

# PROFESSOR ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

Author of "The Wonderful Century: Its Successes and Failures," etc., etc.

By D. T. ELLIOTT.

**T**HE name of Alfred Russel Wallace is well-known as that of a scientist of repute, and the author of several interesting works on scientific and metaphysical subjects. The latest of his works, viz.: "The Wonderful Century," is an epitome of the scientific successes and failures of the nineteenth century. Among the successes he deals with the progress made in "Travelling," "Fire and Light," "The Applications of Light," "Photography," "Astronomy," "Cosmic Theories," and "Popular Discoveries in Physiology." And in a deeply interesting chapter he estimates the achievements of the nineteenth as compared with earlier centuries. Among the failures of the century he deals in a very able and graphic manner with "The Opposition to Hypnotism and Psychical Research," "The Demon of Greed," "The Plunder of the Earth," "Vaccination a Delusion," and the "Neglect of Phrenology." With this latter subject we are for the present more particularly interested. It is evident from this carefully written essay that Prof. Wallace has been a close student of all the standard works on Phrenology, and has also followed closely the modern physiological researches in the manifestation of mind through the organism of the brain. Prof. Wallace in reviewing the historical account of Dr. Gall's discoveries, states: "I begin with the subject of Phrenology—a science of whose substantial truth and vast importance I have no more doubt than I have of the value and importance of any of the great intellectual advances already recorded." The labours of Dr. Spurzheim and the philosophical works of George Combe are dilated upon in a clear and forcible manner. The examinations made by Mr. G. Combe of the

patients in the Newcastle Lunatic Asylums are interesting reading, and clearly demonstrate even to the sceptic the accuracy with which, by the aid of Phrenology, peculiarities and mental deformities may be observed. Later phrenologists (particularly the late L. N. Fowler, who had many opportunities of examining patients detained in asylums for the insane), have been equally successful in pointing out abnormal characteristics in mentally deformed people. Modern phrenologists only ask that this science, which has helped and blessed thousands should be impartially put to the test, not only in pointing out abnormal peculiarities in character but in following its teaching with regard to the right choice of pursuit. Prof. Wallace was early in life convinced of the truth of Phrenology through having his own cranium phrenologically examined, which, he says, "confirmed me in the belief that the science is a true and important one." Phrenologists should profit by the weighty words of this scientific veteran; for if Phrenology is to be accepted or fully enquired into by modern scientists it must be kept separate from those subjects which are purely mystic and mystifying. The writer of this essay says: "Although Phrenology, to be thoroughly understood and applied to the accurate delineation of character requires a considerable amount of study and long practice, yet it appears, superficially, to be very easy; and it can actually be applied in cases of very marked character with fair success after a moderate amount of practice. Hence, although many of the public exponents of the science were very able men, there were others who adopted the business of lecturer and examiner of heads with imperfect knowledge. These by

their ignorance of the anatomy and physiology of the brain, their clumsiness in detecting the comparative size of the organs, and their inability to estimate the complicated results produced by the various combinations of the organs as influenced by temperament, education and social position, were liable by their mistakes to bring great discredit on the subject, since the public, and especially those who opposed Phrenology from any of the causes already stated, could not, or would not, distinguish between the student and the pretender, and loudly proclaimed that these failures demonstrated the fallacy of the whole science."

We gladly echo these sentiments, and would further state that with the advantages offered for training by the Fowler Institute and others, no phrenologist should enter upon a professional career without being fully equipped with the required knowledge, and trained by a competent teacher. Space will not allow us to quote as much as we should like from this able essay, but we would strongly advise our phrenological friends to secure a copy. No better book could be presented to a young man or woman at this season of the year. The essayist closes with a prophecy, which the signs of the times induce us to believe will be fulfilled. "Phrenology will assuredly attain general acceptance. It will prove itself to be the true science of the mind. Its practical uses in education, in self-discipline, in the reformatory treatment of criminals, and in the remedial treatment of the insane, will give it one of the highest places in the hierarchy of the sciences; and its persistent neglect and obloquy during the last sixty years will be referred to as an example of the almost incredible narrowness and prejudice which prevailed among men of science, at the very time they were making such splendid advances in other fields of thought and discovery."

Prof. Wallace has a well-balanced mind, and great versatility of talent. He possesses a fine physique with a good development of the Mental-Vital temperament; he has a strong hold on life and is capable of getting much happiness out of his surroundings. He is studious, thoughtful and cogitative, with a keen discriminating intellect. He is quick in observing the incongruous and in detecting any flaws in intellectual work. He is a sound reasoner, has a comprehensive mind, and will enquire into subjects on his own account rather than accept other peoples theories. He has an available mind, all his facts are well analyzed, and he is careful in separating the chaff from the wheat. Order, system and method will characterise his work, and he will remember the location of objects with accuracy. The anterior lobe of the brain is particularly broad and long from the meatus auditorius, indicating him a man of thought, judgment and keen intellectual ability. Having a good stock of vitality to draw upon, his large and active brain is well nourished and he will accomplish more mental work than those less favourably organized. The intellect is evenly developed; mental work to such a man would be comparatively easy. He is a keen observer, intuitive in perception and a quick calculator. His force of character lies in his moral and intellectual brain. He is earnest, persevering and persistent in prosecuting his plans, and is not deterred in his efforts by difficulties. The elements of sagacity, discernment and penetration are strongly marked. His social nature is warm and sympathetic. He is not dictatorial or assuming towards his opponents, but will tenaciously hold to his own views of a subject until he sees good reason for changing his mind. Prof. Wallace is a good specimen of a man who has lived a temperate life and disciplined his mind.

