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Aristocracy and Evolution. By W. H. MALLOCK. (London: Adam and Charles Black. 1898.)

MR. MALLOCK has written an interesting book on an interesting subject. The reviewer, indeed, of Mr. Mallock's literary productions may safely assume at the outset of his work that he will deal with arguments cleverly reasoned and attractively presented. We know of few expositors of difficult subjects whose manner exhibits such an appearance of ease; and for that very reason his opponents, whom he seems eager to provoke rather than anxious to conciliate, are tempted to urge that his argument is easy because it is superficial, and that his reasoning appears to be conclusive only because it is not profound. In our opinion this criticism fails of its mark; though we are disposed to regard Mr. Mallock as a populariser rather than discoverer of truth. We do not consider his work to be less, but more, important on that account; for he is able on topics of high interest to attract an audience, which would probably refuse in these days to listen to severer writers. Not a little, for example, of the present volume, which is, and is intended to be, more systematic and elaborate than much of Mr. Mallock's previous writing, appears to us an echo of the commonplaces of recent economic treatises on the importance and functions of the employer; and professional economists have before now met socialist contentions with arguments not dissimilar in essence from some of those advanced here.

But it would be unjust to describe the book as a mere *rechauffée* of economic orthodoxy; for, although Mr. Mallock draws his illustrations for the most part from the region of economic fact, and lays the greater stress of his emphasis on the economic side of life, he yet brings other departments of man's activity within the range of his argument, and derives his reasoning from other sources than economic text-books. Nor, if the book were to some extent a re-statement of matter, which might be found in essence elsewhere, would it cease to deserve credit for its mode of exposition. Although Mr. Mallock is too prone to use a dichotomy, which towards the end of his book may weary his readers, he is astonishingly successful in securing and retaining their attention, in first insinuating, and then compelling, persuasion. No candid opponent, we believe, can peruse his pages without feeling that such a powerful statement of the case requires an adequate answer; and no impartial bystander can study his controversial thrusts and parries without admiring and wondering at his practised dexterity.

His thesis, stated briefly, is that "aristocracy" has a connection of supreme importance with "evolution," or, expressed more fully, that the "exceptionally gifted and efficient minority" exercise a determining influence on social progress. This thesis is set forth in four sections. The first is mainly negative, and devoted to exhibiting the error committed by sociologists in attempting to merge the "great man" in the "aggregate." In the second the nature of the superiority

of the "great man," and the mode in which he influences progress, are shown; in the third the part played by the average or ordinary man is brought into contrast; and in the fourth and concluding portion Mr. Mallock reaches the moral, which, he rightly observes, he has hitherto kept in the background, but which we believe we are not mistaken in asserting to be the main object of the whole of his reasoning. He considers the dependence of exceptional action on the attainment of exceptional reward, and the connection of social happiness, like progress, with inequality. It is true that this moral is reserved to the end, and does not obtrude into the earlier portion of the argument; but the sub-title of Mr. Mallock's book, in which it is described as "a study of the rights, the origin, and the social functions of the wealthier classes," proves that he has intended it to be a refutation of socialist doctrine, and that it will be so regarded both by those who agree, and by those who disagree, with his conclusions.

In our opinion he has been generally successful in the main part of his contentions; and he has, at an opportune moment, rendered a service of great value, by bringing into due prominence considerations disregarded by socialist writers and overlooked by less biased reasoners. His emphasis of the danger, implicit in arguing from aggregates, of neglecting the vital differences between parts of those aggregates, and his criticism, in illustration of this danger, of the errors and inconsistencies of investigators such as Mr. Kidd, or Mr. Herbert Spencer, seem to us no less deserved and opportune, than his distinction of the "great man" from the "fittest survivor" is subtle and convincing. The "fittest men," he argues, by surviving, raise the general level of the race, and thus promote a very slow progress, but the "great man" causes rapid movement by his superiority to his contemporaries. The actual facts of practical life do not allow of his being explained away on the ground that the difference between him and the ordinary man is slight, or that his ability or work is the product of antecedent circumstance. Evolution may indeed be defined as "the reasonable sequence of the unintended;" but the great man, working with unintended materials, produces an intended result. The unintended or evolved element may concern the speculative philosopher taking a large sweep of history, but the intended element in progress is that which is of interest for immediate practical purposes; and evolution, from this point of view, may be more properly defined as "the unintended result of the intentions of great men." Their greatness may not be, as Carlyle contended, heroic; it may be, on the contrary, unamiable, and, while differing in kind and degree, it is measured by the overt results actually produced. It is "merely those qualities, which, in any domain of social progress, make the few more efficient than the many." Again, the "fittest survivor" promotes progress by living while others die, but the "great man" promotes progress by helping others to live, and, while in the social sphere the counterpart to the Darwinian struggle is discovered in the competition of labourers to find employment, the

