

## THE FORGE

The crippled god lay dead where he had wrought  
His many works beside the forge. He lay,  
His brown breast bared; and all the muscles' play  
Of those two branch-like arms was still, and nought  
Of that great strength, of all the grieving thought  
Had death sapped from his face. Not Jove this clay  
Could cleanse from such a harsh-hued pain. Always  
The god had toiled and failed in what he sought,—  
To form one perfect weapon. Years ago  
Came to that lone, unhallowed grove a band  
Of men, and from the fallen Vulcan's hand  
They took the tools and with them toiled. And, lo!  
They fashioned them a cross and bore it thence—  
The dead god's face was touched with calm intense.

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