

Treated the matter as a pleasant jest,
And set at naught the Syndic and the rest,
Maintaining, in an angry undertone,
That he should do what pleased him with his own. 85

And thereupon the Syndic gravely read
The proclamation of the King; then said: 90
"Pride goeth forth on horseback grand and gay,
But cometh back on foot, and begs its way;
Fame is the fragrance of heroic deeds,
Of flowers of chivalry and not of weeds!
These are familiar proverbs; but I fear 95
They never yet have reached your knightly ear.
What fair renown, what honour, what repute
Can come to you from starving this poor brute?
He who serves well and speaks not, merits more
Than they who clamour loudest at the door. 100
Therefore the law decrees that as this steed
Served you in youth, henceforth you shall take heed
To comfort his old age, and so provide
Shelter in stall, and food and field beside."

The Knight withdrew abashed; the people all 105
Led home the steed in triumph to his stall.
The King heard and approved, and laughed in glee,
And cried aloud: "Right well it pleaseth me!
Church-bells at best but ring us to the door;
But go not in to mass; my bell doth more: 110
It cometh into court and pleads the cause
Of creatures dumb and unknown to the laws:
And this shall make, in every Christian clime,
The Bell of Atri famous for all time."

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.