struggle, to which historical progress is due, is confined to the leaders, and is a contest, not for existence, but for domination. The analogies and differences thus exhibited by Mr. Mallock seem to us of real importance; and, once admitted, they are destructive of not a little nebulous reasoning from the facts of biology to the possibilities of sociology. It must, however, be allowed that it is somewhat difficult, on his principles, to decide what constitutes greatness, if in fact, as he argues, it is only determined and exhibited by its overt effects.

He then proceeds to consider the means by which the "great man" applies his greatness to wealth-production and to politics; and in the first of these cases, although for the moment he banishes the question of the motives determining action, he yet hints distinctly at the moral of his whole book. The great man can only influence the action of others in wealth-production by coercion (or slavery), or by inducement (or the wage-system). Wage-capital is an accumulation of the necessities of life, owned or controlled by a few persons, and apportioned among the many on the condition that they shall be technically directed by the few. Socialism, if it banished inducement, must substitute coercion; and, as a matter of fact, socialists, who profess to abolish competition, do not, in their actual proposals, remove competition from among the directors of industry, for they are to be appointed, promoted or degraded, according to the success with which they respectively direct labour. Under the present system they *induce* labour to work, and fail, if they do not meet the wishes of the mass of consumers; under socialism they would be invested with compulsory powers of *coercion*, and be appointed or removed by some official body. But that labour must be directed, and the directors encouraged or discouraged, the more recent socialists do not deny. Similarly, in politics all would admit that the governor must be an "exceptional" man; and opinions, although proceeding from the multitude, must be manipulated by the few, before they can be powerful by becoming identical.

In the third book, Mr. Mallock considers the functions of the average by contrast with those of the great man, and the nature and degree of their respective contributions to social progress. For practical purposes, he concludes, *the* cause of an effect is that cause only, which may, or may not, be present, and the products of joint action may be discriminated by an analysis of the faculties necessary to produce the product. Judged in this manner, in the process of wealth-production, the matter is summed up by saying that, while supply is "aristocratic," and requires the "direction" of "great men," demand is "democratic," and depends on the wants of the many.

The few, therefore, being necessary, and exceptional action indispensable, the question considered in the fourth book remains of the best mode of eliciting its full potency. Even the ordinary man will not work without reward, in the shape of some gratified want; and the great does not differ in this respect from the ordinary man. No one can tell that his powers are exceptional unless they are shown;

and he must be induced to work, and cannot be coerced. What reward, then, will be adequate in the sphere of wealth-reproduction? For this, as Mr. Mallock argues, is the fundamental question, which socialists have to face and to answer. They themselves admit that the desire for exceptional wealth has been operative in the past, and that at the present the labourer at least wishes to possess all that he produces. The joy of excelling, of benefiting others, or of being honoured, may prompt to benevolent action or to religious work; but hardly to wealth production. They may lead to artistic production and to scientific discovery, which themselves contribute their quota to the production of wealth; but pecuniary reward influences artistic production of any but the highest kind, which forms but a small part of wealth, and the application of scientific discoveries, without which the discoveries themselves are useless for wealth-production, is manifestly prompted by a desire for wealth, which, in the case of the discoverers, may have its place taken by a desire for truth. Even in war, where the desire for honour is as keen as the work of the soldier is exceptional, and the fighting, unlike the industrial, instinct is inherent in dominant races, desire for pecuniary reward enters into the calculations of those, who make the prolonged intellectual efforts, which are necessary; and all these motives, while mixing with the desire for wealth, do not supersede it but rather add to its efficiency. It is a means to power, and it is the physical basis of an enlarged life, which is desired, not merely for the immediate producer, (although socialists argue to the contrary), but as a continued possession for his family and his class.

