

It is hardly possible to exaggerate the importance of the question now under discussion in NATURE, "What was Kant's view of Space?" A mistake there is simply fatal. I therefore rejoice to find the columns of that paper are so generously thrown open to those who, like myself, are not primarily concerned with physical science. But this question, like all others in philosophy, has a proclivity to indefinite expansion, and unless its discussion be rigidly restricted to the main issue involved in it, the conductors of NATURE will have to ostracise it. Their space is not an infinite form, but a quantum to be carefully economised. It is, for example, an unwarrantable waste of that commodity to make Hegel the exponent of Kant on a point where Hegel taught that Kant was wrong.

It is fortunate for our interests, as students of Kant, that Mr. Lewes, while committing the strange oversight of criticising Kant's Intuition from Hegel's standpoint, in his last letter (NATURE, Jan. 27) enables us to *dénâter* the main issue from the mass of questions which entangle it. He evidently, if tacitly, slights the plank I threw to him, viz., that Thought, in its ultimate relation to Intuition, borrows, or has reflected on it, the forms peculiar to Sense. What are Kant's *Begriff vom Raume, Begriff der Zeit*, but this? (With these expressions, compare the following:—Also ist die ursprüngliche Vorstellung vom Raume Anschauung *à priori* und nicht Begriff. Transac. *Æsth.* s. 3, 4.) This reflection of form is not what Mr. Lewes is after. He maintains that, according to Kant, "the activity of mind is threefold—Intuitive Thought, Conceptive or Discursive Thought, and Regulative Thought." (Is not Regulative Thought discursive?) So, then, the main issue between Mr. Lewes and (I think) Professor Croom Robertson on the one hand, and Professors Sylvester and Huxley, Mr. W. H. S. Monck, and myself on the other, is plainly this. *Did Kant mean to teach that man has Intuitive Thought, i.e., Intellectual Intuition?* Now that I must be understood emphatically to deny; and in the event of the shortcomings of better men than myself, I hold myself prepared to establish the negative of that question, understanding by Thought the *genus* of which Understanding and Reason are *species*.

Ilford, Jan. 31

C. M. INGLEY

#### Dust and Disease

THE extremely important discoveries brought to light by Professor Tyndall will call forth great exertions on the part of thinking persons to carry his plans into operation, and I have no doubt, when due precautions are taken to sift infected air as it passes into the lungs of those whose duties take them where contagion abounds, we shall have the happiest results.

So great will be the tide of interest in this direction, that I am anxious to cast into it a theory I have long held, in hopes that it may drift in some one's way to be turned to use; I commend it to the travelling portion of your readers especially.

Whilst travelling in some very unhealthy parts of Africa, more particularly amongst the marshes bordering on the Shiré and Zambesi rivers, it was often necessary to camp at night just where the canoe happened to be moored when daylight failed us. Reeds, rushes, and mud were never many feet off, and the accumulation of scum, decaying vegetation, &c., lodged in the sedge, made the situation as delightful to mosquitoes as it was trying to the constitution of the European.

Still, with all this, as long as it was possible to rig up a mosquito curtain, I am convinced that really less danger existed in thus sleeping in the midst of miasma than in other places where less of it was supposed to be present, but where the traveller felt no necessity to stretch this thin covering over him.

I have in this way done canoe journeys of twenty to twenty-five days in length without a day's illness from fever, and I could instance similar experiences on the part of others.

Now the reason I assign is this: the mosquito curtain is to miasma, what the Professor's cotton-wool respirator is to the poison of scarlatina, we will say.

The curtain, after being used once or twice, saturated with dew, folded up whilst damp and crammed into the limited space generally provided for it in the safest place, becomes just so much affected by this treatment that each thread loses its smooth glaze, and is soon fluffy and fuzzy for want of a better expression.

The little honeycomb holes in the fine "net" are now a series of small six-sided sieves, each covered over with the fine filaments of cotton which have got disturbed and frayed up. Dew, falling upon a surface of this kind, quickly turns it into an exquisitely

fine strainer—in fact almost a film of water—through which all the air has to pass which is breathed by the person reposing beneath it.

Now, it is an old notion that the miasma which produces the bilious remittent fever (the pest of this part of Africa in question) and various other diseases of the tropics, cannot pass across water.

I believe that acting upon this theory, the Admiralty provides that boats' crews shall sleep in their boats anchored off shore in malarious rivers. However, be this as it may, I have a strong belief that the "wet sieve" *does* stop the poison in some way or other, and that it is a great safeguard to the voyager in these places.

The whole subject of miasm is in the dark; it is lawless as a cause of disease; it baffles the most astute, but the day may be coming when such hints as these of Prof. Tyndall's shall fit into an organised attack upon it, and we shall be able to overcome it in a measure.

A curtain, properly made, and taken care of with that instinct which alone is begotten by the buzz of mosquitoes, is perhaps the most valuable possession a man can have against deadly attacks in the night whilst men are asleep: were its merits studied more, we should not find men stuffing their companions so perpetually with quinine, to the keeping up an unhealthy tone by this abuse alone, and to the confusion of this most invaluable medicine when it is really called in to do its duty upon the fever-stricken patient.

Chatham, Jan. 24

HORACE WALLER, F.R.C.S.

#### Scenery of England and Wales

THE willingness you have hitherto shown to give authors an opportunity of defending themselves against being misunderstood, induces me to hope that you will allow me to disclaim being the author of certain statements, and to deny the truth of other statements, on which an anonymous reviewer in your last number mainly founds the charge of boldness he brings against me for writing the work entitled "Scenery of England and Wales," &c.

In one part of the review *I am made to say* that I "purposely refrained from reading;" in another it is assumed that my reading has "consisted mainly of the recent journals and magazines;" and further on it is asserted that I wrote the book "without reading."

The facts are, that for many years I devoted more or less time to reading on the subject of Denudation, and that, as stated in the Preface, until lately I purposely refrained from "reading *very much* (a distinct thing from not reading) lest a bias should be given to my opinions."

My reason for not quoting the remarks of the late Principal Forbes on the glaciers of Norway, was not, as implied by your reviewer, because I underrated the *denuding power of glaciers*, but because Forbes said very little on the subject.

Mrs. Somerville's estimate of the velocity of the Rhone may be incorrect, and perhaps, likewise, her statement that the declivity of the river is 1 foot in 2,620; but this is no reason why your reviewer should leave the reader to suppose that I misquoted Mrs. Somerville. In other parts of the work I have referred to the velocities of many currents besides the one off the southern promontory of Shetland.

The argument against denudation by currents, derived from the non-displacement of *barnacles*, would, I think, never be brought forward by any one acquainted with the fact that sea-waves often remove stones and large blocks while barnacles in the immediate neighbourhood are left undisturbed—that waves and currents, by their insinuating, undermining, overturning, and removing action, can carry on the work of denudation within a few inches of an unabraded rock-surface—and that a certain amount of resistance to be overcome is necessary to enable all denuding agents to produce effects which can be immediately perceived. On the western shore of Morecambe Bay, sea-waves and currents detach and remove fragments of limestone rock by a lateral process, while the brink of the unremoved mass of rock retains its glacial polish; and many other instances illustrative of this subject might be stated.

The fact that for more than twenty years I have *confined* my observations to England and Wales, and devoted nearly my whole time to visiting, revisiting, and studying every part of the country, is no reason why I should not have ventured to write a work on the Scenery of England and Wales in connection with Denudation. The country stands almost alone as regards the variety and importance of its geological phenomena, including