

GERMANY'S SUPERMAN AND OURS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ARGUS.

Sir,—May one plead for somewhat more accuracy in matters of philosophical discussion. Nietzsche did not die "raving in a lunatic asylum," as your contributor writes in "The Argus" of Saturday, under "Germany's Superman and Ours." Nietzsche was somewhat more than the "inspired idiot" he is said to be. The words he puts into the mouth of an old woman in "Thus Spake Zarathustra" need to be corrected by what he said himself in "The Joyful Science," sec. 71, whose last words are: "One cannot be too mild towards women." Then Weininger's work, "Sex and Character," is founded on something deeper than Schopenhauer's "Essay on Woman," which itself contradicts his view of woman as the redeeming intellectual power—certainly under conditions. That Nietzsche's ideas of Jesus differed very much from his ideas of clerical Christianity is apparent from what he says in "The Will for Power," ss. 168 and 191, for instance; also in s. 361, which I quote:—"The continuation of the Christian ideal belongs to the most worthy of existing things." What our superman should be will depend on what view the Protestant religion, as a whole, takes of woman, as ideal, not in the mere reality; and the fault of our religion is just that which the Roman Catholic knew to avoid. We have no mother of Christ to worship, and if the want of it leads to German brutality, it will not save us from inhumanity in the long run. We must revise our philosophy. Yours, &c.,

DAVID IRVINE.

St. Kilda, Jan. 2.

[Our contributor writes:—"This is an extract from the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' on Nietzsche:—"Towards the end of 1888, after recovering from an earlier attack, he was pronounced hopelessly insane, and in this condition he remained until he died on the 25th of August, 1900." In regard to the contradiction concerning women, no philosopher ever failed to contradict himself, and Nietzsche, being a mad one, contradicted himself more than any of the sane ones. If Mr. Irvine will read the portion of Schopenhauer's essay on woman, where the matter of complementary sexual characters is discussed, he will find young Mr. Weininger's inspiration. Nietzsche's contradiction quoted from the 'Will for Power' is merely another example of his capacity for making remarks totally at variance with the general tenor of his teaching."—Ed. "A.")