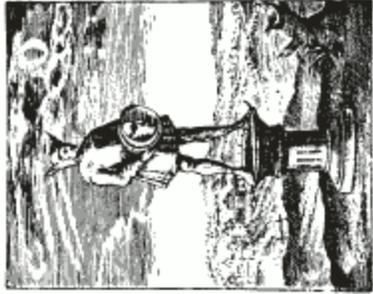


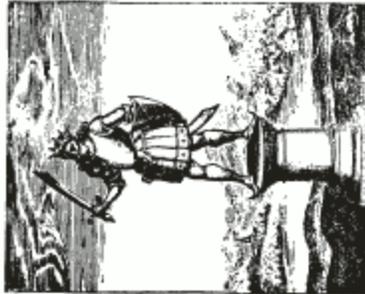
SUN



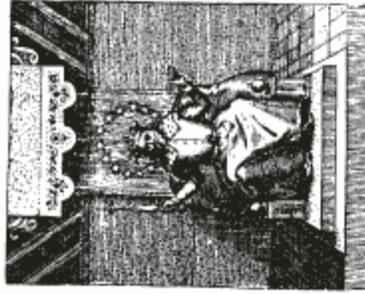
MOON



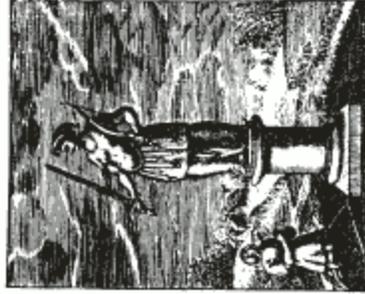
TUISCO



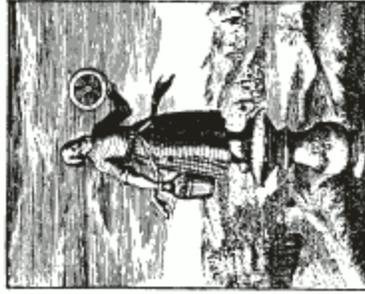
WODEN



THOR



FREIA



SEATER

These are drawings of the images of the Teutonic planetary gods of the astrological week, from which the English names of the days of the week are derived. (See R. Verstegan, *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence: in Antiquities*, pp. 68-80.)

APPENDIX

The Teutonic Pagan Week

IT is not known when the Teutonic peoples began to use the planetary cycle of seven days, but many historians agree with the opinion of Ernst Richard, who says: “The week as a time unit was taken over from the Romans, and their names of the days were germanized.”¹

¹ E. Richard, *History of German Civilization*, p. 70.

By the end of the first century A. D. the Romans regarded several of the Teutonic gods as corresponding to those planetary deities to whom the days were devoted by the Latins. It is very possible that the usage of the Roman planetary week had been adopted already by that time among some of the Germanic tribes. Caesar said of the Gauls: “Among the gods, they most worship Mercury. There are numerous images of him; they declare him the inventor of all arts, the guide for every road and journey, and they deem him to have the greatest influence for all money-making and traffic. After him they set Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva. Of these deities they have almost the same idea as all other nations: Apollo drives away diseases, Minerva supplies the first principles of arts and crafts, Jupiter holds the empire of heaven, Mars controls wars.”²

² Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, book 6, chap. 17, in Loeb Classical Library, *Caesar, The Gallic War*, p. 341.

Tacitus remarks, for example: “Of the gods, they give special worship to Mercury, to whom on certain days they count even the sacrifice of human life lawful.”³ This is a possible allusion to Woden’s day (Wednesday), which corresponds to the Roman *Mercurii dies* (Mercury’s day).

³ Tacitus, *De Germania*, chap. 9, in Loeb Classical Library, *Tacitus, Dialogues, Agricola, Germania*, p. 277.

The Day Began With the Night

The same writer tells us that the German people kept a calendar record of the year, the months, and the days. One observation is worthy of special notice: “They count not by days as we do, but by nights: their decisions and proclamations are subject to this principle: the night, that is, seems to take precedence of the day.”⁴

⁴ *Ibid.*, chap. 11, in Loeb Classical Library, *Tacitus, Dialogues, Agricola, Germania*, p. 281.

