

THE ROCKWOOD REVIEW

Norseman's dearest wish was to die bravely, a spirit still dwelling in the fighting heroes of our day. The death of a Norse viking is thus described by Boyersen in his poem, "Odin's Ravens."

"In the prow with head uplifted
Stood the chief like wrathful Thor,
Through his locks the snowflakes
drifted,
Bleached their hue from gold to
hoar.
Mid the crash of mast and rafter
Norsemen leaped through death
with laughter,
Up through Valhal's wide flung
door.

In the Elder Edda is found this story.—A giant had a daughter called Night who like all her race was dark and swarthy of complexion; after being married to two or three others she was wedded to Delling or Daybreak and their son was Day, a child, light and fair like his father. Odin gave Night and Day two horses, and two cars, and set them up in the heavens that they might ride successively one after the other, each in twenty-four hours time round the world. Night rode first with her steed Hrimfaxe, *fax* signifies name. Every morning the earth is bedewed with foam from this horse's bit. The steed driven by Day was called Skinfaxe, the shining mane, and all the earth and sky glisten with the light shed from his mane. Such were the Norse ideas of day and night.

Between Asgard, the home of the gods, and Midgard, the world, was placed a bridge it was called Bifrost, the rainbow, the vibrating way, and it trembled with various colored light, over this bridge rode every day the gods on their horses, Odin on Sleipner, Heimdal, the god of the rainbow corresponding to the Greek goddess Iris, on Goldtop. Some of the English names of the other horses of the gods

were, Fleetfoot, Silvertop, Palehoof, Lightfoot, Sinews, the Sunbeam, and the Shining one. Thor was compelled to go on foot to attend the council of the gods, he could not use the Asa bridge as his thunder would destroy it, so he was forced to wade through some rivers daily to get there. The giants could not pass over it, for the red of the rainbow was burning fire and would injure them. It was a common custom among the reapers of Norway to leave a sheaf of wheat, in the fields, for the houses of the gods.

In a thunder storm, Thor rode about in his big thunder chariot, drawn by two wonderful goats, from whose hoofs and teeth sparks of fire flashed, Thor's red beard also flashed with the lightning. In his hand he carried a magic hammer, which he would hurl at different objects, and it always returned to his hand. Many were the conflicts in which he engaged with different giants, and there are many myths telling of his mighty strength, but there is not space to enumerate them here.

Thor was at one time belated and spent the night in the home of a peasant in Midgard; food was scarce, so Thor gave them his goats for the evening meal, but warning them to give him back every bone. One greedy fellow cracked a shank to extract the toothsome marrow, and next morning when the Thunder adjusted the skins to the pile of bones, the goats were reanimated, but one was ever afterwards lame in a hind leg.

There is another legend about him going to a place in Jotunheim, to get the huge brewing kettle of the giants, for the gods were holding a feast with Ægir, the Sea Tempest. Thor after many adventures secured the gigantic pot, clapped it on his head, and walked