Correspondence.

THE BIRTH OF A SOUL.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN PRACTITIONER AND REVIEW:

SIR,—A clear and simple definition of the Anglo-Saxon word Soul is essential to a full and complete comprehension of our subject. Soul is Anglo-Saxon, and is synonymous with mind. Mind is derived from the Sanscrit and means, to think. The soul, then, is that which thinks, and is the vital principle which constitutes our life and being. It is a part of, and essentially of the same nature as, the universal soul or life. It is also the intelligent principle which reasons, wills, designs and exercises memory and judgment. It is susceptible of being influenced by the spiritual and material environment, and is the centre from which emotions radiate. It is a spirit and non-material, and therefore possesses neither shape nor form. It becomes manifest by clothing itself in matter, which it would seem was created for that purpose. It develops an individuality from environment, but never ceases to be indissolubly a part of the universal soul. It is therefore immortal.

According to the Bible, God made man out of the dust of the earth, and when all the complex organs, internal and external, had been perfected, He breathed into the cold, clayey nostrils the breath of life, and the image became a living soul.

The philosopher Plato, as well as some of the early Christian fathers, including Origen, believed in the pre-existence of souls; but in the sixth century the Church condemned this belief; and theologians now assume that the souls of mankind are the progeny of the special and distinct creation to which I have referred.

Let us try to see if exact science and knowledge can be made to sustain this assumption.

Man, like all other animals and reptiles, has his beginning in a minute particle of matter known as protoplasm, a chemical compound of carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen and phosphorus. This particle of protoplasm develops into an egg, or ovum. The human ovum originates and is developed in small sacs known as graafian follicles, which are situated in and just under the surface of the female ovaries; and if we care to examine the living follicle microscopically, we may see the work of egg production beautifully and wonderfully exemplified.

The first stage in the process of ova development consists in the secretion of a particle of granular fluid by the lining mem-