

Empire," "Woman's Suffrage," "The Jewish Question," "The Irish Question," "Prohibition in Canada and the United States," and "The Oneida Community and American Socialism."

The Prince of India; or, Why Constantinople Fell. By LEW WALLACE, author of "Ben Hur," etc. Cloth, 2 vols., 16 mo. Price \$2.50 the set in library box. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. Montreal: C. W. Coates. Halifax: S. F. Huestis. Second edition.

The closing decade of the nineteenth century is witnessing a revival of the old "Historic Novel," and if one may judge anything from the eagerness of the reading public to have these novels, an increasing demand for a healthier style of fiction than that of which George Moore, Ibsen and Zola are the chief exponents. Conan Doyle in the Old World and General Wallace in the New have recently given us vivid pictures of the dead past, causing the old characters of history to move before our gaze, describing with detailed accuracy the circumstances and the customs of their day, teaching us by example the old lesson of our prophetic poet, that

. . . through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns.

The Methodist Book Room has issued a second edition of the novel upon which General Wallace had been at work for the last two years, entitled "The Prince of India; or, Why Constantinople Fell." The fact that over 100,000 copies were ordered before it was taken off the press is a proof of the abundant financial success; but the question we wish to consider just now is, What about the book as a book?

It is a work which would establish firmly a reputation for any unknown author, but General Wallace has to compete with himself, and "Ben Hur" is the standard by which he must be judged.

Unquestionably this is a greater book than "Ben Hur," greater in its historical accuracy, in its attention to details, in its absence of anachronisms, greater, also, in its main conception faithfully brought out through plot and incident, as the events sweep on in ordered sequence to their tragic close.

Unquestionably it has been a greater task to write this than to write "Ben Hur," because the latter, from the comparative scarcity of the details known about the period of which it treats, allowed greater freedom to the imagination, while in the present case the reins of the fancy would have to be checked by the actual happenings.

The Prince of India is the Wandering Jew, who a traveller through all the known lands of the earth, has sat at the feet of all the great philosophers and teachers of religion, seeking even the rest of a trustful peace for his soul but finding it not. He is introduced to be as learned in all the knowledge of the world as skilled in the mastery of men, and yet longing for some higher ideal, he determines to found a universal brotherhood of all who believe in God.

Being persuaded that the Islam is too firmly attached to Mohammed, he establishes himself at Constantinople, and proclaims his idea to the Christians there. We will not here unravel the plot; but circumstances force the Prince to seek help from Mohammed, and as a messenger from Heaven he leads on that ambitious prophet and ruler to undertake the conquest of Constantinople.

This book is indeed a monumental work. While the style is crisp and nervous, there is no superficial lightness about it. The spark and savour of those old Byzantine times are tersely reproduced. There are some remarkably vivid and dramatic descriptions, such as the "Story of the