

The Builders

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

*All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.*

*Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.*

*For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our todays and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.*

*Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.*

*In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the gods see everywhere.*

*Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.*

*Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble, as they seek to climb.*

*Build today, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall tomorrow find its place.*

*Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.*