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A Psalm of Life





**A Psalm of
Life**   

BY
Henry W. Longfellow



NEW YORK:
THE LOVELL COMPANY,

23 DUANE STREET.

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A Psalm of Life.




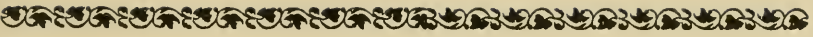
ONE of the very earliest of Henry W. Longfellow's poems, written while a very young man and published in his first collection of poems in 1839, will probably live longer than his more mature work. It was originally published as "What the Heart of the Young Man Said to the Psalmist," and it was his earnest protest against the pessimistic teaching of the unknown writer of Ecclesiastes. Read in this light, as it should be, it has a power and strength seldom found in verse. As a poet, Longfellow is admitted to be the one who has "best expressed the feelings of natural man in regard to death and future life," and in his "Psalm of Life" and "Footsteps of Angels" (his tribute to his dead wife), this expression finds its highest embodiment. He died in 1882.



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.

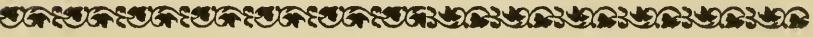
Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
“Dust thou art, to dust returnest,”
Was not spoken of the soul.






Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way ;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.


Aet 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!

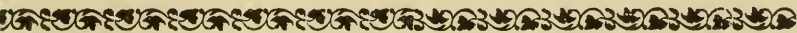
Trust no future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead past bury its dead!
Act,— act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!






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 shiptwrecked 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.



Psalm of Life.

$\text{♩} = 84.$

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a melody of eighth notes. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line of eighth notes. The music is in 2/4 time, as indicated by the tempo marking $\text{♩} = 84.$ The system concludes with a double bar line.

The second system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a melody of eighth notes. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line of eighth notes. The music is in 2/4 time. The system concludes with a double bar line.

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