

NOTES AND NEWS

IN connexion with the Seventh meeting of the Executive Council which was held in London on November 28th and 29th, Lord Passfield, Minister for the Dominions and Colonies, presided at a luncheon given by the British Government in honour of the Institute. Lord Passfield, in welcoming the members of the Council, congratulated the Institute on the excellent work accomplished in the three years of its existence. He said he thought the Institute might eventually prove to be one of the most important post-war international developments. He was glad so good a beginning had been made with the scientific and systematic study of African languages and cultures. Anthropology had become a requisite study, together with sociology and linguistics, if the duty of the white races in Africa were to be properly performed. He wished the Institute every success in the work which it had set itself.

Professor Westermann said that the Institute sought not only to be a centre of African studies, but rather the connecting link between scientific research and practical life in Africa where Europeans who took their work seriously soon found themselves faced by problems which they could not solve. This was true of administrators, educationalists, missionaries, planters, and traders, some of whose problems had already been studied by experts in Europe. The Institute was receiving an increasing number of inquiries to many of which it could reply: others were passed on to specialists. The Journal was already taken by a satisfactory number of subscribers, and he hoped it would become the centre for discussion of problems dealing with African life. The Institute was interested in anthropology and linguistics, but its vital interest was the African. Its ultimate aim was not to collect more data, but the application of knowledge and facts to African life.

A report of the proceedings of the Executive Council will appear in the April number, but the Editor is happy to announce at once that the Council decided to enlarge each issue of *Africa* by 32 pages. The fact that the Journal has been so well received and that the membership of the Institute has increased so satisfactorily were the main reasons which enabled the Council to come to this decision. It is hoped by this means to increase the value of the publication and to widen its scope and interest so that it may be of greater use and value to everyone interested in the problems which face those working in Africa.

From correspondence received by the Directors it appeared that the length fixed for manuscripts submitted for the Prize Competition for books

written by Africans in an African language might prove a difficulty. It was originally arranged that manuscripts must be from 40,000 to 60,000 words in length, but the Executive Council have now decided to allow more latitude. A minimum of 15,000 words and a maximum of 50,000 words has been fixed.

The languages selected for the competition in 1930 are Xosa, Swahili, Hova, Kongo, and Akan (Twi or Fante), and manuscripts must be sent to the offices of the Institute by October 1st, 1930.

For 1931 the languages in which manuscripts will be accepted will be Mende, Suto, Luganda, Mandingo, and Hausa.

The Council will greatly appreciate any assistance which readers can give in making this competition known among Africans. The need for encouraging the production of vernacular literature is an urgent one and the Council is anxious that the Institute shall do everything possible to assist in this matter.

Following on proposals made by the Conference on African Missions held at Le Zoute in 1926, an International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa has now been set up as a sub-committee of the International Missionary Council. The aim of the committee is to promote the production, publication, and distribution of literature for use in connexion with missionary work in Africa. The committee will serve areas in Africa not covered by the Central Committee on Christian Literature for Moslems, whose publications are mainly in Arabic. A number of British, American, and Continental missionary societies and the tract societies are co-operating in this new effort. Its scope will include the general as well as the specifically religious literature which the Missions need for the carrying on of their many-sided work. The sub-committee of the Conference of British Missionary Societies on Christian Literature for Africa was the forerunner of this new committee and now constitutes the British section of it. The committee is anxious to maintain close relations with the Institute.

The first number of a journal called *Oversea Education* (quarterly, 1s.) published by the Oxford University Press for the Secretary of State for the Colonies has recently been published and a review appears on p. 126. The object of this new journal is to encourage educational research and experiment in tropical and sub-tropical areas. Information and criticism on what is being considered and attempted will thereby be placed at the disposal of education authorities and those interested in education in those areas. In this way inquiry will be stimulated and at the same time it will prevent time and money from being wasted on investigating schemes that have been tried and found wanting or regarding which full information is already available.

It is hoped that information from all parts of the world which are interested

in education in the tropics will be contributed to the journal, which will thus become a clearing-house of data and ideas.

Members continue to express their appreciation of the arrangements by which they are able to use in the chief European cities libraries which specialize in books dealing with Africa.

It is therefore particularly satisfactory to be able to announce that the Government libraries in Italy are available to the general public and can be used by members without formalities.

Professor Labouret has also been able to arrange for members to use the library of the Ministère des Colonies in Paris. In this case, however, certain formalities are necessary and a special introduction will be provided for members wishing to make use of this privilege. Information in regard to this special introduction can be obtained either direct from Professor Labouret, or on application to the Secretary.

