

MISCELLANEOUS.

A BREATH FROM NIRVANA.

BY H. BEDFORD JONES.

I gripped the coverlet in pain, and there
Death's fore-word came to me. I saw the great
Ineffable, the nameless glory-state
That waited on my soul, and loomed so fair
Across the Void; the angel-throngèd Stair
Leading unto the Throne, the sun-streamed Gate—
These lay before me, seeming but to wait
Death's final kiss, within my heart a prayer.
"Now come, sweet Death, and close this Heaven-pact!"
Then sudden fell a light across the sun,
And I—I shrieked and died; for, heavenless,
My sundered spirit thro' the Nature Fact,
Cast unto fragments, joined within the One
And All, the *Universal Nothingness*.

SCHILLER'S SKULL.

Goethe has written a poem on the contemplation of Schiller's skull, and it is well known that the great German poet kept this skull on his desk before him in constant commemoration of his beloved friend. The skull was dug up from the Grand Ducal mausoleum where Schiller's body had been placed soon after his death. In 1826, twenty years after Schiller's death, the mausoleum had to be rebuilt so as to make room for more bodies, and at that time the Mayor of Weimar, Carl Leberecht Schwabe, selected this skull, fully convinced that it was the skull of the great poet, and some highly respected physicians confirmed him in this view. In the meantime the suspicion grew stronger and stronger that the skull could not have been that of Schiller, and that Goethe had wasted his reverence on the relics of a lesser man.

Prof. Hermann Welker, an anatomist of Halle, was led to this conclusion from a number of corroborating circumstances. There is a death mask of Schiller made in plaster of Paris, and also a plaster of Paris reproduction of his skull, made before the great poet's body was deposited in the mausoleum. The mask is still in the possession of the Schwabe family, the descendants of the Mayor of Weimar. Both casts differ from the skull which was in Goethe's possession, and are positive evidence that it can not be genuine.

Dr. von Froriep, a native of Weimar, took a deep interest in the question and has finally succeeded in discovering the genuine skull of Schiller. He