

MR. WALLACE'S STUDIES.*

DURING the thirty-five years from 1865 to the present, Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the distinguished English naturalist, who is now in his seventy-eighth year and whose name has been before the public in illustrious association for nearly half a century, besides the writing of such important works as *The Malay Archipelago*, *Tropical Nature*, and *The Wonderful Century*, has contributed many articles on scientific subjects to the reviews and other periodicals. Some fifty of these papers he has now collected into two volumes. He calls them "studies," because, while comparatively brief and fragmentary, they deal with large and often profound problems, and embody the results of his most careful research and deliberate reflection. That they are mostly concerned with various aspects of the theory of evolution we need not say, but not a few of them touch on subjects aside from that wide path of scientific investigation, and even lay hold of questions that are purely social and sometimes political.

In the first volume we have seven groups, of which the first confines itself to geological points wholly, such as the formation of valleys and ocean basins and the work of ice on the earth's crust. Two other groups are devoted to zoölogical topics and one to the laws of the distribution of English and American flowers. There are five papers on evolutionary questions and three on anthropological themes chiefly suggested by researches in the South Pacific.

The second volume opens with a series of critical discussions of educational topics,

one on American scientific museums, one on Reclus's proposal for a vast model of the globe, one on white men in the tropics, which is instructive reading for these times of "expansion" and the so-called taking up of "the white man's burden." Under the political head Mr. Wallace puts forth the claims of coal to be considered as a national trust; he pleads for a representative House of Lords in England, and argues against interest-bearing funds. Land questions are considered in a series of four papers, the bearing of which is in favor of land nationalization. Two groups of discussions of ethical and sociological topics conclude the second volume. The churches would do well to weigh what Mr. Wallace has to say on the religious observance of Sunday, and his predilections in favor of what is called "spiritualism" come out in his plea with the agnostic and the rationalist for the leading of a moral life.

There is a singular mixture of Tolstoism and Darwinism in these pages, which are full of exact and affluent scientific information, couched in lucid and for the most part untechnical English, luminous with illustration from the natural world, and animated by a humane, beneficent and lofty purpose. Accepting without question the author's premises, one cannot always follow to his conclusions, and the fact that the most highly trained scientific intelligence is sometimes most liable to vagaries may occasionally find exemplification in his case; but no exceptions taken can seriously affect the real value of these discussions or lessen their extreme interest for all thoughtful readers, especially such as are contented to seek their inspiration for life through the phenomena and laws of the material universe.

*Studies Scientific and Social. By Alfred Russel Wallace. Two Volumes. Illustrated. The Macmillan Co. \$5.00.