

kins and the national socialists on the other) centred on this paradigm and divided on precisely the lines laid down by Professor Meek as defining the neoclassical and Marxist versions.

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G. E. MINGAY, ed. *Arthur Young and his Times*. London & Toronto: Macmillan, 1975.

This is not the critical life of the great agricultural publicist which its title seems to imply, but rather a selection from Arthur Young's own writings. As one would expect from Professor Mingay, it is well chosen and introduced, and serves as a useful supplement to John C Gazley's *Life of Arthur Young, 1741-1820*,¹ whose 727 pages say a great deal about Young's family, politics, and religion, but not very much about his views on agriculture and economics.

Professor Mingay's general introduction provides a serviceable short life and a spirited defence of Young's competence and importance as an agricultural thinker. The selections which follow are well chosen from the whole range of Young's published writings, and most of them are long enough for Young to get his teeth into a problem. Each group of selections has a short but comprehensive introduction.

The first chapter is in itself a fine summary of the economics of agriculture from the tenant's point of view — the working of rents, tithes, taxes, and rates, — with Mingay gently moderating Young's enthusiasm over such points as the virtue of high rents and the indispensibility of long leases. For the chapter on the "Agricultural Revolution," it would be tedious if not impossible to collect examples of all the new arrangements and techniques involved — enclosure, new rotations and manures, stock breeding, and so on. But Professor Mingay neatly solves that problem by three long selections on what Young thought the best practice: the Norfolk Husbandry, the Marquis of Rockingham, and the stockbreeder Robert Bakewell. The book ends with excerpts from Young's travels in Ireland, France, Catalonia, and Italy, which counterpoint his views on England.

Through all of this, two themes stand out. One is Young's enthusiasm for agricultural improvement and his exasperation at backwardness. But, as the selections show, he recognised perfectly well that what works in one place may not work somewhere else; he was no crank or mere doctrinaire. The other is his acute economic imagination, particularly intent on the economic necessity of a high level of consumption by the poorer ranks of society. It was only late in life that he recognised that his favourite remedy of enclosure was harming the rural poor; but that conclusion fitted what he had always thought.

The introductions to the selections on England are solid and succinct. If they add little that is new, that is because Professor Mingay has said it before.² The introductions to the Irish and continental sections, unfortunately, do not go much beyond a precis of what Young is about to say. Surely some comment on

¹ Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1973.

² E.G., J. D. CHAMBERS & G. E. MINGAY, *The Agricultural Revolution* (London: Batsford, 1966).

that vast and exciting topic, French agriculture under the *Ancien régime*, was in order. Professor Mingay seems to have taken too much to heart Young's comment on the Channel: "The streight that separates England, so fortunately for her, from all the rest of the world."³

Young is always fun to read, with his vigorous style, whether in praise or blame, and his aesthetic — even sensuous — pleasure in good farming land well improved. Comparative historians who read this book can note his complaints of Gallic lack of vivacity, and the deplorable French habit of not conversing with strangers. Victims of supermarket meat can ponder his balanced judgement between the new breeds of sheep (Southdowns and New Leicesters), which fatten rapidly and in the right places and keep well once slaughtered, and the older Norfolk breed, which lacks these virtues but simply tastes better.

This would be a very good book for classroom use, but for two flaws. One is the lack of a bibliography (beyond a list of Young's own writings). Professor Mingay's introductions would be far more valuable if supported by references and suggestions for further reading. This is particularly so on the question of the social results of agricultural improvement; Professor Mingay's relatively benign picture of this is not universally shared.

The other flaw, and one more likely to be fatal, is the price. A paperback edition at a reasonable price would be useful and enjoyable. But a book may be worthwhile without being worth twenty-six dollars and fifty cents.

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James S. DONNELLY, Jr. — *The land and the people of nineteenth-century Cork: The rural economy and the land question*. Studies in Irish History, Second series, edited by T. W. MOODY and others. London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975.

Dr Donnelly's book is a significant addition to a distinguished series and reflects the growing scholarly preoccupation with the economic and social history of Ireland. In view of the prominence accorded the Irish 'land question' during the later nineteenth century in both Ireland and at Westminster (not to mention in subsequent historiography), it is surprising that until recently the history of the Irish economy has very much taken a second place to political analysis and studies of 'great men.' But in the last few years the work of such scholars as L. M. Cullen, Barbara Solow and W. E. Vaughan has done much to redress the balance. *The land and the people of nineteenth-century Cork* is certainly the most thorough examination of the Irish agricultural economy yet to appear. Since economics, social movements and politics can rarely be considered to function independently of one another, Donnelly's integrated view of the land question, Irish society and nationalist politics is very welcome.

Donnelly's work, a revision of his Harvard doctoral dissertation, is a regional study of Ireland's largest and southernmost county. Cork was selected in order to facilitate a manageable and detailed study, and to emphasise the need for further specialised work on other parts of Ireland; because only when full regional studies have been undertaken can a coherent idea of the diversity of the once-supposed homogenous Irish social and economic structure be achieved. Although

³ Arthur YOUNG, *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788 and 1789* (1792), first entry, 15 May 1787.