In this reasoning there is, we believe, not a little subtle force and sound sense; and Mr. Mallock recalls to notice ugly, but vital, facts, which ardent reformers would neglect or thrust aside. His argument seems indeed open to the objection that, with a change of conditions, there might conceivably, if improbably, come a change of temperament and character; and that, if pecuniary reward were compulsorily absent, the other motives, now mingled with it, might possibly be present in a purity, to which they are under existing circumstances necessarily strange. The fact is that the conditions of society organised on a socialistic basis are so foreign to actual experience that it is hazardous to argue to their possibilities from the facts of present life. But this conclusion hardly tells more in favour of risking the change than it throws doubt on cherished socialist contentions; and Mr. Mallock enjoys for the most part the advantage of reasoning from the known to the unknown, whereas his socialist opponents frequently judge by the unknown of the known. We must add that the final application of his argument to a judgment on the educational theories of the day seems to us more questionable than his contention that happiness is not incompatible with that inequality, which, he maintains, is a necessary incident of social progress. It is probably true, as he urges, that the removal of artificial impediments is all that is needed to afford opportunity for the development of the higher kinds of genius; and

that, as the old proverb puts it, a "little knowledge may prove a dangerous thing," if it leads to the belief that equal education will produce equal social conditions. But, if exceptional efficiency can only be definitely shown by its overt effects, it is hard to say where the line should be drawn between the removal of negative impediments and the bestowal of positive encouragement; and the chief criticism we are disposed to make on Mr. Mallock's whole book is that distinctions, which at first he expresses, as though they were sharply defined, and easily recognised, seem, on prolonged examination, to grow less precise and rigid. They are, however, we believe, less vague and more reasonable than the aspirations of his opponents; and his negative criticism is perhaps at once more important and more opportune than his positive work.

L. L. PRICE

The Autobiography of Arthur Young, with Selections from His Correspondence. Edited by M. BETHAM-EDWARDS. (London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1893. Pp. 480, 8vo., 12s. 6d.).

ARTHUR YOUNG, a never-to-be-forgotten traveller, is already a forgotten economist. Everybody knows his *Travels in France*; nobody reads his *Political Arithmetic*. Yet almost everything that he wrote is worth reading, and his Autobiography should interest the general reader as well as the economist. The opening chapters are animated and circumstantial, evidently written when he was in the full enjoyment of vigour. The later chapters, chiefly in the form of a diary, degenerate more and more into a bald chronicle, fitfully recorded, and interspersed with gloomy speculations upon religious topics. The travels and tours are themselves autobiographical. Read with this volume, and with a bibliography of Young's works, they give us a sufficiently full account of a strenuous life. Born in 1741, unhappily married in 1765, struggling with increasing debts in spite of large earnings from his pen, gaining a wide and lasting reputation as an authority upon agriculture, appointed Secretary to the newly formed Board of Agriculture in 1793, saddened for life by the death of his favourite little daughter, Bobbin, in 1797, and thenceforward a prey to morbid religious feeling, gradually becoming blind from 1807, and dying in 1820—these are the main incidents of his existence.

The autobiography does not throw much new light upon economic literature. Young has very little to say about his books beyond the sums he received for them, and the distinguished persons who read them. But his life abounds in references to the most interesting of his contemporaries. We have conversations with Johnson, Burke, Pitt, Wilberforce, George III., correspondence with Dr. Burney, Fanny Burney, Washington, Bentham, John Howard, Dr. Priestley, and a host of others. The style, especially of the earlier portions of his book, is vivacious, racy of the soil, vigorous and personal like that of Cobbett without Cobbett's occasional coarseness. Witness, for

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