The Latins began their days at midnight, but the Germanic peoples probably reckoned their days from sunset to sunset. We still have Christmas Eve and Halloween as reminders of that

ancient practice. Verstegan, who made a specialty of investigating the antiquities of our forefathers, says “They did count time by the nights whereof we yet retain our saying of *sennight* and *fortnight*, for seven nights and fourteen nights, more usually yet so speaking, than saying seven days or fourteen days.”⁵

⁵ R. Verstegan, *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence: in Antiquities*, p. 58.

Caesar said: “The Gauls affirm that they are all descended from a common father, Dis, and say that this is the tradition of the Druids. For that reason they determine all periods of time by the number, not of days, but of nights, and in their observance of birthdays and the beginnings of months and years day follows night.”⁶

⁶ Julius Caesar, *The Gallic War*, book 6, chap. 18, in Loeb Classical Library, *Caesar, The Gallic War*, p. 343.

It Preceded Christianity

Mention has already been made of monuments of the Roman planetary week in the first centuries, and that some of them were found in regions occupied by the Teutonic peoples in the days of the empire. This seems to indicate that the planetary week was introduced into northern Europe before Christian missions made much impression upon the heathen population there. J. Grimm, in commenting on the fact that the Teutonic peoples gave to the days names equivalent to the corresponding gods of the Roman nomenclature, says: “But these names, together with the institution of the week, had passed on from Rome to Gaul and Germany, sooner than the Christian religion did.”⁷

⁷ J. Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, Vol. 1, p. 123.

W. Smith and S. Cheetham also are of the same opinion, saying: “Hence the days of the week received names which were thought equivalent to their classical planetary denominations. This fact renders it highly probable that the week was adopted by the northern tribes in pre-Christian times; for if it had been received from Christian missionaries, they would scarcely have adopted a nomenclature which tended to perpetuate the names of the very deities whose worship they sought to abolish.”⁸

⁸ W. Smith and S. Cheetham, *A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, Vol. 2, p. 2032, art. “Week.”

A more recent authority on religious usages, the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings, remarks also: “The fact that the days of the week in Teutonic mythology are heathen names suggests that the seven-day week was received before Christianity.”⁹

⁹ J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 9, p. 413, art. “Numbers (Aryan).”

The Planetary Week in Old England

English history and traditions trace the Teutonic planetary week back to pagan times. “Our own names for the days of the week,” says J. R. Green, “still recall to us the gods whom our fathers worshiped in their German homeland. Wednesday is Woden’s-day, as Thursday is the day of Thunder, the god of air and storm and rain; Friday is Frea’s-day, the deity of peace and joy and fruitfulness, whose emblems, borne aloft by dancing maidens, brought increase to every field and stall they visited. Saturday commemorates an obscure god, Saetere; Tuesday the dark god, Tiw, to meet whom was death. Eostre, the god of the dawn or of the spring, lends his name to the Christian festival of the Resurrection.”¹⁰

¹⁰ J. R. Green, *A History of the English People*, Vol. 1, pp. 26, 27.

Bede, the English monk and historian who lived from 672 to 785 A. D., says of the heathen in general: “But when the Gentiles learned from the people of Israel the observance of the week, they turned this custom into the praise of their gods. Indeed, they named the first day for the Sun, the second for the Moon, the third for Mars, the fourth for Mercury, the fifth for Jupiter, the sixth for Venus, the seventh for Saturn, especially dedicating their days to the same strange things to whom also dedicating the wandering stars, although reckoning them in a different order. For they thought the spirit came from the Sun, the body from the Moon, fervor from Mars, wisdom and eloquence from Mercury, moderation from Jupiter, sensual pleasure from Venus, and slowness [or laziness] from Saturn.”¹¹

¹¹ Bede, *De Temporibus Ratione*, chap. 8, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. 90, cols. 327, 328, author’s translation.

The Saxons Brought It

It was about the middle of the fifth century A. D. that the Saxons came from the Cimbric Peninsula and islands of the region now known as the province of Schleswig, where Germany and Denmark join together, and landed in the British Isles. They came under the leadership of Hengist and Horsa, two brothers, at the invitation of the British king Wyrtegeorn (Vortigern) to assist him in repelling the assaults of the Picts and Scots.

William of Malmesbury, an English monk and historian who wrote between 1080 and 1143 A. D., says this about the arrival of the Saxons on the British Isles:

“These were under the conduct of Hengist and Horsa, two brothers of suitable disposition, and of noble race in their own country. They were great-grandsons of the celebrated Woden, from whom almost all the royal families of these barbarous nations deduce their origin; and to whom the nations of the Angles, fondly deifying him, have consecrated by immemorial superstition the fourth day of the week, as they have the sixth to his wife Frea.”¹²

¹² William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle*, translation by J. A. Giles, p. 8. See also *The Historians' History of the World*, Vol. 18, pp. 43, 44.

