

The Fight Worthwhile

The fight worthwhile on this good old earth
Isn't the fight for a hoard of gold I
It isn't the fight to increase your worth
In stocks and bonds and things to hold;
It isn't the fight for a higher place,
For a need of power for a little while,
Or to finish first in the grinding race
And to bask in glory and pomp and style.

The fight worthwhile is the fight to be
Unfettered here by the cords of vice;
To set your soul from your body free,
To be unswerved by a yellow price;
To win the love of your fellowmen,
To be a man that they all respect,
To lose a fight but to fight again
With your shoulders square and your head erect.

This is the fight worthwhile today;
To have ideals and to cling to them,
To live your life in your own good way
In spite of the scoffers who may condemn;
To be willing to fail if the victory
Would lower your standard of what is right,
To be poor in purse, if you have to be,
But rich in spirit. Here is a fight!

To ask no favors from any man,
To conquer yourself, and to face the strife
With courage born of your own-made plan,
To do your best with your term of life;
To shirk no task that you find to do,
However bitter it seems to be!
And at last when the battle of earth is through
To be ready to die, is victory.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)