

The Neighborly Man

Some are eager to be famous, some are striving
to be great,
Some are toiling to be leaders of their nation
or their state,
And in every man's ambition, if we only understood,
There is much that's fine and splendid; every
hope is mostly good.
So I cling unto the notion that contented I
will be
If the men upon life's pathway find a needed
friend in me.

I rather like to putter 'round the walks and
yards of life,
To spray at night the roses that are burned and
browned with strife;
To eat a frugal dinner, but always to have a
chair
For the unexpected stranger that my simple
meal would share.
I don't care to be a traveler, I would rather be
the one
Sitting calmly by the roadside helping weary
travelers on.

I'd like to be a neighbor in the good old-fashioned way,
Finding much to do for others, but not over
much to say.
I like to read the papers, but I do not yearn
to see
What the journal of the morning has been
moved to say of me;
In the silences and shadows I would live my
life and die
And depend for fond remembrance on some
grateful passers-by.

I guess I wasn't fashioned for the brilliant
things of earth,
Wasn't gifted much with talent or designed for
special worth,
But was just sent here to putter with life's little
odds and ends
And keep a simple corner where the stirring
highway bends,
And if folks should chance to linger, worn and
weary through the day,
To do some needed service and to cheer them
on their way.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)

