# CORRESPONDENCE

## The Heredity of the Tudors

*To the Editor, Eugenics Review*

SIR,—" No scandal about Queen Elizabeth." But a careful study of the portraits of Henry VIII's putative children has convinced me that while Queen Mary and King Edward VI reproduce some of their father's features, Elizabeth's face belongs to an entirely different type. I do not believe that she had a drop of Tudor blood in her veins. If this is true, the flighty Anne Boleyn, and some person unknown, gave us our greatest sovereign.

W. R. INGE.

The Deanery, St. Paul's, E.C.4.

*To the Editor, Eugenics Review*

SIR,—I have read with considerable interest the article by Mr. Gun in your last issue on the Heredity of the Tudors, and while finding myself in general agreement with his conclusions, I venture to offer one small criticism. Mr. Gun almost ignores the Valois connection with the Tudors, merely making a brief reference to the striking resemblance between Henry VII and his first cousin once removed, Louis XI. The other Valois he dismisses as unlikely to have any influence on the Tudor heredity. But surely the past history of the royal house of France would suggest that they were well worthy of consideration.

In the first place the Valois were descended in the direct male line from most of the ablest of the Capetians [monarchs much resembling the Tudors in some respects], and may well have been expected to have inherited some of their qualities. And in the second place one at least of the Valois, Charles the Wise, great-great-grandfather of Henry VII, showed many of the characteristics of a great ruler, and in a general way was not unlike the first of the Tudors. His grandson Charles VII, " the Victorious " or " the Well Served," though noble in neither character nor appearance, had at any rate one typical Tudor gift, the art " of knowing on which side his bread was buttered," and his son Louis XI was undoubtedly one of the greatest of French kings.

When one considers how much " new blood " the Tudors possessed, new blood coming in from virile and untainted stocks, and remembers that the Valois had not this advantage, but had only drawn upon royal families with a tendency to suffer from the same complaints as themselves, one surely cannot deny a decided resemblance between certain members of the two families. Cunning and meanness are apparent in both, notably Charles VII, Louis XI on the one hand, and Henry VII and, to a large extent, Elizabeth on the other. Moreover, physical degeneracy is not lacking in the Tudors. None of them except Elizabeth reached the age of sixty, and there is evidence to believe that Henry VII, Henry VIII's son, Richmond, and probably Edward VI died of consumption. How much more likely that these defects were inherited rather from the Valois, who were known to show signs of degeneracy, than from any of those forbears whom Mr. Gun has so ably described and who appear to have been free from them.

H. S. LEIGH-TAYLOR.

## Negative Eugenics

*To the Editor, Eugenics Review*

SIR,—" Eugenics as a Moral Ideal," by Dr. F. C. S. Schiller (p. 103 of the July REVIEW) is a charming and instructive article, as one would expect from him. But I demur to his statement that " negative eugenics is powerless to *improve* the human race and to lift human life to a higher level." Does he not contradict it later when he says that " the present race has evolved from something we all think lower and inferior "? That evolution was surely brought about by eliminative—that is, in effect, by negative—eugenics.

My policy of negative eugenics is that the couples in the financially poorest third, or so, of the nation should not have more than two children per family. What would be its result? The other couples would soon begin to have larger families than that, as a rule—partly because of the consequent reduction of their taxation and general easing of economic conditions, partly because of the regard for adequate parenthood which a diminishing population would evoke, partly because of the change to the view that the possession of more than two children is a sign of superiority; and philoprogenitiveness is doubtless hereditary, so that in the long run the great majority of children born will themselves in turn desire more than two offspring. A point to be especially noted is that my policy would gradually solve the " carrier " problem.

I shall not feel that we are on the way to rapid race improvement until the Government declares that the people in the poorest classes should not have more than two children per family. I wish the Eugenics Society meantime to say: " On economic grounds it is very desirable that the couples in the poorest third of the population should not have more than two children per family, and we believe that on