

BLACKFRIARS

with the account of a holiday visit of Dr. Burne to the nephew and niece whom he had not seen for six years, when they were nine and eight respectively. The added years have brought them to the threshold of youth, and he finds them keenly interested in their latest hobby, a recently acquired microscope. A slide of the lower mandible of an ant leads to a most fascinating description of ant life. Children and grown-ups alike will revel in this. But besides being a joy in itself it has a very definite purpose; it leads naturally to a fine exposition of the significance of instinct and its relation to and difference from reason. Particularly illuminating is the introduction of a third notion. "Between the blind instinct of the worm and the reasoned conduct of man, there is a third kind of conduct called *intelligent behaviour*." The difference between the latter and reason is excellently explained by the difference between a *perception* and a *concept*. It is rightly pointed out that we find "intelligent behaviour" much more often than "reason" in many people who are called "intelligent." The terms may not be used in the Scholastic sense, but their meaning is quite clear in the context. From this point, the passage through animal to human psychology is easily made, still appearing as the natural outcome of the homely events of the story. In the discussion of the human soul, speculative and experimental psychology are effectively united. It may seem to some that the going is a little hard here; that is true, but it is difficult to see how it could have been made less so. The succeeding chapter on *Man and Woman* is a particularly valuable one and may perhaps be regarded as the purpose of the whole book, as the publishers seem to suggest in their blurb; in that case we should combine with it the succeeding one, in which *Noggs raises some problems* pertinent to the adolescent boy. Both these chapters are excellently done; frankness, delicacy and sound ethics combine to make them the best of their kind we have seen. Whether such topics should, absolutely speaking, be discussed in print is debatable; but if the existence of much unpleasant literature on the same subject seems to call for judicious intervention by sane Catholic writers (as many will think), then this book offers splendid service to a splendid cause.

HILARY J. CARPENTER, O.P.

SCIENCE AND THE SUPERNATURAL. A correspondence between Arnold Lunn and Professor J. B. S. Haldane (Eyre & Spottiswoode; 10/6.)

Controversy by correspondence has its own defects; a certain repetition is inevitable, evasion is easy, and too often the disputants pursue each other stubbornly round and round the familiar mulberry bushes of debate. Yet it has great advantages: it leads

REVIEWS

to spontaneity, it emphasizes contrast, it maintains the faculty of surprise. Indeed it seems to possess some of the qualities of a detective story as we laboriously trace the clues which might explain some unexpected triumph or débâcle. And it is perhaps the only form of prolonged dialectic which will appeal to an English public. All these merits and some of these defects could be illustrated from *Science and the Supernatural*.

A single line of argument can be traced through 29 of the 31 letters; the nature of the scientific method—the extent to which it is employed by modern scientists—the test case of “Natural Selection.” At times the line is seen to curve, at times it is observed by charges and counter charges of irrationalism and by the quick feints of Professor Haldane at Celibacy or at the Problem of Evil. But it remains and gives consistency to the volume linking the smaller eddies of discussion on the onus of intolerance and on the scientific attitude to the miraculous or to the *quinque viae*. Throughout, Professor Haldane defends and counter-attacks with a sporadic and perhaps embittered talent. Letter XVI is an example of compressed triumphant refutation, and yet it becomes increasingly apparent that Mr. Lunn is making the better case. A fault in tactics may partly explain this disappointing defence of a naturally strong position; Professor Haldane never retreats. It is natural and rather gratifying that he should quote St. Thomas often. It is natural and very pardonable that he should misinterpret him; for his references at times indicate an unfamiliarity with the text of the *Summa*, and his use of such technical terms as *genus*, *differentia*, *forma substantialis* suggests that he was unaware of their definitions. But his dogged efforts to maintain these misinterpretations quickly sap our confidence. It is not his failure to name the Martyrs of Science but his endeavour to cloak that failure that is a dialectical disaster, while Mr. Lunn is winning the sympathy of all his readers by the buoyant admission of some trivial error. For Mr. Lunn’s supreme competence in debate is emphasized by his refusal to be pontifical. His arguments are illuminated with a sense of the comic and his technique is all the more national for being pugilistic. His letters have provided us with a handbook to the art of English controversy. GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

VISCOUNT HALIFAX. By J. G. Lockhart. Part I: 1839-1885. (Geoffrey Bles, London; 1935; 12/6.)

This well-written book is but a Prelude. For the real interest of Lord Halifax’s life lies in his later years, when he had become a much loved and respected leader, busied about the desired recognition of Anglican Orders, and the memorable Conversa-