

**THE VILLAGE
BLACKSMITH**

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The Village Blacksmith by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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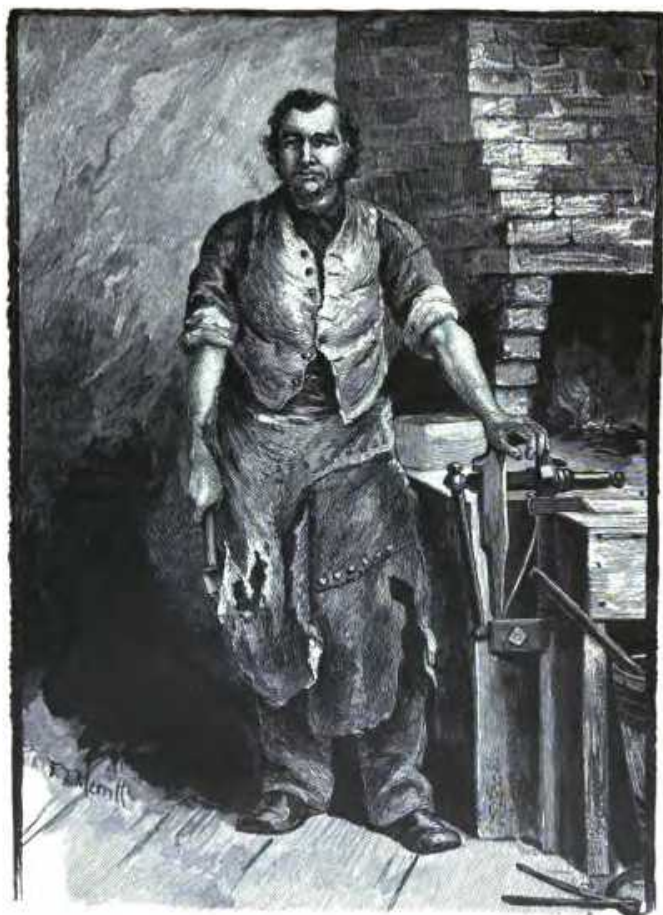
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HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

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"The smith, a mighty man is he."

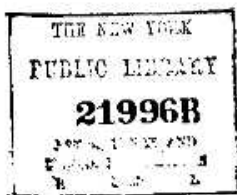
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BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

ILLUSTRATED

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INTRODUCTION

TRUE poet is also true priest. He takes of earth's commonest things, the plain bread and water of every-day toil and trial, and, having laid loving, reverent hands upon them, he delivers them unto us enriched with a new grace, a diviner virtue. It is the sacrament of thought.

Half a century ago—and until within a few years—a blacksmith's shop, of the old New England village type, stood in Brattle street, Cambridge, not far from Longfellow's home. Hundreds of passers-by glanced at the low roof, the overhanging boughs, the grimy smith at his forge, the gazing children at the door, and went their way without giving them a second thought. Not so the poet. Where others saw but the veriest com-

INTRODUCTION.

monplace he discovered fit material for tuneful song,—love, sorrow, the patience of hope, the strength of duty, all the beauty and tragedy of earnest human living. And though smith and smithy, the sheltering tree, the loitering children, poet and passers-by, alike are gone, the song lives on. Its pictures fade not; its lessons grow not old; it will but become the more precious as the times and customs which it commemorates slide farther back into the past, and differ more widely from those of to-day.

W. M. L. J.



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