Mr. T. G. Benson, the editor of *Habari*, has sent the following information in regard to this publication, which will be of special interest to many readers:

The idea of a monthly journal for the native peoples of Kenya Colony was first conceived in 1922 and the first number appeared in July of that year. It was then edited by a committee of four which included the Chief Native Commissioner. For various reasons the paper lapsed in 1926, and when it was revived in April 1927 it was put in the hands of the Education Department. During the last two years it has increased in size and circulation and has largely expanded the scope of its publication. The bulk of its articles are still printed in Ki-Swahili and English, but an increasing amount is in Ki-Swahili only, including the much enlarged section of 'Letters to the Editor' from African readers, and a recently added supplement or Teachers' Journal. The circulation is still not large because there is considerable competition with other vernacular papers, including three Roman Catholic mission monthlies in Kikuyu, Dho-Luo and Ki-Swahili respectively, together with the organ of the Kikuyu Central Association printed in Kikuyu, and, at the coast particularly, *Mambo Leo*, the excellent Tanganyika Government monthly which is printed in Ki-Swahili throughout.

The original purpose of this paper, which has always been a Government organ, supported by a Government grant, was to explain Government regulations and laws and to make official announcements from time to time, but this purely routine side has been largely superseded and the real value of the paper is now beginning to be felt. It is being more and more realized that the African tribes need to record, now or never, their literature, history, tradition, beliefs, customs and folk-lore; in a few years it will be too late

to get accurate or complete accounts. The writing down and printing of such records wins respect for their own lore which they are only too ready to despise. It is a fact that the collecting and publishing of African tales, games, and so on, has in many cases encouraged the more educated people among our local tribes to take pains to make permanent records themselves. 'Turn but a stone and start a wing.' We do not know what we may eventually get, but encouragement given is well rewarded and will in the long run, we may be confident, result in the production of a literature which will be the work of the African mind alone, expressing its individual genius along its own lines.

This is the chief aim in the policy which is being followed in the production of this monthly paper. The time is drawing near when small books of reprints will be made from *Habari* similar to those made from *Mambo Leo*. Apart from folk tales, of which there are already several collections, such reprints might contain traditions of the origin of the tribes, ideas concerning the Deity, sacrificial customs, songs and games, legal methods, proverbs, riddles and jests.

Furthermore there is much need for the spread of new knowledge by means of articles on such subjects as the history of East Africa, African exploration, lives of African heroes, and complete stories. When once they have grasped the idea of the realistic expression of their lives cast in a fictitious mould, native authors will not be lacking, but prolonged efforts are for the most part still beyond them.

An important but subsidiary aim of a native newspaper is the provision of an 'open forum' for the expression of Africans' opinions, and the discussion of questions which loom large in their lives. For the most part such outpourings come from the pens of the mission-trained men, as is natural. The voice of the people who are still unaffected by splashes of spurious European culture is mainly inaudible except perhaps in local Native Council Meetings and Chiefs' *barazas*. But the more freely they feel able to express themselves the better it will be for the country.

Publication of local news also provides an opportunity for the people of the scattered village communities to discuss the events of the neighbourhood and the progress of the life of the inhabitants. World news opens the door a little on what is to most African readers a strange and incomprehensible universe where wonders, such as weekly air mail services to India, wireless, and so forth occur. It is sometimes advisable too to expand and try to explain a new ordinance, for the laws are not available except in English, and it is only in administrative officers' *barazas* as a rule that any explanation is given of a fresh decree. Such innovations as registration of births and deaths, registration of letters, taxes and police, seem to most Africans but strange absurdities involved with Europeans.

There is also the instructional side which must not be allowed to loom too large in a paper run by a pedagogic Department. Talks on how to make articles of use in the home, or how to grow certain foods or crops, are valuable however, and the demand for agricultural and nature study lectures is not inconsiderable, but it has been found advisable to concentrate as much as possible of such material into the Teachers' Supplement.

The example set by the Institute in offering a prize for productions by African writers has been invaluable to those whose concern it is to use such a paper as this to lead on the African to realize his own heritage. The proportion of articles of European origin and authorship as compared with African is still far too large, but it will be possible by patient encouragement to secure an ever increasing amount of contributions from Africans, whether it be in the form of original composition, the writing up of African folk-lore, tales, games and songs, or simply the work of sifting, reviewing or choosing from materials laid before them by European advisers, so that the results may appear as 'poured through the crucible' of the African mind.

