

On Being Broke

Don't mind being broke at all,
When I can say that what I had
Was spent for toys for kiddies small
And that the spending made 'em glad.
I don't regret the money gone,
If happiness it left behind.
An empty purse I'll look upon
Contented, if its record's kind.
There's no disgrace in being broke,
Unless it's due to flying high;
Though poverty is not a joke,
The only thing that counts is "why?"
The dollars come to me and go;
To-day I've eight or ten to spend;
To-morrow I'll be sailing low,
And have to lean upon a friend.
But if that little bunch of mine
Is richer by some toy or frill,
I'll face the world and never whine
Because I lack a dollar bill.
I'm satisfied, if I can see
One smile that hadn't bloomed before.
The only thing that counts with me
Is what I've spent my money for.
I might regret my sorry plight,
If selfishness brought it about;
If for the fun I had last night,
Some joy they'd have to go without.
But if I've swapped my bit of gold,
For laughter and a happier pack
Of youngsters in my little fold
I'll never wish those dollars back.
If I have traded coin for things
They needed and have left them glad,
Then being broke no sorrow brings—
I've done my best with what I had.

Edgar Guest (1881-1959)