

We have now before us *The Wonderful Century, the Age of New Ideas in Science and Invention*,¹ by that well known scientist and social reformer, Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace. The volume has been revised and largely re-written by the author. It is peculiarly fitting that the history of the nineteenth century should be told by Mr. Wallace, the co-discoverer with Darwin of the origin of species and the survival of the fittest theory. Never probably in the history of the world has there been such an extraordinary growth and rapid development in the department of knowledge. Never has evolution worked so rapidly. Wonderful, however, as this advance has been it is destined in the near future to be even yet more wonderful, since with the evolution from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, as Herbert Spencer has taught, the circle of new ideas is ever widening. The present edition, Mr. Wallace tells us, is substantially a new work. The chapters on Locomotion, Photography, Chemistry have been greatly extended and a new one on Electricity added, whilst four new chapters have been devoted to Astronomy, the most ancient of the sciences, and yet that which has made the most amazing advance during the nineteenth century. With Mr. Wallace's ideas on social reform we are in entire agreement. With a wealth constantly increasing and with means of unlimited production to our hands, an ever increasing want and distress is entailed upon the masses. The case for a more equal distribution is proved up to the hilt, but Mr. Wallace's remedy of progressive taxation would in our opinion meet with too great an opposition and would give rise to

¹ *The Wonderful Century, the Age of New Ideas in Science and Invention*. New Edition. Revised and largely re-written. With 107 Illustrations. By Alfred Russel Wallace. London : Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd. 1903.

class warfare and cries of spoliation. Municipal and State production and distribution upon lines already commenced, as, for example, our great municipal services, appear to us to be the simplest and the least likely to lead to embittered strife. But these subjects do not enter much into the treatment of the main topics of the book. We know of no book which could be placed with greater advantage in the hands of the young student.
