my children I shall live;
No monument of stone would give
Me greater glory, year by year,
Than sons and daughters treading on
In truth and honor when I'm gone.

Who leaves a sturdy child on earth,
A noble person, sweet and pure,
Has monuments that long endure.
He needs no shaft to prove his worth;
The luster of his children's deeds
Are all the monuments he needs.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)