THE SAXONS AND THE DANES

this is their highest mark of applause, to praise by the sound of their arms."

These German tribes worshipped many gods. The English names for some of the days of the week are derived from the names of their principal deities. Wednesday is the day of Woden, or Odin, the father of the gods, from

whom the chiefs claimed descent. Thursday is Thor's day; Friday is Freya's day; and Tuesday is named for Tiw, the god of death.

War was the chief occupation of these tribes. It was considered disgraceful to get anything by peaceful industry that could be obtained by war; and they believed that the warrior who fell with his face to the foe was carried at once by the Valkyries, or "warmaidens," to the great hall of Woden to enjoy an eternity of fighting and feasting in the company of heroes.

13. The Saxon kingdoms.—At first the Saxons were divided into many tribes, each with its own territory. The South-Saxons lived in Sussex, the West-Saxons in Wessex, and the East-Saxons in Essex. The Jutes settled chiefly in Kent, and the Angles in Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria. These seven kingdoms were called the Heptarchy.

These seven kingdoms were constantly engaged in a struggle for the mastery; but at last, in 827, Egbert, king of Wessex, showed himself stronger than the rest, and one

BRITAIN

827]