

"during twenty-five years, adored as a god. To him belonged Israel's and the skillful Galans. It was there they learnt the art of forging, in which they excelled."

So fully had the Scandinavian sagas, the Saxon and the German chronicles, and the French romances spoken of this mystical smith, that the idea became familiar to the common people, and was handed down in the popular superstitions to a comparatively modern period. Two of these, one from Germany and one from England, will suffice as examples, and show the general identity of the legends and the probability of their common origin.

Hermann Harrys, in his "Tales and legends of Lower Saxony," tell the story of a smith who dwelt in the village of Hagen, on the side of a mountain about two miles from Osnabruch. He was celebrated for his skill in forging metals; but being discontented with his lot and murmuring against God, he was supernaturally carried into a cavernous cleft of the mountain, where he was condemned to be a metal king, and resting by day, to labor by night at the forge for the benefit of men, until the mine in the mountain should cease to be productive.

In the cool mine, says the legend, his good disposition returned, and he labored with great assiduity, extracting iron ore from its veins, and at first forging household and agricultural implements. Latterly he confined himself to the shoeing of horses for the neighboring farmers. In front of the cavern was a stake fixed in the ground, to which the countryman tied his horse which he wished to have shod, and on a stone near by he laid the necessary fee. He then retired; and returning in due time, found the task completed; but the smith, or, as he was called, the Hiller, would never permit himself to be seen.

Similar to this is the English legend, which tells us that in the vale of Berkshire, at the foot of White Horse Hill, evidently the site, from the stones which lay scattered around, of a Druidic monument, formerly dwelt a person called Wayland Smith. No one ever saw him, for the huge stones afforded him a hiding place; but when his services were required to shoe a horse, the horse was left among the stones, and a piece of money placed upon one of them. The owner of the animal then retired, and, after some time returning, found the horse shod and the money gone. The modern English reader will be familiar with this story from the use made of it by Sir Walter Scott, in his romance of *Kenilworth*.

It is evident from what has been said that the smith, as the forger of metals, and the fabricator of arms for the battle-field, of jewels for the boudoir, and implements of agricultural and household use, was a most important personage in the earliest times—deified by the ancients and invested by the moderns with supernatural gifts. It is equally evident that this respect for the smith above all other artisans was prevalent in the Middle Ages.

It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that the idea should have been incorporated into the secret societies of the Middle Ages, and adopted by the Masons, at first by the Operative branch, and afterwards in a modified and corrupted form by the Speculative. The history of the connection of the Legend of the Smith with the Legend of the Craft is worthy of investigation.

In most of the old manuscript constitutions of the Operative Masons we find the Legend of the Craft, and with it a reference to Tubal Cain. Thus, in perhaps one of the oldest, that known as the "Cooke Manuscript," it is said; "Ye shall understand that this son, Tubal Cane, was founder of Smith's craft and of other crafts of metal—that is to say, of iron, of brass, of gold, and of silver, as some doctors say."

Again, in the Landsdowne Manuscript, a hundred years later, there is the same mention of Tubal Cain who "formed the Smith Craft of gold and silver, iron and copper, and steel;" and in all other manuscripts we find the same reference.

Nothing but the prevalence of this mediæval legend of the smith Volund will, I think, account for this reference to the Father of Smith Craft in the legend which should have been exclusively appropriated to Stone Craft. There is no connection with the forge and the trowel which authorizes, on any other ground, the honor paid by stonemasons to a forger of metals—an honor so marked, that in time the very name of Tubal Cain came to be adopted as a significant and important word in the Masonic ritual.

Afterwards, when the Operative art was superseded by the Speculative science, the latter supplemented to the simple Legend of the Craft, which had been invented by the former, their more recondite Legend of the Temple. In this legend the name of Hiram, whom the King of Tyre had sent with all honor to the King of Israel to give him aid in the construction of the Temple, is introduced. But it is not the first time that this character is made known to the fraternity. He is mentioned also in the old Legend of the Craft. In the Cooke Manuscript it is said: "Solomon had fourscore thousand Masons at his work. And the king's son of Tyre was his Master Mason." This is all that is said of him in this manuscript of the latter part of the fifteenth century. In the next century the legend is enlarged by the interpolation of new incidents;