Geoffrey of Monmouth, an English writer of the twelfth century, relates the following interview between Vortigern and Hengist, upon the latter's arrival in Britain: "At the name of Mercury the king [Vortigern] lifted up his countenance and asked of what manner of religion they were. Unto whom Hengist [said]: 'We do worship our country gods, Saturn, Jove [Jupiter], and the rest of them that do govern the world, but most of all Mercury, whom in our tongue we do call Woden. Unto him have our forefathers dedicated the fourth day of the week that even unto this day hath borne the name of Wednesday after his name. Next unto him we do worship the goddess that is most powerful above all other goddesses, Frea by name, unto whom they dedicated the sixth day, which we call Friday after her name.'"¹³

¹³ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Histories of the Kings of Britain*, book 6, chap. 10. See also Olaus Magnus, *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*, book 3, chap. 3, pp. 93-95.

Matthew of Westminster (or Paris), writing in the thirteenth century A. D., gives the following account:

"Their leaders are reported to have been two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, who were sons of Withgisius, whose father was Witha, whose father was Wetha, whose father was Woden, from whose blood the royal families of many provinces derive their origin. And when at last they were brought into the presence of the king [Vortigern], he asked of them what faith and what religion their fathers had espoused. And Hengist replied: 'We worship their national gods, that is to say, Saturn and Jupiter, and the rest of those deities who govern the world, and most especially Mercury, whom we call Woden. To him our ancestors dedicated the fourth day of the week, which to this day is called Wodnesday. Next to him we worship that goddess who is the most powerful of all the goddesses, named Frea, after whose name we call the day Friday.'"¹⁴

¹⁴ Matthew of Westminster, *The Flowers of History*, pp. 216, 217.

Verstegan's Researches

Early in the year 1605, R. Verstegan, in his study of the antiquities of the Teutonic peoples, wrote a very instructive treatise on the customs of our forefathers. His remarks on the gods of the planetary week are so apt that it is fitting to present them here:

The Sun

"First then, unto the day dedicated unto the especial adoration of the idol of the Sun, they gave the name of Sunday, as much as to say *the Sun's day* or *the day of the Sun*. This idol was placed in a temple, and there adored and sacrificed unto, for that they believed that the Sun in the firmament did with or in this idol correspond and cooperate. The manner and form whereof, was according unto this ensuing picture.

“It was made as here appears, like half a naked man set upon a pillar, his face as it were, brightened with gleams of fire, and holding with both his arms stretched out, a burning wheel before his breast: the wheel being to signify the course which he runs round about the world; and the fiery gleams and brightness, the light and heat wherewith he warms and comforts the things that live and grow.

The Moon

“The next according to the course of the days of the week, was the idol of the Moon, whereof we yet retain the name of *Monday*, instead of *Moon-day*, and it was made according to the picture here following.

“The form of this idol seems very strange and ridiculous, for being made for a woman she has a short coat like a man: but more strange it is to see her hood with such two long ears. The holding of a moon before her breast may seem to have been to express what she is, but the reason of her chapron with long ears, as also of her short coat and piked shoes, I do not find.

Tiw (the Teutonic Mars)

“The next unto the idols of the two most apparent planets was the idol of Tuysco, the most ancient and peculiar god of all the Germans, here described in his garment of a skin, according to the most ancient manner of the Germans’ clothing. Of this Tuysco, the first and chiefest man of name among the Germans, and after whom they do call themselves *Tuytshen*, that is, *duytshes* or *duytsh* people, I have already spoken in the first chapter: as also shown, how the day which yet among us retains the name of *Tuisday*, was especially dedicated unto the adoration and service of this idol.

Woden (the Teutonic Mercury)

“The next was the idol Woden, who as by his picture here set down appears was made armed, and among our Saxon ancestors esteemed and honored for their god of battle, according as the Romans reputed and honored their god Mars.

“He was while sometimes he lived among them, a most valiant and victorious prince and captain, and his idol was after his death honored, prayed and sacrificed unto, that by his aid and furtherance they might obtain victory over their enemies: which when they had obtained, they sacrificed unto him such prisoners as in battle they had taken. The name *Woden* signifies *fierce* or *furious*, and in like sense we yet retain it, saying when one is in a great rage that he is *wood*, or takes on as if he were *wood*. And after this idol we do yet call that day of the week *Wednesday*, in stead of *Wodensday*, upon which he was chiefly honored...

