

Pixley Folks

Sometimes I git to thinkin' o' the days o' youth, an' then
There comes a-troopin' through my mind th' wimmin folk an' men
I used ter know in Pixley, an' I sit with 'em awhile,
A-livin' all th' fun we knew before we put on style;
A-dancin' all th' dances, th' lancers an' q'drilles,
A-goin' to th' buskin' bees an' picnics on th' hills,
An' I quite ferget I 'm livin' on a crowded city street,
Where I don't know a quarter of th' people that I meet.

I settle in my arm chair, an' I light my meerschaum pipe,
An' then I 'm back in Pixley with the apples red an' ripe.
I 'm makin' eyes at Agnes, which is wrong I must allow,
Coz she was married long ago an' has four babies now.
An' I 'm pokin' fun at Lydy, who was in for any joke,
But she has married wealthy — still out yonder in th' smoke
She is still the laughin' lassie, free from all the haughty airs
That wimmin folk think needful when they marry millionaires.

Then I steal a kiss from Nellie, an' I hear her say 'No, no!'
Th' way she did a thousand times, but never meant it, though.
An' again from church we 're comin', an' th' hour is gettin' late
An' we stand awhile a-gabbin', she a-swingin' on th' gate,
A-tellin' of her uncles an' her aunts, an' how they were,
While all that I was wan tin' was to stay an' talk of her.
An' again I 'm gettin' ready jes' to ask her to be mine,
An' again she ups an' leaves me, sayin' 'Ed, it's after nine."

O, I tell you what! It's funny, when I think about it all,
An' I kinder get to broodin' an' th' old days I recall
When there warn't no automobiles, warn't no problem plays an' such,
When th' only fault with young folks was they loved t' play too much;
When there warn't no style about us, one warn't richer than another,
When we didn't think of money, never snubbed a poorer brother;
An' to see 'em now with riches, an' ashamed to even say
That they ever lived in Pixley— Why, my soul is there today!

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)