

The Doubtful To-Morrow

Whenever I walk through God's Acres of Dead
I wonder how often the mute voices said:
'I will do a kind deed or will lighten a sorrow
Or rise to a sacrifice splendid- to-morrow.'

I wonder how many fine thoughts unexpressed
Were lost to the world when they went to their rest;
I wonder what beautiful deeds they'd have done
If they had but witnessed to-morrow's bright sun.

Oh, if the dead grieve, it is not for their fate,
For death comes to all of us early or late,
But their sighs of regret and their burdens of sorrow
Are born of the joys they'd have scattered to-morrow.

Do the friends they'd have cheered know the thoughts of the dead?
Do they treasure to-day the last words that were said?
What memories would sweeten, what hearts cease to burn,
If but for a day the dead friends could return!

We know not the hour that our summons shall come;
We know not the time that our voice shall be dumb,
Yet even as they, to our ultimate sorrow,
We leave much that's fine for that doubtful to-morrow.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)