

The Age Of Ink

Swiftly the changes come. Each day
Sees some lost beauty blown away
And some new touch of lovely grace
Come into life to take its place.
The little babe that once we had
One morning woke a roguish lad;
The babe that we had put to bed
Out of our arms and lives had fled.

Frocks vanished from our castle then,
Ne'er to be worn or seen again,
And in his knickerbocker pride
He boasted pockets at each side
And stored them deep with various things-
Stones, tops and jacks and-colored strings;
Then for a time we claimed the joy
Of calling him our little boy.

Brief was the reign of such a spell.
One morning sounded out a bell;
With tears I saw her brown eyes swim
And knew that it was calling him.
Time, the harsh master of us all,
Was bidding him to heed his call;
This shadow fell across life's pool-
Our boy was on his way to school.

Our little boy! And still we dreamed,
For such a little boy he seemed!
And yesterday, with eyes aglow
Like one who has just come to know
Some great and unexpected bliss,
He bounded in, announcing this:
'Oh, Dad! Oh, Ma! Say, what d'you think?
This year we're going to write with ink!'

Here was a change I'd not foreseen,
Another step from what had been.
I paused a little while to think
About this older age of ink-
What follows this great step, thought I,
What next shall come as the time goes by?
And something said: 'His pathway leads
Unto the day he'll write with deeds.'

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)