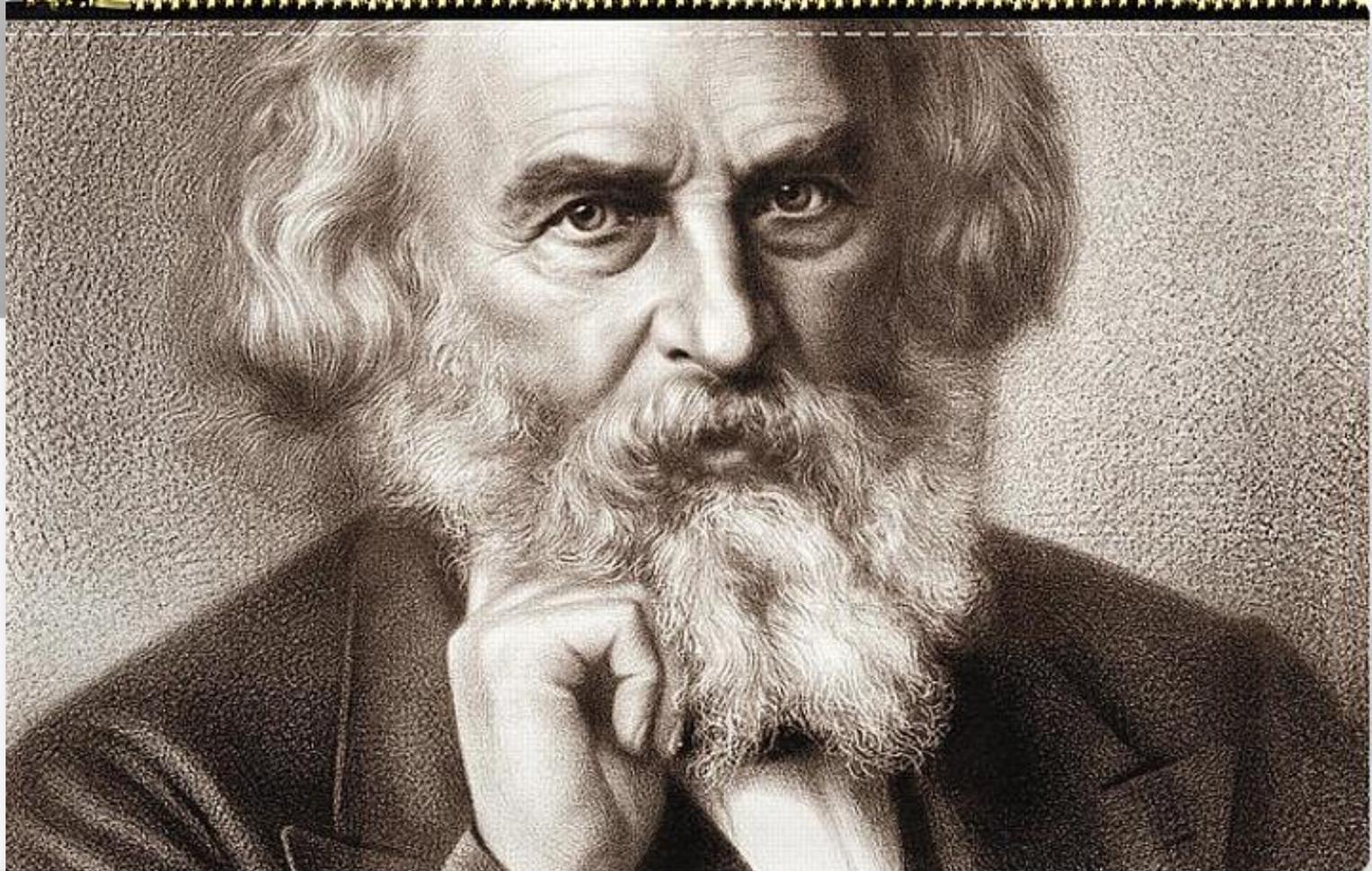


# Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

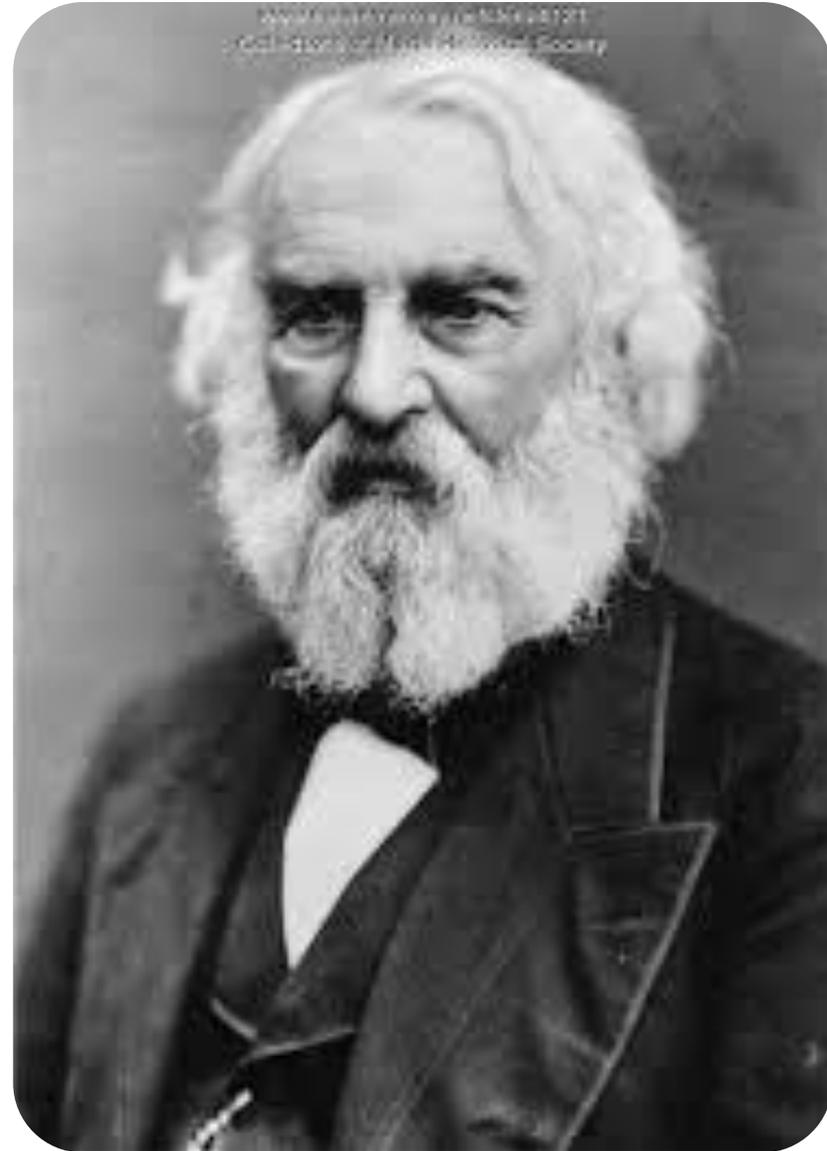


# INTRODUCTION

## HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

(February 27, 1807 – March 24, 1882)

He was a traveller, a linguist, and a romantic in the literary sphere. He is one of America's great poets. He became a national literary figure by the 1850s.



# INTRODUCTION

**'The Builders' by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow describes a poet's view on the large and small contributions made to the history of the human race. The human life is compared with the 'Buildings' and human beings are compared with the 'Builders'.**

**The poem speaks about the relationship between human beings and history. It also stresses that 'we are the builders of our lives'. It takes time, hard work, and flexibility to build our lives.**

**'THE BUILDERS'**  
are compared to  
**'HUMAN BEINGS'**

**'THE BUILDINGS'**  
are compared to  
**'HUMAN LIFE'**

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 to-days 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.

