The Proof Of Worth by Eddie Guest

Though victory's proof of the skill you possess,  
Defeat is the proof of your grit;  
A weakling can smile in his days of success,  
But at trouble's first sign he will quit.  
So the test of the heart and the test of your pluck  
Isn't skies that are sunny and fair,  
But how do you stand to the blow that is struck  
And how do you battle despair?  
  
A fool can seem wise when the pathway is clear  
And it's easy to see the way out,  
But the test of man's judgment is something to fear,  
And what does he do when in doubt?  
And the proof of his faith is the courage he shows  
When sorrows lie deep in his breast;  
It's the way that he suffers the griefs that he knows  
That brings out his worst or his best.  
  
The test of a man is how much he will bear  
For a cause which he knows to be right,  
How long will he stand in the depths of despair,  
How much will he suffer and fight?  
There are many to serve when the victory's near  
And few are the hurts to be borne,  
But it calls for a leader of courage to cheer  
The men in a battle forlorn.  
  
It's the way you hold out against odds that are great  
That proves what your courage is worth,  
It's the way that you stand to the bruises of fate  
That shows up your stature and girth.  
And victory's nothing but proof of your skill,  
Veneered with a glory that's thin,  
Unless it is proof of unfaltering will,  
And unless you have suffered to win.

Life's Slacker by Eddie Guest

The saddest sort of death to die  
Would be to quit the game called life  
And know, beneath the gentle sky,  
You'd lived a slacker in the strife.  
That nothing men on earth would find  
To mark the spot that you had filled;  
That you must go and leave behind  
No patch of soil your hands had tilled.  
  
I know no greater shame than this:  
To feel that yours were empty years;  
That after death no man would miss  
Your presence in this vale of tears;  
That you had breathed the fragrant air  
And sat by kindly fires that burn,  
And in earth's riches had a share  
But gave no labor in return.  
  
Yet some men die this way, nor care:  
They enter and they leave life's door  
And at the end, their record's bare—  
The world's no better than before.  
A few false tears are shed, and then,  
In busy service, they're forgot.  
We have no time to mourn for men  
Who lived on earth but served it not.  
  
A man in perfect peace to die  
Must leave some mark of toil behind,  
Some building towering to the sky,  
Some symbol that his heart was kind,  
Some roadway where strange feet may tread  
That out of gratitude he made;  
He cannot bravely look ahead  
Unless his debt to life is paid.