

Another told me that on the same road, before arriving at the Village, one comes to a Cabin where lives one named *Oscotarach*, or "Pierce-head," who draws the brains out of the heads of the dead, and keeps them. You must pass a river, and [101] the only bridge you have is the trunk of a tree laid across, and very slightly supported. The passage is guarded by a dog, which jumps at many souls, and makes them fall; they are at the same time carried away by the violence of the torrent, and stifled in the waters. "But," said I to him, "whence have you learned all this news of the other world?" "It is," he told me, "persons brought back to life, who have reported it." Thus it is the devil deceives them in their dreams; thus he speaks by the mouth of some, who having been left as dead, recover health, and talk at random of the other life, according to the ideas that this wretched master gives them. According to them the Village of souls is in no respect unlike the Village of the living,—they go hunting, fishing, and to the woods; axes, robes, and collars are as much esteemed as among the living. In a word, everything is the same; there is only this difference, that day and night they do nothing but groan and complain. They have Captains, who from time to time put an end to it and try to moderate their [102] sighs and groans. God of truth, what ignorance and stupidity! *Illuminare his qui in tenebris, et in umbra mortis sedent.*

Now this false belief they have about souls is kept up among them by means of certain stories which the fathers tell their children, which are so poorly put together that I am perfectly astounded to see how men believe them and accept them as truth.