

MR. WALLACE ON MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM.*

THE fact that Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace is a firm believer in Spiritualism ought to go far with the public to show how utterly erroneous is the general impression that the ranks of the Spiritualists are made up of people who know nothing whatever of modern science. Mr. Wallace is one of the foremost scientific men in this age, second only to Darwin, equal to Tyndall, and far superior to Huxley, and his name will be known in future years, when many of the most popular men of the day will have been forgotten. Everything that comes from Mr.

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Wallace's pen is well worthy of perusal. His work on the Malay Archipelago is of itself sufficient to have created for him a reputation of no mean order, and his volume entitled *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection* is full of original facts and written in a flowing and easy style that renders it as interesting as a novel. We never look into the latter volume without feeling our interest in the study of the *Philosophy of Natural History* considerably augmented. The work on *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism* is of a totally different character, but, it is nevertheless calculated to have a far wider circulation, to be more generally read, and perhaps to do even a larger amount of good. It comprises three essays that have appeared before at different times and under different circumstances. The first one is an answer to the arguments of Hume, Lecky and others against miracles—an argument much needed in these days of scepticism—and the whole subject is treated with masterly ability. The second is on the "Scientific Aspect of the Supernatural," written, the author tells us, "more than eight years ago for the pages of a secularist periodical," and deals largely with the question of the spiritual phenomena. The last consists of the two well-known papers that appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* last year. These latter will be fresh in the recollection of our readers, having been extensively read by Spiritualists and non-Spiritualists at the time. They created a great sensation in connection with Spiritualism in circles where otherwise it would never have been heard of, and doubtless led many to investigate the subject for the first time. Our space will not allow us to quote extracts from these essays of Mr. Wallace, nor perhaps is it desirable, since the book has but to be known to be procured and read. We look upon it as one of the very few really good books that have appeared in connection with Modern Spiritualism. It is beautifully got up, well printed and elegantly bound, thus forming a very handsome volume. It is also cheap, which is another recommendation, and not a small one.
