

He Earned His Way

Rose unto the heights of fame
And with the great men stood,
He heard the people cheer his name
And speak of him as good.
Success at last he had attained
By toiling day by day;
His father's name was unprofaned,
His crest of honor was unstained,
He earned his way.

He had not sought the easy road
Nor tried a doubtful scheme,
But he had borne his heavy load
Up hill and over stream.
He had not stooped to do a wrong
That might not be unlearned;
But though the way at times seemed long
He plodded on with courage strong
And every victory earned.

He heard men whisper in the night,
That venturing disgrace,
And stepping from the path of right
But hiding every trace,
Were all he had to do to win,
That honor could be feigned,
But still he kept a lifted chin,
Filled with the holy thought within,
To earn whate'er he gained.

He rose unto the heights of fame,
And with the great men stood;
He never compromised with shame,
Nor bartered what was good.
With head erect he toiled along,
With clean hands for the fray,
He heard the gossip of the throng
That many profited by wrong,
But earned his way.

Edgar Albert Guest (1881-1959)