

Correspondence.

DR. RUSSEL WALLACE AND WOMAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE OUTLOOK."

their mates. Under these conditions we are to have a selection of the parents of the coming race far superior to that which prevails under existing arrangements. In that day "when our workers, our thinkers, our legislators can be persuaded to accept these fundamental truths, and make them the twin guiding stars of their aspirations and their efforts, the onward march towards true civilisation will have begun." We rub our eyes. The suffragists seem, indeed, to be bringing down the walls of Jericho.

Dr. Wallace is one of the primitive Darwinians. For nearly fifty years the advocates of the earlier theories of evolution have been telling us that woman is the inferior creature; that she is only the undeveloped male with all the social standards and qualities in a lower stage of evolution. And now, if she is only to be allowed to select the male, her unerring instinct is to result in a superior breed of the race. How are the prophets stultified at the hands of the friends of the prophets. *Et tu, Brute!* Have we not heard with our ears, and has not Herbert Spencer declared it unto us, that women are creatures full of mere personalities, that they lack perception of truths of high generality; that they can never detach an abstract conception from a concrete case; that they are inexact; that they are averse to precision; that they go on doing things in the ways they were taught, never imagining better methods, however obvious; and that for them deliberately to weigh evidence is impossible? Have not the followers of Haeckel gone further? Have they not told us that woman is a mere incident only completed when she is absorbed into man; that she is without logic; that she is non-moral; and that organic untruthfulness characterises all women? Now the trumpet brays again, but to a new strain!

How silly it all is, and how well deserved is the scorn of "Eve" for the scientific prophet. Dr. Wallace has not even the sense of proportion. To make *tabula rasa* of all the past history of the race, to declare the progress in morals it has made to be non-existent, to assert that "our widespread and costly religious and educational agencies have, so far, made not the slightest advance towards improvement in the average character," so as to clear the stage for his own trivialities, is merely to exhibit Dr. Wallace himself as deficient in a certain sense of humour. Dr. Wallace, as "Eve" says, has not the least idea of being funny. I regret to admit it; if he had, it would have been the one redeeming feature in his article.

Speaking myself as a mere man, and worse still as an evolutionist, I am afraid I am getting rather tired of these crudities of the earlier Darwinians when they attempt to apply their principles to society. There is not a single idea in Dr. Wallace's article which shows that he understands the meaning of society. Fresh from the study of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest among animals, and full of the ideas which direct the experiments of breeders of prize stock, they desire to breed man along the same lines. But man's ruling and important qualities are those which make him an effective member of a profoundly complex social organism like human society and the science of society—as a younger school of social evolutionists are already beginning to see—is something quite different from the science of natural selection among the lower animals.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

January 16.

ADAM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "THE OUTLOOK."]

SIR,—"Eve's" letter in your columns last week has its strong justification. The elephantine pranks and elementary ignorance of a certain type of scientific mind when dealing with the simplest of social questions, particularly if it touches the relations of the sexes, is a combination in literature often fearful and wonderful to see. Dr. Alfred Wallace's article in the current number of the *Fortnightly*, which "Eve" submits to censure, is really a remarkable production. It is on the whole singularly devoid of ideas. But its main conception amounts to this; that there has been no appreciable advance in the moral nature of man since the earliest days of savagery. The class of evidence and the kind of authorities which he quotes in support of this surprising thesis, would be enough in itself to suggest great reluctance to most intelligent persons if asked to subscribe to it. But it is all meant only as an introduction to two wonderful proposals worthy to be classed with the kind of fudge which Mr. Francis Galton sometimes unfortunately gives us under the name of "Eugenics." The first is merely for an improved system of education under properly selected teachers. It leads up to the second; it is the second which counts. This proposal is for an improved social system under which women will be economically and socially free to choose