Architect: शिल्पकार

Massive Deeds: बडे कार्य

Ornaments: अलंकार

Rhyme: काव्य

Strengthen: मजबूत बनाना

Structure: ढांचा

Shape & Fashion: तैय्यार करना.

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 to-day, then, strong and sure,  
With a firm and ample base;  
And ascending and secure  
Shall to-morrow 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.

**Wrought: निर्माण करना**

**Unseen: कभी न देखा**

**Dwell: रहना**

**Stairways: सीढ़ी का रास्ता**

**Stumble: ठोकर खाना**

**Climb: उपर चढ़ना**

**Ascending: आगे बढ़ना.**

**Attain: हासिल**

**Boundless: असीमित**

# EXPLANATION: STANZA-I

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

In the first stanza the poet begins by stating that all people, no matter who they are, are the builders of their own lives.

He said that all the residents of the earth have contributed to the history. Some of the people have contributed at large scale while others have contributed very little

# EXPLANATION: STANZA-II

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

The poet focuses on the importance of human contributions. He states that “Nothing” one does is “useless” or “low.” All things have their “place” where they belong. Every person’s contributions do matter. Though something seems to be valueless, it really has a deeper impact. The speaker says even the smallest act changes into massive deeds because of the smaller actions.

# EXPLANATION: STANZA-III

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

Poet says that the “structure” made by human beings is slowly spreading in the world. It is growing larger with the deeds which humankind has contributed to history.

The story of the earth is made up of the memories of past and present. Human beings are shaped as per the memories they have experienced earlier.

## EXPLANATION: STANZA-IV

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

The poet describes the process of “building” up “Time” and shaping the future. There cannot be any gaps within history as there are so many contributors to this process. It should be shaped and created truly. Although all the residents of the planet have participated in this act, no single person can see the whole picture. It can be only seen by the God.

# EXPLANATION: STANZA-V

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

The speaker looks back to a time before modernity. It was in the old days of the past that the builders crafted the art. They were devoted to their task and preserved this art with the greatest care.

Their lives were clearly dedicated to shaping their future. Although they couldn't understand the impact they were having, "the Gods" are able to "see everywhere" and know how the world is evolving.

# EXPLANATION: STANZA-VI

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

The poet asks the readers that everyone should work as per their capabilities whether it is “unseen” or “seen.” It is important to work on the house, where Gods may reside. The world should not degrade physically or morally. It must remain “Beautiful, integrated and pure” without wasting time on judging other people.

# EXPLANATION: STANZA-VII

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

The speaker stresses on the importance of various kinds of work and the impact they have on the progress of humankind. He believes that without the “walls of time” the lives of humanity are “incomplete.” One must have access to a strong and varied history and the desire to develop it further. Otherwise, the world will be like a “Broken stairway.” It will not function properly and people will fail when they attempt to understand the nature of life.

# EXPLANATION: STANZA-VIII

***Build to-day, then, strong and sure,  
With a firm and ample base;  
And ascending and secure  
Shall to-morrow find its place.***

The poet says that everyday one should work on building a strong and sure base of their life. A person's life is built on this structure and it will support the future of that person. It will allow a person to move beyond their basic life and come closer to the God. That person's future life will be improved as he works on their contributions to "Time."

# EXPLANATION: STANZA-IX

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

In the final stanza the speaker describes how only through the construction of a strong life-base will one be able to the ultimate goal of life. Here, one can see the world through his broad understanding. True understanding is delivered at this point through God. One will have a “boundless reach of sky” to look out over and a clear view of one’s own life, the meaning of existence and the history of humankind.

# CONCLUSION

**Hence, this poem compares the human life with the 'Buildings' and human beings are compared with the 'Builders'. The poem shed light on the relationship between human beings and history. It also stresses that 'we are the builders of our lives'. It takes time, hard work, and flexibility to build our lives.**