

have seen them quarrelling and fighting. Tuisco was spoken of as having only one hand, owing to a wolf having bitten off the other.

Brage was the name of another god. To him men prayed for help when about to make speeches. *Iduna* was said to be his wife. She was thought to have the charge of a box of apples, which the gods tasted when they felt themselves growing old, and which were thought to make them immediately young again.

Very little is known about *Soeter*, from whom Saturday takes its name. He was said to stand on a fish, with a bucket in his hand.

Heimdall was called "the god with the golden teeth." He was spoken of as dwelling at the entry into heaven, at the end of the rainbow, which was considered the bridge between earth and heaven.—His office was to prevent any one getting by this bridge into heaven who ought not to enter. To show his fitness for guarding the entrance to heaven, he was said to sleep more lightly than a bird,—to see 300 miles distant during the night, as well as during the day,—and to hear the grass growing on the meadows, and the wool on the backs of the sheep. Besides, he carried in the one hand a sword, and in the other a trumpet, whose sound could be heard in all worlds, when he blew it to get other gods to help him. How different from the only true God! "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." "He seeth under the whole heaven." "The thunder of his power, who can understand?" Well may we say to him, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee; glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

The Saxons who came to the North Sea Islands, and who were the forefathers of some of you, worshipped other gods and goddesses besides those already mentioned; but they were all dumb idols, which required help, instead of being able to give it.

The notions which the Saxons had of heaven were no better than their notions about God. The names they gave to heaven were Valhalla and Gladheim.—They thought that only those who had been great warriors, or who died bravely in battle, were admitted to Valhalla. What do you think they thought the perfect happiness of Valhalla consisted in? They thought that in Valhalla a cock, with a

crest of gold, crowed every morning to awake the heroes to battle. Thus aroused the heroes armed themselves and rushed to the battle. Then they slew one another with the utmost fury. But these deaths were only for a short time. When dinner-time drew near, Woden spoke the word, and that instant the dead started up as if nothing had happened, and rode into the great palace, where they sat down together in the most friendly manner. Thus seated at dinner, they feasted abundantly on the never-ending flesh of the boar *Scrimmer*, and drank huge draughts of mead and ale from the skulls of their enemies. Such being their low views of heaven's happiness, they were accustomed to express their hopes of enjoying it in thoughts like these:—

"When with Woden, I shall be,
Seats shall be prepared for me;
There our ale in brimmers flows,
And the hollow skulls of foes
For our pitchers we shall choose."

But their low thoughts of future happiness led the Saxons to far worse conduct than merely saying foolish things about it. Thinking that a man's happiness in Valhalla would depend on the number of enemies whom he had conquered or killed, they were awfully savage in battle.—Thinking that Woden would not admit any wives or servants who died a natural death, many gave themselves up to the most violent deaths. Thinking, too, that admission to Valhalla might be obtained by the violent death of a substitute, many cowards put their slaves to death. How different is the true heaven, and the preparation for entering it!

"Pure are the joys above the sky,
And all the regions peace;
No wanton lips nor envious eye
Can see or taste the bliss."

Those holy gates for ever bar
Pollution, sin, and shame;
None shall obtain admittance there
But followers of the Lamb."

In this series of letters you have been told a little about three different kinds of idolatry that were practised in the North Sea Islands. The British, Roman, and Saxon false gods have all disappeared long ago. In a former letter you were told about how the knowledge of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, is thought to have been first brought to this country. There is reason for thinking that this knowledge was never completely lost, but that, owing to the Saxons forcing the