

found themselves reaching certain general conclusions, which they put forward as recommendations. The most important of these, and the one that provides the central thesis of the book, is the view that the success of peace-making this time depends upon our ability to reconcile the negative task of restoring and preserving order (the old conception of peace as the mere absence of war) with the more positive duty of creating the conditions in which international co-operation and general prosperity can expand. One way of achieving this is to treat peace-making rather as a long process than as a single event; and the authors of the book effectively quote Lord Halifax in support of their view that the various aspects of peace-making will demand a whole series of conferences, that it will be a "long-range continuous process". Before the book went to press they had the satisfaction of seeing this idea already widely accepted, and to some extent put into operation. As they say, the "climate of opinion . . . bodes well for more scientific peacemaking". With this survey before him, the reader can perhaps look hopefully beyond the disturbing difficulties of the moment.

MAURICE BRUCE.

## BERGSON'S PHILOSOPHY

The Creative Mind

By Henri Bergson. Translated by Mabelle L. Andison. Pp. 307. (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1946.) 3.75 dollars.

THE innocent inquirer picking up this book might be led to expect new light on Bergson's philosophy. He would be disappointed. It is a translation of a collection of essays published in France in 1934 under the title "La Pensée et le Mouvant". The present publishers do not mention this fact, nor do they explain the change in title. As the author tells us in his preface and notes, the seven essays that form two thirds of the book were first published between 1903 and 1923, and the long introduction that forms the rest was completed by 1922 except for a few pages on physical theory added ten years later.

Bergson's reputation as a constructive thinker rests secure upon his last book, "Les Deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion" (1932). His earlier and better-known work, which belongs to the nineteenth rather than to the twentieth century, has less permanent value; but as destructive criticism of some aspects of nineteenth century scientific thought it was useful in its day. Bergson, however, made the mistake of supposing the limitations of nineteenth-century scientific thought to be universal limitations of the human intellect. That mistake greatly diminished the value of anything positive he had to say. Most philosophers are right in what they assert and wrong in what they deny. With Bergson it was more nearly the other way about. For all his eloquence and all his ingenious similes and illustrations, Bergson has little to say about 'duration' except that it is lived through and is distinct from the superficial and confused theoretical concepts of time used by science; nor about 'intuition' except that reason is not everything.

The long introductory essay is partly autobiographical and is some help towards understanding the development of Bergson's thought. The chief justification for the present translation, however, lies in the last three essays. They show him in a very

favourable light as an expositor of other thinkers. There is a fine tribute to Claude Bernard and his treatment of scientific method in experimental biology and medicine. There is also a friendly and masterly summary of the philosophy of William James. Lastly, there is a most interesting account of a remarkable Frenchman of the nineteenth century, Ravaissou, who deserves to be better known to English readers. Besides being a philosopher, he was an administrator who had a profound influence on French education. We are apt to think of the government of Napoleon III, under which Ravaissou worked, as reactionary and inefficient. It is humiliating to reflect that no British government would have appointed such a man or given him such freedom of action.

A. D. RITCHIE.

## WEST AFRICAN ART

The Golden Age of West African Civilization

By Dr. R. E. G. Armattee. (Published for the Lomeshie Research Centre for Anthropology and Race Biology.) Pp. 96+25 plates. (Londonderry: Londonderry Sentinel, 1946.) 8s. 6d. net.

ANY work which helps to make better known the great masterpieces of West and Central African art is to be welcomed, and this rather uneven little book (based, be it noted, on a lecture to a Dublin audience) is more than justified by the photographs collected in it of some twenty of the finest works of ancient Ifé and the Congo, and by the passionate sincerity with which the author, himself African born, sets forth his message, which is that African art and culture before the slave-trade were the equal of any in the world and that this fact should condition the attitude of Europeans to the African, sadly fallen though he now is from that high state. This is such a true and momentous theme, and Dr. Armattee is so well fitted by his insight into the African past and his experience of Europe to expound it, that we may wish he had concentrated upon developing its positive side more fully instead of squandering fully half his letterpress in diversionary and sometimes exaggerated attack upon European civilization.

The iniquities of the slave-trade and the shortcomings of subsequent policy are widely known and admitted: but there are very few indeed who know to what marvellous perfection the anonymous artists of Ifé and Benin had attained, and the fact should be driven home, as a matter of immediate social necessity, to European and African alike. Dr. Armattee is a master of the *tu quoque*; but here his energetic flogging of the dead or dying horse of imperialist exploitation must be a serious obstacle to all but the most determined pursuers of the real theme. If he will discard these distractions—and also such minor, though charming, irrelevancies as the appearance on dust-cover, cover and frontispiece of a drawing of his very attractive little daughter—he should make a notable contribution to the enriching of both civilizations by helping to bring the inspiration of the past to the aid of the present. The example of Mexico is not without relevance.

Meanwhile, he may like to know that some of the finest African masterpieces are again visible at the British Museum.

It must be added that he accepts too confidently the conjectural dating of the Ifé heads by Frobenius and others.

W. B. FACC.