

Legend of the Smith became the common property of the Scandinavian and Teutonic nations of so impressive a character that it continued to exist down to mediæval times, and traces of it have extended to the superstitions of the present day.

Among the Scandinavians we have the legend of Volund, whose story is recited in the Volunddarkvitha, or Lay of Volund, contained in the Edda of Sæmund. Volund (pronounced as if spelled *Wayland*) was one of three brothers, sons of the Alf-king, that is to say, of a supernatural race. The three brothers emigrated to Ulfdal, where they married three Valkyries, maidens of celestial origin, whose attributes were similar to those of the Greek *Parcæ*. After seven years the three wives flew away, to pursue their allotted labor of visiting battle-fields. Two of the brothers went in search of their errant wives; but Volund remained in Ulfdal. He was a skillful workman at the forge, and occupied his time in fabricating works in gold and steel, while patiently awaiting the promised return of his beloved spouse.

Niduth, the king of the country, having heard of the wonderful skill of Volund as a forger of metals, visited his home during his absence and surreptitiously got possession of some of the jewels which he had made, and of the beautiful sword which the smith had fabricated for himself. On the return of Volund, he was seized by the warriors of Niduth, and conducted to the castle. There the queen, terrified at his fierce looks, ordered him to be hamstrung. Thus, maimed and deprived of the power of escape or of resistance, he was confined to a small island in the vicinity of the royal residence, and compelled to fabricate jewels for the queen and her daughter, and weapons of war for the king. It were tedious to recount all the adventures of the smith while confined in his island prison. It is sufficient to say that, having constructed wings by which he was enabled to fly, which reminds us of the Greek legend of *Dædalus*, he made his escape, having first by stratagem dishonored the princess and slain her two brothers.

This legend of "a curious and cunning workman" at the forge was so popular in Scandinavia, that it extended into other countries, where the Legend of the Smith presents itself under various modifications.

In the Icelandic legend, Volund is described as a great artist in the fabrication of iron, gold, and silver. It does not, however, connect him with supernatural beings, but attributes to him great skill in his art in which he is assisted by magic.

The Germans had the same legend at a very early period. In the German legend, the artist is called *Wieland*, and he is represented as the son of a giant named *Wade*. He acquires the art of a smith from *Minner*, a skilled workman, and is perfected by the dwarfs in all the operations of the forge, as an armorer and goldsmith. He goes of his own accord to King *Nidung*, where he finds another skilled smith named *Amilius*, with whom he contends, and kills him with his sword *Misnug*. For this offense he is maimed by the king, and then the rest of the story proceeds very much like that of the Scandinavian legend.

Among the Anglo-Saxons we find the legend not varying much from its original type. The story, where the hero receives the name of *Weland*, is contained in an ancient poem, of which fragments only unfortunately remain. The legend had become so familiar to the people that King *Alfred*, in his translation of the "*Consolations of Philosophy*," by *Boethius*, where the author alludes to the bones of the Roman Consul *Fabricius*, in the passage "*ubi nunc sunt ossa Fabricii*," (where now are the bones of *Fabricius*?) thus paraphrases the question: "Where now are the bones of the wise *Weland*, the goldsmith that was formerly most famous?" *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, afterwards, in a Latin poem, speaks of the gold and jewels and cups that had been sculptured by *Weland*, which name he latinizes as *Gueilandus*.

In the old French chronicles we repeatedly encounter the legend of the skillful smith, although, as might be expected, the name undergoes many changes. Thus, in a poem of the sixth century, it is said that in a combat of *Walter de Varkastein*, he was protected from the lance of *Randolf* by a cuirass made by *Weiland*.

Another chronicle of the twelfth century tells us that a count of *Angouleme*, in a battle with the Normans, cut the body and the cuirass of the Norman king in twain at a single stroke with his sword *Durissima*, which had been made by *Waland*, the smith. A chronicle of the same period, written by the monk *John of Marmontier*, describes the magnificent habiliments of *Geoffrey Plantagenet*, Duke of Normandy, among which, says the author, was "a sword taken from the royal treasury, and long since renowned. *Galannus*, the most skillful of armorers, had employed much care and labor in making it." *Galans* is the name bestowed in general on this skilled smith, and the French romances of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries abound in references to swords of wondrous keenness and strength that were fabricated by him for the knights and paladins.

There was another smith, named *Dionises*, the brother of *Galans*, who was famous for the manufacture of swords and armor. In the romances of *Godfrey of Bouillon*, there is mention of another smith, named *Antequites*, "who was," says the troubadour,