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The Idol of the Sun.

In every nation but the Jewish, a gross system of superstition was gradually established. Human folly chose out strange objects to represent the Deity; the most ancient of these were the heavenly bodies, the worship of which was so strictly forbidden to the Israelites; "The sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven"—Deut. iv. 19. The departed heroes and kings, belonging to heathen nations, were raised into gods.

Foolish fancy soon added so many others, that the air, the sea, the rivers, the woods, and the earth, became stocked with divinities: and it was easier, as an ancient sage remarked, to find a deity than a man.

When our Saxon ancestors had settled themselves in England, they had many gods, and worshipped various images. Speed, the historian of Britain, observes, "As in virtues the Saxons outstripped most Pagans, so in the zeal of their heathenish superstition and idolatrous service, they equaled any of