

that its ends are cut off perpendicularly; that souls go away to the end which is at the setting Sun, and that they build their Cabins upon the edge of the great precipice which the earth forms, at the base of which there is nothing but water. These souls pass the time in dancing; but sometimes, when they are sporting on the edge of this precipice, some one falls into the abyss, and is immediately changed into a fish. To be sure, there are trees along these shores, but they are so slippery that souls can grasp them only with great difficulty. I have already said that they imagine that the souls eat and drink. I may also add that they fancy that they marry, and that the children who die here are children in that end of the world, and grow up just as they would have done in the country where they were born. Now this belief, so full of nonsense, gives us good opportunities to convince them of error. First, we tell them that, if the earth were entirely flat, it would soon be flooded by the tide of the Ocean. Moreover, we show them that it would be day at the same time all over the world. But as it is now, when it is Noon here it is night [171] in France, during the Winter. We assure them that our ships sail to the rising and the setting Sun, and that the land of souls has never been encountered. They are astonished when one speaks to them of the Antipodes, and laugh at the idea, just as others, of better understanding than these, scoffed at it in former times.

We often tell them that, if souls ate, they would grow old and die; how is it that they believe them to be immortal? Besides, if they married and had children, as they do not die, the whole earth would soon be filled with souls; we would run across them