Thor (the Teutonic Jupiter)

“The next in order as aforesaid was the idol Thor, who was not only served and sacrificed unto of the ancient pagan Saxons, but of all the Teutonic people of the septentrional regions, yea, even of the people that dwelt beyond Thule or Iceland, for in Greenland was he known and adored; in

memory whereof a promontory or high point of land lying out into the sea, as also a river which falls into the sea at the said promontory, does yet bear his name; and the manner how he was made, his picture does here declare.

“This great reputed god, being of more estimation than many of the rest of like sort, though of as little worth as any of the meanest of that rabble, was majestically placed in a very large and spacious hall, and there set, as if he had reposed himself upon a covered bed.

“On his head he wore a crown of gold, and round in compass above and about the same, were set or fixed, twelve bright burnished golden stars. And in his right hand he held a kingly scepter.

“He was of the seduced pagans believed to be of most marvellous power and might, yea, and that there were no people throughout the whole world, that were not subjected unto him; and did not owe him divine honor and service.

“That there was no puissance comparable to his: his domination of all others most farthest extending itself, both in heaven and earth.

“That in the air he governed the winds and the clouds, and being displeased did cause lightning, thunder, and tempests, with excessive rain, hail, and all ill weather. But being well pleased, by the adoration, sacrifice, and service of his suppliants, he then bestowed upon them most fair and seasonable weather: and caused corn abundantly to grow, as also all sorts of fruits, etc, and kept away from them the plague, and all other evil and infectious diseases.

“Of the weekly day which was dedicated unto his peculiar service, we yet retain the name of Thursday, the which the Danes and the Swedes do yet call *Thorsday*. In the Netherlands, it is called *Dunders-dagh*, which being written according to our English orthography, is *Thunders-day*, whereby it may yet appear that they anciently therein intended, the day of the god of thunder; and in some of our old Saxon books I find it to have been written *Thunres-deag*. So as it seems that the name of *Thor* or *Thur*, was abbreviated of *Thunre*, which we now write *Thunder*.

Friga (the Teutonic Venus)

“The next following in rank and reputation, was the goddess Friga, who was made according as this picture here does demonstrate.

“This idol represented both sexes, as well man as woman, and as an hermaphrodite is said to have had both the members of a man, and the members of a woman. In her right hand she held a drawn sword, and in her left a bow; signifying thereby that women as well as men should in time of need be ready to fight. Some honored her for a god and some for a goddess, but she was ordinarily taken rather for a goddess than a god, and was reputed the giver of peace and plenty, as also the causer and maker of love and amity, and of the day of her especial adoration we yet retain the name of *Friday*; and as in the order of the days of the week Thursday comes between Wednesday and Friday, so (as Olaus Magnus notes) in the septentrional regions, where they made the idol Thor sitting or lying in a great hall upon a covered bed, they also placed on the one side of him the idol Woden, and on the other side the idol Friga. Some do call her *Frea* and not

Friga, and say she was the wife of Woden, but she was called *Friga*, and her day our Saxon ancestors called *Frig-deag*, from whence our name now of Friday indeed comes....

Seater (the Teutonic Saturn)

“The last to make up here the number of seven, was the idol *Seater*, fondly of some supposed to be Saturnus, for he was otherwise called *Crodo*; this goodly god stood to be adored in such manner as here his picture does show him.

“First on a pillar was placed a perch, on the sharp, prickled back whereof stood this idol. He was lean of visage, having long hair and a long beard: and was bareheaded and barefooted. In his left hand he held up a wheel; and in his right he carried a pail of water, wherein were flowers and fruits. His long coat was girded unto him with a towel of white linen. His standing on the sharp fins of this fish, was to signify that the Saxons for their serving him, should pass steadfastly and without harm in dangerous and difficult places. By the wheel was betokened the knit unity and conjoined concord of the Saxons, and their concurring together in the running one course. By the girdle which the wind streamed from him, was signified the Saxons’ freedom. By the pail with flowers and fruits was declared, that with kindly rain he would nourish the earth, to bring forth such fruits and flowers. And the day unto which we yet give the name of Sater-day did first receive, by being unto him dedicated, the same appellation.”¹⁵

¹⁵ R. Verstegan, *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence: in Antiquities*, pp. 68-80.