

TUBAL-CAIN

FLORENCE WESTACOTT

*Why are you sorrowful, Tubal-cain
First of those who have wrought in brass and iron,
Your skill was famed at the world's fresh dawn,
Why, now, should your spirit be torn with pain?*

Truly, I was a cunning worker in iron;
And I dreamed a dream. I would teach mankind
To be makers of all beneficent things.
Strong in pride was I, uncounselled, and blind,
Forgetting the crime of my forefather, Cain;
(On his brow the brand, to his race the stain.)
I recalled not the Garden, the subtle Snake,
The hiss, the whisper, "Ye shall be like gods",
The sin at the root which will stir and wake
Till the good we devise brings evil in train.

I made bright sickles and reaping-hooks,
And divers tools for the hands of men.
Then the came to me, saying, "Tubal-cain,
"Make us swords, sharp and strong." And they said again,
- "Fashion armour, proof against dart and spear.
"We would be masters throughout the earth,
"Shape us weapons our foes may behold with fear."

I toiled at my forge. The flames up-flared.
But at close of day, when the sun went down,
Leaping billows of fire filled the western sky,
—Like a city ablaze! And I heard a cry,
"Who will deliver us from this curse?"
I fell on my face, while that dreadful shout
Rang out—rang out—through the universe.

*Must you weep thus forever, Tubal-cain
Shall your spirit find no release from pain*