

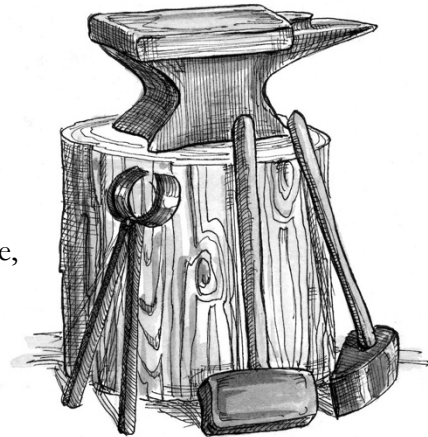
THE ANVIL

Aaron Ferguson

“The grass withers and the flowers fade,
but the word of the Lord stands forever.” *Isaiah 40:8*

Once upon a blacksmith's shop I came and stood in awe.
The scene before me baffled me. Amazed at what I saw,
I entered there and asked the smith if he could tell me more
About the mess of hammers that lay upon his floor.

A hundred hammers, maybe more, had been cast by him aside,
So, all about that dusty den was not a place to stride.
Piles were here, piles were there, piles were all around.
It seemed that I would never find a path to walk around.



But when I did, I asked the smith, who ceased his rhythmic ring,
Why the mounds of mallets seemed to cover everything?
He said, “They break with all the beating and submit to the anvil chime.
They look as if they're hard enough, but they fall in passing time.”

Perplexed I was, perplexed indeed, to hear him say this thing,
That all these hammers' heads were bent from so much hammering.
I wondered then how oft' the anvil would have to be replaced,
For surely with such violent blows the anvil's been defaced.

“How many anvils have you had,” said I, “to endure so many blows?”
“Just one,” said he. “Just one, 'tis true. The anvil wears the hammers so.”
Then I pondered on God's Word, as skeptics ever beat upon.
Through all their vengeful, doubtful blows, the Anvil stands,
and the hammers — gone!

Adapted from “The Anvil” by John Clifford