

meats, drinking mead out of cups which could never be emptied, issuing forth every morning, not only to fight, but actually to slay and be slain in furious combat; victors and vanquished alike, however, recovering from their wounds or coming to life again in time for the night's carouse. It was a frank copy of the joys of this life writ in large childish characters; its *nairete* reminds one of the enthusiasm of a celebrated surgeon, who declared that, if there were no amputations in heaven, he didn't want to go there. It was essentially a fighter's paradise, to which only warriors and their wives, mothers, or daughters could gain admittance. The vast majority of the race were forced to content themselves with an abode in chilly, foggy regions in the bowels of the earth, presided over by the earth-goddess Hela, whose name has been modified into "hell."

If the Norse ideal of heaven was far below the Christian, its hell was a far more humane conception than that fierce and gloomy Oriental idea to which its name has been transferred, and which has become by a sad travesty the peculiar possession and pride of the "Gospel of Love."

The Mahomedan Paradise was another conception of the same class, higher in that it recognized broader grounds of admission than simple warlike courage and truthfulness, but infinitely lower in the sensual and self-indulgent character of the rewards offered, the exclusion of woman except in so far as she can gratify man's passions, and the recognition of "faith" as a substitute for "works." Its hours, palms, and divans, its gardens, fountains, and delicious fruits, are such obvious and vulgar reproductions of earthly ones, that there is little difficulty in believing the story told by certain historians that Mahomet actually constructed such a "paradise" as the Koran describes in some lovely but inaccessible mountain-valley, to which from time to time certain of his faithful followers would be transported while under the influence of an opiate. After being permitted to remain there a few hours or days, their food would again be drugged, and they would be brought back, to testify to others on their return to consciousness that the half had not been told. As with Valhalla, death in battle against the infidel was its surest passport, and the absolutely reckless bravery which this belief developed in the two races is, to say the least, a highly suggestive commentary upon our statement that the greatest factor in producing the fear of death is the dread of a future life.

Another great group of beliefs, the Egyptian Mysteries, have so completely succeeded in remaining what their name implied (as, indeed, they were intended to remain), that little or no idea can be formed of their conception of a future life. We catch nothing but occasional glimpses of an ever-shifting and misty group of deities, some in animal, some in human form,—Osiris and Amenti, Thoth and Ptah, Anubis and Isis,—whose only definite function appears that of a court of inquiry and judgment upon the souls of the dead. They require a strict account of the deeds done in the body, the heart of the dead man is weighed in the scales of Truth, etc. Morality rather than piety seems to be demanded