

The Truth About Envy

I like to see the flowers grow,
To see the pansies in a row;
I think a well-kept garden's fine,
And wish that such a one were mine;
But one can't have a stock of flowers
Unless he digs and digs for hours.
My ground is always bleak and bare;
The roses do not flourish there.
And where I once sowed poppy seeds
Is now a tangled mass of weeds.'
I'm fond of flowers, but admit,
For digging I don't care a bit.
I envy men whose yards are gay,
But never work as hard as they;
I also envy men who own
More wealth than I have ever known.
I'm like a lot of men who yearn
For joys that they refuse to earn.
You cannot have the joys of work
And take the comfort of a shirk.
I find the man I envy most
Is he who's longest at his post.
I could have gold and roses, too,
If I would work like those who do.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)