

THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE

loved ones whom death has torn from us. As for the first hope, it corresponds to a natural feeling of the justice of compensation, which is quite correct subjectively, but has no objective validity whatever. We make our claim for an indemnity for the unnumbered defects and sorrows of our earthly existence, without the slightest real prospect or guarantee of receiving it. We long for an eternal life in which we shall meet no sadness and no pain, but an unbounded peace and joy. The pictures that most men form of this blissful existence are extremely curious; the immaterial soul is placed in the midst of grossly material pleasures. The imagination of each believer paints the enduring splendor according to his personal taste. The American Indian, whose athanatism Schiller has so well depicted, trusts to find in his Paradise the finest hunting-grounds with innumerable hordes of buffaloes and bears; the Eskimo looks forward to sun-tipped icebergs with an inexhaustible supply of bears, seals, and other polar animals; the effeminate Cingalese frames his Paradise on the wonderful island-paradise of Ceylon with its noble gardens and forests—adding that there will be unlimited supplies of rice and curry, of cocoanuts and other fruit, always at hand; the Mohammedan Arab believes it will be a place of shady gardens of flowers, watered by cool springs, and filled with lovely maidens; the Catholic fisherman of Sicily looks forward to a daily superabundance of the most valuable fishes and the finest macaroni, and eternal absolution for all his sins, which he can go on committing in his eternal home; the evangelical of North Europe longs for an immense Gothic cathedral, in which he can chant the praises of the Lord of Hosts for all eternity. In a word, each believer really expects his eternal life to be