

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW



NUREMBERG



In the valley of the Pegnitz, where across  
broad meadow-lands

Stands the mighty linden planted by Queen  
Cunigunde's hand;

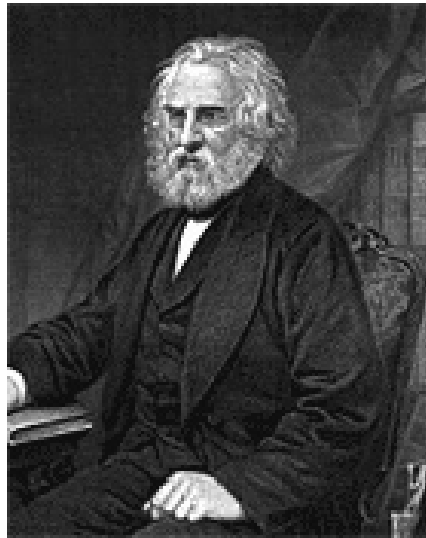
Rise the blue Franconian mountains,  
Nuremberg, the ancient, stands.

On the square the oriel window, where in  
old heroic days

Quaint old town of toil  
and traffic, quaint old  
town of art and song,

Sat the poet Melchior  
singing Kaiser Maximilian's  
praise.

Memories haunt thy  
pointed gables, like the  
rooks that round them  
throng:



Everywhere I see around  
me rise the wondrous world  
of Art:

Memories of the Middle  
Ages, when the emperors,  
rough and bold,

Fountains wrought with  
richest sculpture standing in  
the common mart;

Had their dwelling in  
thy castle, time-defying,  
centuries old;

And above cathedral  
doorways saints and bishops  
carved in stone,

And thy brave and thrifty burghers boast-  
ed, in their uncouth rhyme,

By a former age commissioned as apostles  
to our own.

That their great imperial city stretched its  
hand through every clime.

In the church of sainted Sebald sleeps en-  
shrined his holy dust,

In the court-yard of the castle, bound  
with many an iron hand,

And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard  
from age to age their trust;

In the church of sainted Lawrence stands a  
pix of sculpture rare,

Like the foamy sheaf of fountains, rising  
through the painted air.

Here, when Art was still religion, with a  
simple, reverent heart,

Lived and labored Albrecht Durer, the  
Evangelist of Art;

Hence in silence and in sorrow, toiling still  
with busy hand,

Like an emigrant he wandered, seeking for  
the Better Land.

Emigravit is the inscription on the tomb-  
stone where he lies;

Dead he is not, but departed,—for the art-  
ist never dies.

Fairer seems the ancient city, and the sun-  
shine seems more fair,

That he once has trod its pavement, that he  
once has breathed its air!

Through these streets so broad and stately,  
these obscure and dismal lanes,

Walked of yore the Mastersingers, chanting  
rude poetic strains.

From remote and sunless suburbs came  
they to the friendly guild,

Building nests in Fame's great temple, as in  
spouts the swallows build.

As the weaver plied the shuttle, wove he  
too the mystic rhyme,

And the smith his iron measures ham-  
mered to the anvil's chime;

Thanking God, whose boundless wisdom  
makes the flowers of poesy bloom

In the forge's dust and cinders, in the tis-  
sues of the loom.

Here Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet, laure-  
ate of the gentle craft,

Wisest of the Twelve Wise Masters, in huge  
folios sang and laughed.

But his house is now an ale-house, with a  
nicely sanded floor,

And a garland in the window, and his face  
above the door;

Painted by some humble artist, as in Adam  
Puschman's song,

As the old man gray and dove-like, with  
his great beard white and long.

And at night the swart mechanic comes to  
drown his cark and care,

Quaffing ale from pewter tankard; in the  
master's antique chair.

Vanished is the ancient splendor, and be-  
fore my dreamy eye

Wave these mingled shapes and figures, like  
a faded tapestry.

Not thy Councils, not thy Kaisers, win for  
thee the world's regard;

But thy painter, Albrecht Durer, and Hans  
Sachs thy cobbler-bard.

Thus, O Nuremberg, a wanderer from a  
region far away,

As he paced thy streets and court-yards,  
sang in thought his careless lay:

Gathering from the pavement's crevice, as a  
floweret of the soil,

The nobility of labor,—the long pedigree  
of toil.