

Correspondence.

DR. RUSSEL WALLACE AND WOMAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE OUTLOOK."

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SIR,—I have enjoyed "Eve's" letter. Dr. Wallace has also afforded me much amusement, but I always am amused at the extraordinary limitations of scientific people; it would seem that a mind crammed with science has often no room for anything else. I do not think man is without a sense of humour. Sir W. S. Gilbert's "for turtle and his mother were the only things he loved" is worth a gold medal. Witness again Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, and the late Lord Brampton, but his humour was quite different from woman's. Hers is caused by contrast, inappropriateness, and the "out of the way." Certainly Thackeray did not understand women. With him, a good woman was always a weak one and in tears, *vide* "Amelia" and others, and few men do so really—except those with a rare intuition such as some doctors and some clergy.

I agree with Dr. Wallace that humanity does not make much progress. Read the accounts of explorers in savage countries left with supreme power; how often they degenerate into brutes! But Dr. Wallace's methods of improvement are quite impossible; he must recreate humanity before he can arrange that the loving heart and clever head, to be utilised for the instruction of youth, will always go together; the opposite is so often the case. Then can he imagine that any woman would care for a physically and mentally perfect being?—a mixture of a prize-fighter and a don! If he were the former he would be too material to possess any attractive qualities, and mental perfection would mean a prig and a bore. We like a conglomeration of various qualities; we love a man not because he is perfect, but because he is himself—his

faults perhaps make him dearer—and also, because we do! Those are the reasons, and poor Dr. Wallace will never alter them; perhaps some day he will cease being funny and fall in love himself with poor humanity as it is.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,
Bath, January 14. _____ E. R.