



**From My Arm-Chair**  
by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Am I a king, that I should call my own  
This splendid ebon throne?  
Or by what reason, or what right divine,  
Can I proclaim it mine?

Only perhaps, by right divine of song  
It may to me belong;  
Only because the spreading chestnut tree  
Of old was sung by me.

Well I remember it in all its prime,  
When in the summer-time  
The affluent foliage of its branches made  
A cavern of cool shade.

There by the blacksmith's forge, beside the  
street,  
Its blossoms white and sweet  
Enticed the bees, until it seemed alive,  
And murmured like a hive.

And when the winds of autumn, with a shout,  
Tossed its great arms about,  
The shining chestnuts, bursting from the  
sheath,  
Dropped to the ground beneath.

And now some fragments of its branches bare,  
Shaped as a stately chair,  
Have by my hearthstone found a home at last,  
And a whisper of the past.

The Danish king could not in all his pride  
Repel the ocean tide,  
But, seated in this chair, I can in rhyme  
Roll back the tide of Time.

I see again, as one in vision sees,  
The blossoms and the bees,  
And hear the children's voices shout and call,  
And the brown chestnuts fall.

I see the smithy with its fires aglow,  
I hear the bellows blow,  
And the shrill hammers on the anvil beat  
The iron white with heat!

And thus, dear children, have ye made for me  
This day a jubilee,  
And to my more than three-score years and  
ten  
Brought back my youth again.

The heart hath its own memory, like the mind,  
And in it are enshrined  
The precious keepsakes, into which is wrought  
The giver's loving thought.

Only your love and your remembrance could  
Give life to this dead wood,  
And make these branches, leafless now so  
long,  
Blossom again in song.