Life is real, life is earnest,   
And the shell is not its pen –  
“Egg thou art, and egg remainest”  
Was not spoken of the hen.  
….  
Lives of roosters all remind us,   
We can make our lives sublime,   
And when roasted, leave behind us,   
Hen tracks on the sands of time.

….

Oliver Wendell Holmes

A Psalm of Math

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,    
Life is but an empty set ! —    
For the elements are null that slumbers,    
Still write the zeroes of what we shall get.   
    
Life is real number!  It has a graph!    
And finding the slope is not its ultimate goal ;    
Dust thou variables, to the constants are not,    
Will never be the congruence of thy soul.   
….

Tris Chu

Psalm of Labouring Life

Tell me not, in doctored numbers,  
Life is but a name for work!   
For the labour that encumbers   
Me I wish that I could shirk.

Life is phony! Life is rotten!   
And the wealthy have no soul;   
Why should you be picking cotton,   
Why should I be mining coal?

….

Franklin P. Adams

What the Heart of the Young Woman Said to the Old Maid

[Tell me not, in idle jingle,](http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poems/psalm-life-0#0)

Marriage is an empty dream,

For the girl is dead that's single,

And things are not what they seem.

Married life is real, earnest;

Single blessedness a fib;

Taken from man, to man returnest,

 Has been spoken of the rib.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,

Is our destined end or way;

But to act, that each to-morrow

Nearer brings the wedding-day.

….

Phoebe Cary