

The Living Workshop

Standards should serve the work, not turn skilled hands into machines.

Let standards guide, but leave a hand its craft,
Let book times help us read the path made clear;
A living shop grows wiser through each draft,
But let the fault itself decide the gear.
Let apprentices learn why, and not just how,
For thought makes labor glad, not cold machine;
Let judgment meet the facts that face us now,
And own the cure when causes hide unseen.
Keep useful forms, yet let good workers vary,
Seek not a flawless finish as your rule;
The honest fault may teach the work each day,
Lest rigid sameness make the craftsman fool.
Let every repair belong within the whole,
And human judgment give the shop its soul.