

cerned, yet you shall never find among them any knowledge or perception of spiritual things." Yet it is a mistake to suppose that this insensibility has been so universal as it is often represented. To say nothing of the considerable numbers who have adhered faithfully to the Roman Catholic Church, the large number of Mahomedans in China, of whom many must have been proselytes, indicates an interest in religion; and that Buddhism itself was in China once a spiritual power of no small energy will, I think, be plain to any one who reads the very interesting extracts in Schott's essay on Buddhism in Upper Asia and China. (*Berlin Acad. of Sciences*, 1846.) These seem to be so little known that I will translate two or three of them. "In the years *Yuan-yeu* of the Sung (A.D. 1086-1093), a pious matron with her two servants lived entirely to the Land of Enlightenment. One of the maids said one day to her companion: 'To-night I shall pass over to the Realm of Amita.' The same night a balsamic odour filled the house, and the maid died without any preceding illness. On the following day the surviving maid said to the lady: 'Yesterday my deceased companion appeared to me in a dream, and said to me: "Thanks to the persevering exhortations of our mistress, I am become a partaker of Paradise, and my blessedness is past all expression in words."' The matron replied: 'If she will appear to me also then I will believe what you say.' Next night the deceased really appeared to her, and saluted her with respect. The lady asked: 'May I, for once, visit the Land of Enlightenment?' 'Yea,' answered the Blessed Soul, 'thou hast but to follow thy handmaiden.' The lady followed her (in her dream), and soon perceived a lake of immeasurable expanse, overspread with innumerable red and white lotus flowers, of various sizes, some blooming, some fading. She asked what those flowers might signify? The maiden replied: 'These are all human beings on the earth whose thoughts are turned to the Land of Enlightenment. The very first longing after the Paradise of Amita produces a flower in the Celestial Lake, and this becomes daily larger and more glorious, as the self-improvement of the person whom it represents advances; in the contrary case, it loses in glory and fades away.'* The matron desired to know the name of an enlightened one who reposed on one of the flowers, clad in a waving and wondrously glistening raiment. Her whilom maiden answered: 'That is Yangkie.' Then asked she the name of another, and was answered: 'That is Mahu.' The lady then said: 'At what place shall I hereafter come into existence?' Then the Blessed Soul led her a space further, and showed her a hill that gleamed with gold and azure. 'Here,' said she, 'is your future abode. You will belong to the first order of the blessed.' When the matron awoke she sent to enquire for Yangkie and Mahu. The first was already departed; the other still alive and well. And thus the lady learned that the soul of one who advances in holiness and never turns back, may be already a dweller in the Land of Enlightenment, even though the body still sojourn in this transitory world" (pp. 55-56).

What a singular counterpart the striking conclusion here forms to Dante's tremendous assault on a still living villain,—or enemy!

———"che per sua opra
In anima in Cocito già si bagna,
Ed in corpo par vivo ancor di sopra."

—*Infern.* xxxiii. 155.

Again: "I knew a man who during his life had killed many living beings, and was at last struck with an apoplexy. The sorrows in store for his sin-laden soul pained me to the heart; I visited him, and exhorted him to call on the Amita; but he obstinately refused, and spoke only of indifferent matters. His illness clouded his understanding; in consequence of his misdeeds he had become hardened. What was

* In 1871 I saw in Bond Street an exhibition of (so-called) "spirit" drawings, *i.e.* drawings alleged to be executed by a "medium" under extraneous and invisible guidance. A number of these extraordinary productions (for extraordinary they were undoubtedly) professed to represent the "Spiritual Flowers" of such and such persons; and the explanation of this as presented in the catalogue was in substance exactly that given in the text. It is highly improbable that the artist had any cognizance of Schott's Essay, and the coincidence was assuredly very striking.