**A Parody on 'A Psalm of Life'**

**by Oliver Wendell Holmes**

Life is real, life is earnest,

And the shell is not its pen –

“Egg thou art, and egg remainest”

Was not spoken of the hen.

Art is long and Time is fleeting,

Be our bills then sharpened well,

And not like muffled drums be beating

On the inside of the shell.

In the world’s broad field of battle,

In the great barnyard of life,

Be not like those lazy cattle!

Be a rooster in the strife!

Lives of roosters all remind us,

We can make our lives sublime,

And when roasted, leave behind us,

Hen tracks on the sands of time.

Hen tracks that perhaps another

Chicken drooping in the rain,

Some forlorn and henpecked brother,

When he sees, shall crow again.

A Psalm of Life

**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,

   Life is but an empty dream!

For the soul is dead that slumbers,

   And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!

   And the grave is not its goal;

Dust thou art, to dust returnest,

   Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,

   Is our destined end or way;

But to act, that each to-morrow

   Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,

   And our hearts, though stout and brave,

Still, like muffled drums, are beating

   Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world’s broad field of battle,

   In the bivouac of Life,

Be not like dumb, driven cattle!

   Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe’er pleasant!

   Let the dead Past bury its dead!

Act,— act in the living Present!

   Heart within, and God o’erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us

   We can make our lives sublime,

And, departing, leave behind us

   Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,

   Sailing o’er life’s solemn main,

A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,

   Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,

   With a heart for any fate;

Still achieving, still pursuing,

   Learn to labor and to wait