

## PREFACE

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THE hour is close upon us when we shall commence our retrospect of one of the most wonderful sections of time that was ever measured by the sweep of the earth. Already the expert is at work, dissecting out and studying his particular phase of that vast world of thought and action we call the nineteenth century. Art, literature, commerce, industry, politics, ethics—all have their high interpreters among us; but in the chance of life it has fallen out that there is none to read aright for us, in historic retrospect, what after ages will probably regard as the most salient feature of the nineteenth century—the conflict of theology with philosophy and science. The pens of our Huxleys, and Tyndalls, and Darwins lie where they fell; there is none left in strength among us to sum up the issues of that struggle with knowledge and sympathy.

In these circumstances it has been thought fitting that we should introduce to English readers the latest work of Professor Haeckel. Germany, as the reader will quickly perceive, is witnessing the same strange reaction of thought that we see about us here in England, yet *Die Welträthsel* found an immediate and very extensive circle of readers. One of the most prominent