

GREETINGS
from
Longfellow
1923



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Greetings from Longfellow

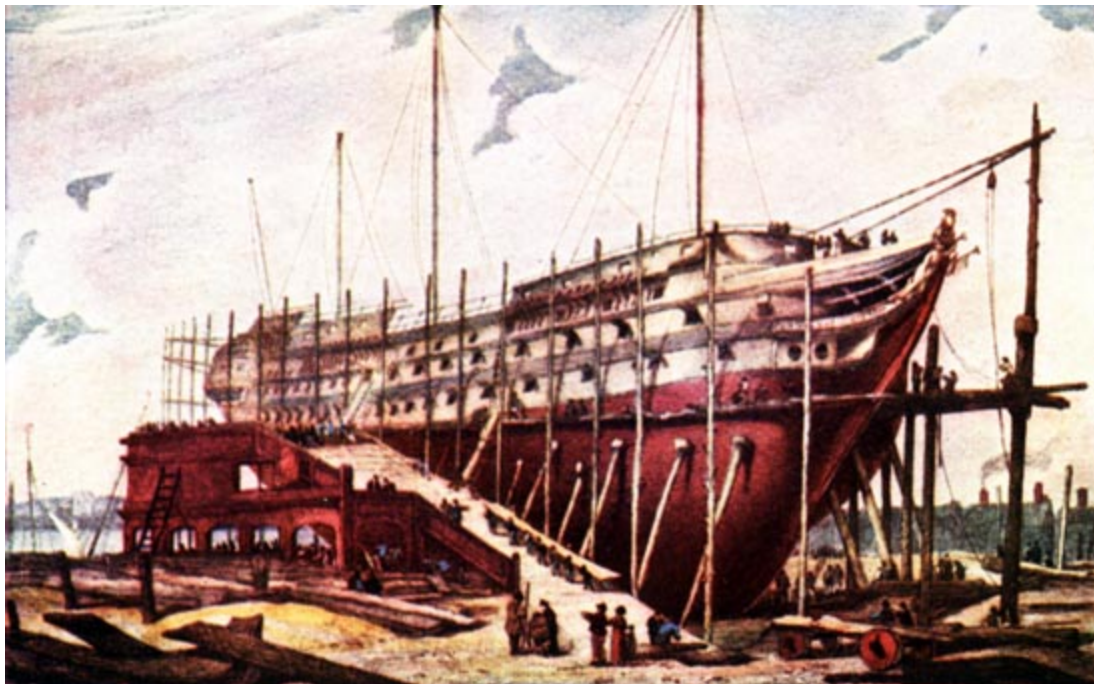
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Cupples and Leon Company, New York, 1907



Sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,

With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'T is of the wave and not the rock;
'T is but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee—are all with thee!



SOMETHING LEFT UNDONE.

Labor with what zeal we will,
 Something still remains undone,
Something uncompleted still
 Waits the rising of the sun.

By the bedside, on the stair,
 At the threshold, near the gates,
With its menace or its prayer,
 Like a mendicant it waits;

Waits, and will not go away;
 Waits, and will not be gainsaid;
By the cares of yesterday
 Each to-day is heavier made;

Till at length the burden seems
 Greater than our strength can bear,
Heavy as the weight of dreams,
 Pressing on us everywhere.

And we stand from day to day,
 Like the dwarfs of times gone by,
Who, as Northern legends say,
 On their shoulders held the sky.



THE LADDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,

Are rounds by which we may ascend.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upwards in the night.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past,
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.



EVANGELINE.

“Gabriel! O my beloved!”
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his
childhood;
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,
Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under their
shadow,
As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.
Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,

Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.
Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered
Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue would
have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,
Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.
Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into
darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.
All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,
All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing.
All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,
Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I thank
thee!"



O little feet! that such long years
Must wander on through hopes and fears,
 Must ache and bleed beneath your load;
I, nearer to the wayside inn
Where toil shall cease and rest begin,
 Am weary, thinking of your road!

O little hands! that, weak or strong,
Have still to serve or rule so long,
 Have still so long to give or ask;
I, who so much with book and pen
Have toiled among my fellow-men,

Am weary, thinking of your task.

O little hearts! that throb and beat
With such impatient, feverish heat,
 Such limitless and strong desires;
Mine that so long has glowed and burned,
With passions into ashes turned
 Now covers and conceals its fires.

O little souls! as pure and white
And crystalline as rays of light
 Direct from heaven, their source divine;
Refracted through the mist of years,
How red my setting sun appears,
 How lurid looks this soul of mine!



THE SINGERS

God sent his Singers upon earth
With songs of sadness and of mirth,
That they might touch the hearts of men,
And bring them back to heaven again.

The first, a youth with soul of fire,
Held in his hand a golden lyre;
Through groves he wandered, and by streams,

Playing the music of our dreams.

The second, with a bearded face,
Stood singing in the market-place,
And stirred with accents deep and loud
The hearts of all the listening crowd.

A gray old man, the third and last,
Sang in cathedrals dim and vast,
While the majestic organ rolled
Contribution from its mouths of gold.



And those who heard the Singers three
Disputed which the best might be;
For still their music seemed to start
Discordant echoes in each heart.

But the great Master said, "I see
No best in kind, but in degree;
I gave a various gift to each,
To charm, to strengthen and to teach.

"These are the three great chords of might,
And he whose ear is tuned aright
Will hear no discord in the three,
But the most perfect harmony."

