

## THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE

istry. But it is so well known how much we have surpassed all earlier centuries through these and other scientific discoveries that we need linger over the question no longer.

While we look back with a just pride on the immense progress of the nineteenth century in a knowledge of nature and in its practical application, we find, unfortunately, a very different and far from agreeable picture when we turn to another and not less important province of modern life. To our great regret we must endorse the words of Alfred Wallace: "Compared with our astounding progress in physical science and its practical application, our system of government, of administrative justice, and of national education, and our entire social and moral organization, remain in a state of barbarism." To convince ourselves of the truth of this grave indictment we need only cast an unprejudiced glance at our public life, or look into the mirror that is daily offered to us by the press, the organ of public sentiment.

We begin our review with justice, the *fundamentum regnorum*. No one can maintain that its condition today is in harmony with our advanced knowledge of man and the world. Not a week passes in which we do not read of judicial decisions over which every thoughtful man shakes his head in despair; many of the decisions of our higher and lower courts are simply unintelligible. We are not referring in the treatment of this particular "world-problem" to the fact that many modern states, in spite of their paper constitutions, are really governed with absolute despotism, and that many who occupy the bench give judgment less in accordance with their sincere conviction than with wishes expressed in higher quarters. We readily ad-