

Bentley not to ascribe to him the notion of gravity as "essential and inherent to matter"; Bentley's lectures on "a confutation of atheism from the origin and frame of the world"; Halley's review of the "Principia" and the account of Newton's work which he wrote for presentation to King James; the first biography of Newton, Fontenelle's "Éloge"; and, as an appendix, an index to the references to Newton in Birch's "History of the Royal Society".

Apart from the general introduction by I. B. Cohen, the introductions to the various sections, and the appendix, the whole of this volume is already available to scholars with access to a good library. Those who are not so fortunate will benefit most from the book; and teachers of the history of science will at last be able to give their students an opportunity to study Newton's mind at work. But one may perhaps question whether the best methods have been adopted. In every case the papers and letters are reproduced facsimile. Obviously one must have the original diagrams reproduced facsimile, if only because their shortcomings led to misunderstandings; equally obviously, if one is to study the impact of Newton on the eighteenth century, one must read him in the sources available in the eighteenth century. But does one need to work with the type then used, and to correct the misprints oneself? Some papers are printed first in Latin and then—for some reason still facsimile—in a nineteenth-century translation. On the other hand, Fontenelle's "Éloge" is given only in English, although Gillispie in his introduction says the translation "is frequently clumsy and nowhere better than adequate". It is difficult to understand why the whole was not reset in modern type, with misprints corrected and with footnotes giving at least the pages for reference back. But this is to say only that a very useful book might have been better.

M. A. HOSKIN

## A RELIGION OF MAN?

### Concerning Human Understanding

Essays on the Common-sense Background of Philosophy. By Prof. Nikunja Vihari Banerjee. Pp. 333. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1958.) 30s. net.

PROF. N. V. BANERJEE, in his recently published book entitled "Concerning Human Understanding", has in fact made a collection of a number of his essays which were written over a period of twenty years.

The title is slightly misleading as the essays of Banerjee are concerned primarily not with the theory of knowledge or understanding but rather with a quest for a religion which will unite (in a sense) the conflicting values of oriental and occidental cultures.

These culminate in a final essay (Part 4: 5) which is in fact a strong recommendation to the world of "the principle of love and kindness in the will of man, and in the world of human affairs, in order that power, and law and institutions, instead of having to exercise relentless authority and despotic rule over man, may be dedicated to the cause of humanity and consequently the world that is to sustain man from the cradle to the grave may become as good as possible and really human. And this suggests the remedy for the crisis of civilization which seems to have reached its climax in our day" (p. 324).

Prof. Banerjee takes Jesus as the supreme example of a dedicated life, such as he advocates. Banerjee has the advantage of being well acquainted with both the chief "Eastern" religious cults and with Christianity in its "Western" expression.

He is severely critical of what he calls "the latest phase of human civilization", in particular of the contrast between the extending achievements of natural science, on one hand, and, on the other, the activity of "political organizations, headed by the State", which are apt to determine man's present as well as his future, and which, according to Banerjee, are approaching Nature in what he calls its irrational and inhuman quality. It is in this context that Banerjee writes with most emphasis of "the failure of civilization".

He writes that man is hostile to and divided against himself in an unprecedented way. Nature is also hostile to man, but this is inevitable, while man's hostility to himself is suicidal.

In what he claims is a historical retrospect, Prof. Banerjee contrasts "the religion of God or gods", for which religion Nature is an object of *jealousy* (my italics), with what he calls "the religion of man".

To overcome the fear of Nature, Banerjee contends, is not enough. Mankind needs to keep his awareness of the hostility of Nature as a kind of stimulus (p. 325).

"The remedy" is approaching. It increases peace with Nature (*loc. cit.*). Here again the Eastern and Western mind are contrasted. Western civilization tends to distract the attention of man from what is wrong in himself, while on the other hand, oriental civilization is conspicuously introspective. Hence, according to Banerjee "the developed eastern mind" is more aware of the problem of liberation.

This book is readable and challenging, but it is doubtful whether the author succeeds in providing sufficient evidence for his sweeping generalizations, for example, about theories of knowledge (Parts 1 and 2), and about philosophy generally, including the theory of value (Part 3). It is also regrettably doubtful whether or not he succeeds in making plausible the more optimistic parts of his book, that is to say, those in which he appears to recommend a confident expectation of the reconciliation of all the opposed tendencies (for example, between Eastern and Western thought) which he clearly and eloquently describes.

D. J. McCracken

## HUSSERLIANA COMPLETED

### Edmund Husserl

Erste Philosophie (1923/24). Zweiter Teil: Theorie der Phänomenologischen Reduktion. Herausgegeben von Rudolf Boehm. (Husserliana, Band 8.) Pp. xliii + 594. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959.) 26.75 guilders, paper bound; 32 guilders, cloth bound.

WITH the appearance of this part, the plan to issue eight volumes of the works of the great master of phenomenology has reached fruition. The Husserl-Archiv at Louvain has erected as enduring a monument to his memory as can be imagined. Scholars in this field are thus obliged to study such a pre-suppositionless philosophy to the limit of their powers, not only for its own sake but in due recognition of its place as a basis for all knowledge. Whether the emphasis is mathematical or psychological, or anything in between, the need is for