

# On Quitting

By Edgar Albert Guest

How much grit do you think you've got?  
Can you quit a thing that you like a lot?  
You may talk of pluck; it's an easy word,  
And where'er you go it is often heard;  
But can you tell to a jot or guess  
Just how much courage you now possess?

You may stand to trouble and keep your grin,  
But have you tackled self-discipline?  
Have you ever issued commands to you  
To quit the things that you like to do,  
And then, when tempted and sorely swayed,  
Those rigid orders have you obeyed?

Don't boast of your grit till you've tried it out,  
Nor prate to men of your courage stout,  
For it's easy enough to retain a grin  
In the face of a fight there's a chance to win,  
But the sort of grit that is good to own  
Is the stuff you need when you're all alone.

How much grit do you think you've got?  
Can you turn from joys that you like a lot?  
Have you ever tested yourself to know  
How far with yourself your will can go?  
If you want to know if you have grit,  
Just pick out a joy that you like, and quit.

It's bully sport and it's open fight;  
It will keep you busy both day and night;  
For the toughest kind of a game you'll find  
Is to make your body obey your mind.  
And you never will know what is meant by grit  
Unless there's something you've tried to quit.

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Forced to drop out of high school to help support his family, Edgar A. Guest started his long career at the Detroit Free Press as a copyboy. He eventually wrote a daily column, "Breakfast Table Chat," that included his own verse. These poems about everyday life were immensely popular throughout the country. A prolific writer of over 11,000 poems, Guest humbly called himself "a newspaper man who wrote verses."