

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

The publisher is very sorry for the late appearance of this number. It has been simply impossible for him to get the mechanical work done any sooner. The JOURNAL has been in hands, and much of it has been in type, over a month, and all the printing establishments in Ottawa have been over-crowded with work for many weeks. It will be no satisfaction to readers, however, to be informed that this JOURNAL is far from being the only periodical in Canada, or ever in the "go ahead" United States, that is sometimes a month late.

This number being for June and July, the next number will also be for the next two months (August and September), and will not be issued until September, as the Editor will be absent from home.

All—advertisers and others—will please bear in mind, however, that they will receive the same compliment of *numbers*, and that the volume will be completed in December instead of in October.

With the September and later numbers, it is proposed to give more attention to house to house decoration and floriculture, and to make other improvements. The publisher therefore trusts that subscribers will bear with these unavoidable delays and irregularities, and respectfully request attention to accounts enclosed in this number.

## NATURE AND REALITY OF RELIGION.

In his review of the controversy between Mr. Spencer and Mr. Harrison, Count Goblet D'Alviella, professor of the history of religions in the university of Brussels, writes as follows: The last word of Evolution agrees with the definitions of the most refined theologians, which, transcending vulgar symbolism, have constantly recognized God in the double character of reality and incomprehensibility. We may add that, before becoming the scientific faith of Spencer, Huxley, and even of Haeckel, this religious conception has sufficed for men of the highest mind and the most pious imagination, such as Giordano Bruno, Spinoza, Kant, Goethe, Shelley, Wordsworth, Carlyle, Emerson, and even M. Rénan. It can lead not to religion only, but even to mysticism, however little, like some Neoplatonists and certain Hindoo philosophers, one may become absorbed in the conception of the supreme unity. Under this relation the danger is not that it will remain with-

out influence, but that it will communicate to its adepts a kind of vertigo more formidable than the fascination of the abyss, either by the contrast of its incommensurable grandeur with the insignificance of our being, or by the opposition of its immutable Unity with the unlimited Variety and perpetual expansion of the material Universe. These sentiments, as Mr. Spencer remarks, can only increase in frequency as well as in intensity as the human mind becomes more capable in seizing the comprehensiveness of things and their complex relations.

Certainly, it is no longer possible to attribute to that Supreme Reality goodness, consciousness, and personality, *as we conceive them*. But do our conceptions exhaust the modes of the infinite? Mr. Harrison will see only the negative side of the Unknowable. Whether you will employ, he tells us, the term existence or energy, you never have anything but a scientific generalization, a dumb, blind, insensible entity, without common attributes, and consequently without possible sympathy with man. Mr. Spencer meets the objection in advance in his "First Principles." "Those who espouse this alternative position," he says, "make the erroneous assumption that the choice is between personality and something lower than personality; whereas the choice is rather between personality and something higher. It is not just possible there is a mode of being much transcending intelligence and will as these transcendent mechanical motions? It is true that we are totally unable to conceive any such higher mode of being. But this is not a reason for questioning its existence; it is rather the reverse. Have we not seen how utterly incompetent our minds are to form even an approach to a conception of that which underlies all phenomena? Is it not proved that this incompetency is the incompetency of the Conditioned to grasp the Unconditioned? Does it not follow that the Ultimate Cause can not in any respect be conceived by us because it is in every respect greater than can be conceived?"

HOW TO DRAIN A HOUSE; PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR HOUSEHOLDERS, by Geo. E. Warring, jr. M. Inst., C.E., Consulting Engineer, &c., &c.; New York: Henry Holt & Co.

This is an admirable little book, of 222 pages, with numerous illustrations. It treats the subject under such heads as the following: House-drains and health; foundation and cellar; special advice as to plumbing; the sewer gas question; sewage disposal for isolated houses; and sub-surface irrigation. It treats of fresh air inlets, soil pipes, cowls, traps, water closets, sinks, &c., &c. The contents of this book should be familiar to every householder. Elsewhere we give extracts from the book.

There will be issued by the New England Publishing Co., Sandy Hook, Conn., during this month, a book entitled "Berlin as a Medical Centre," by Horatio R. Bigelow, M.D., of Washington, D.C. This book will be a complete and accurate medical guide to Berlin, giving instructions in reference to board, clinics, lectures, expenses, &c., and all information that will be necessary for the medical student abroad.