

He writes: 'If you have bad thoughts in you or are fond of fighting others when you get your own set and listen in you can forget and stop all your bad ways'. If that were so, much of UNESCO's occupation would be gone, and the world would be unquestionably a happier place.

REVIEWS

THE IDEA OF PROGRESS. A Revaluation. By Morris Ginsberg. (Methuen; 6s.)

In theory there are two ways of believing in progress: one may believe either that the state of mankind is automatically bound to improve because such is the nature of things; or that it may improve, but only if men freely and consciously set themselves to improve it. The former view, taken literally, has perhaps never been held by anyone in his right mind, but it may be the logical consequence of certain metaphysical premisses, and Professor Ginsberg is inclined to consider it the consequence of belief in divine Providence; which is why, as a believer in progress, he is concerned to detach progress, and the belief in it, from religion. He has the further reason for attempting this that he evidently thinks Christianity too other-worldly to provide motives for improving this world; and this oft-repeated charge, one notes, is not the less effective, and therefore important, for being mistaken. The relevance to 'progress' of the doctrine of the Incarnation Professor Ginsberg does not discuss, and perhaps this is not surprising; but even the beneficial effects of Christianity in the natural order he only admits in a sense that discredits Christianity; they were due, he suggests, not to Christianity itself but to the circumstance that Christianity was 'fertilized by contact with rational thought', without which it would probably never 'have emerged from . . . resignation and other-worldliness'.

Not that this anti-Christian point (very discreetly proposed) is the main contention of this able little book; but the author has to get Christianity (as he conceives it) out of the way, just as he has to get out of the way all forms of belief (theological, metaphysical and even biological) in some law of progress inherent in the nature of things, so as to leave room for his moderately rationalist view that, within limits, man can make his own history, create his own earthly kingdom. 'The choice', he insists, 'is ours.' 'We know of no general law of progress'; but if we wish we can develop 'in a direction which satisfies rational criteria of value'. And this is his definition of progress.

The stress on reason must be welcomed. One welcomes too the author's historical survey of the concept of progress from its formulation by the eighteenth-century French rationalists down to our less optimistic days. The learning is beyond question, the manner quietly reasonable. A Catholic, as I have suggested, will remark a superficiality where Christianity is touched on. It is not true, despite the Syllabus, that the Church has 'explicitly repudiated' the idea of progress; see *inter alia* Leo XIII's encyclical *Inscrutabili*. It all depends on what one expects from human nature 'left to itself'; the Church expects nothing from man alone, everything from God-made-man. Some misunderstandings are, of course, excusable in one who views the Church only from the outside. A further point regards the author's 'rational ethic' which has a rather Aristotelian formulation (p. 75). Such an ethic must surely be *grounded* on the nature of things, i.e. on God. To uphold this ethic against 'relativism' is hardly consistent, in the last resort, with saying that discussion of 'the ultimate premisses of ethics' is 'of no great relevance'. If the universe is not rational, why should man be?

Mr Dawson's great work *Progress and Religion* appears in the bibliography, but it is strangely overlooked in the course of the argument.

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

HUGH POPE, OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS. By Kieran Mulvey, O.P.

With a foreword by His Eminence Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster. (Blackfriars Publications, 12s. 6d.)

Everyone who reads biography, to say nothing of those who write it, must know what a difficult art it is. It must be only less difficult than autobiography: that is if the purpose of both is to give as true a picture of a human being as can be achieved in words. Many writers give an imaginary picture (of others or of themselves); or a theoretical picture, using a person to prove a thesis; or an idealised picture, like too many of the lives of the saints, who become desiccated in the process. A real biography must be a true, that is to say a whole picture not a partial one, and that is what I imagine is so difficult to achieve.

This life of Fr Hugh Pope, the great Dominican, seems to fulfil almost perfectly that requirement. Its limits are only the limits of space and compression, for it is quite short, only 208 pages, and yet its author has skilfully woven into it all the main facets of Fr Hugh's many-sided character and life.

For Fr Hugh's early life, the author has of course, being a comparatively young man who only knew Fr Hugh when he was getting old, had to rely on Fr Hugh's own delightful reminiscences, but, after a