

Hard Knocks

I'm not the man to say that failure's sweet,
Nor tell a chap to laugh when things go wrong;
I know it hurts to have to take defeat
An' no one likes to lose before a throng;
It isn't very pleasant not to win
When you have done the very best you could;
But if you're down, get up an' buckle in —
A lickin' often does a fellow good.

I've seen some chaps who never knew their power
Until somebody knocked 'em to the floor;
I've known men who discovered in an hour
A courage they had never shown before.
I've seen 'em rise from failure to the top
By doin' things they hadn't understood
Before the day disaster made 'em drop —
A lickin' often does a fellow good.

Success is not the teacher, wise an' true,
That gruff old failure is, remember that;
She's much too apt to make a fool of you,
Which isn't true of blows that knock you flat.
Hard knocks are painful things an' hard to bear,
An' most of us would dodge 'em if we could;
There's something mighty broadening in care —
A lickin' often does a fellow good.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)