BANTU ODER NTU

Herr E. Torday schreibt: Es ist unmöglich, Wanger's Artikel über afrikanische Völkernamen¹ ohne Protest hinzunehmen. Niemand stellt es in Abrede, dass eine dringende Notwendigkeit besteht, den Gebrauch der unumgänglich notwendigen afrikanischen Völkernamen in europäischen Sprachen durch ein einheitliches, internationales Übereinkommen zu regeln und jeder hierauf abzielende, praktisch anwendbare Vorschlag wird willkommen sein, insofern er logisch ist und dem Geiste der afrikanischen Sprachen vernunftmässig Rechnung trägt.

Ist dies aber der Fall, wenn man für die Abschaffung der in den Bantu Sprachen gebräuchlichen Vorsilben eintritt? Die Form 'Basutos' ist, wie Herr Wanger richtig konstatiert, reiner Widersinn, und es sind auch nur wenige die sich eines solchen groben Fehlers schuldig machen. Ganz anders steht es mit der deutschen Form 'die Basuto', von welcher Herr Wanger behauptet, sie sei eine doppelte Pluralbildung, in der ausser 'die', welches deutsch eine Mehrzahl andeutet, der afrikanische Plural *ba* einen unbegründeten Pleonasmus bilde. Was hat aber *ba*, welches einen Teil des Hauptwortes bildet, mit 'die', dem durch den Plural bedingten Artikel zu tun? Sagt man etwa deutsch 'die Mann'? Mit nichten; Artikel wie Hauptwort nehmen Pluralform an und 'die Basuto' ist ebenso richtig wie 'die Männer'. In Bantu Sprachen, welche einen Artikel kennen, z.B. im Kikongo, wird in Übereinstimmung mit dem Hauptworte auch der Artikel im Plural stehen und man sagt 'o muntu' (der Mensch) und 'a bantu' (die Menschen).

¹ Siehe *Africa*, Band II, Nr. 4, S. 413.

Wie kann man aber das Präfix vernachlässigen, wenn doch ein Bantu-Substantiv ja erst dann ein Wort wird, wenn es aus einem Stamme und einem Derivativ besteht? Wenn der Missbrauch besteht, in einigen wenigen Fällen, wie z.B. in 'Zulu', die Vorsilbe wegzulassen, täte man besser dies richtigzustellen, als einen in einem Falle durch Gebrauch geheiligten Fehler als Richtschnur für die Gesamtheit gelten zu lassen. Insofern es sich um Sprachen handelt, besteht kein Grund, weshalb man das Derivativ nicht durch ein deutsches Wort ersetzen sollte und einfach von einer 'Suto Sprache' sprechen könnte. Wenn man aber das Wort 'Sprache' weglässt, muss es sicherlich 'Sesuto' heissen. Der Stamm des Substantivs kann auch allein stehen, wenn es als ein Adjektiv benützt wird, wie in 'Zulu-Volk'; europäische Hauptwörter haben kein Präfix, und die Konkordanz ist eine Unmöglichkeit. Dies ist aber kein Grund, Vorsilben immer separat zu schreiben; dies mag für Wörterbuchzwecke von Nutzen sein, sonst hat es aber nicht mehr Sinn als wenn man deutsch 'mitLeid' oder 'unSinn' schriebe. Herr Wanger wird doch sicherlich nicht vorschlagen wollen, man möchte 'buGanda' statt des üblichen 'Buganda' setzen?

Was aber Herrn Wanger's Vorschlag betrifft, an Stelle von 'Bantu' hinfort 'Ntu' zu gebrauchen, so sucht man vergeblich nach einem Motive, welches eine solche Änderung auch nur einigermassen rechtfertigen würde. So paradox dies auch klingt: 'Bantu' ist, in dem Sinne wie dieser Ausdruck von Philologen gebraucht wird, überhaupt kein Bantu-Wort. Es ist vielmehr eine sehr sinnreiche Erfindung Dr Bleek's, der mit diesem Sammelnamen eine Gruppe von Sprachen bezeichnete, welche bis dahin namenlos war. Er folgte hierin den Spuren der romanischen Sprachforscher, die von 'langue d'oc' und 'langue d'oïl' sprechen. Diese Idee ist ja auch in Afrika angewendet z.B. bei den Pangwe (Fan, Pahouin). Um die verschiedenen Teile dieses Volkes, welche von einander abweichende Dialekte sprechen, zu unterscheiden, werden sie 'Makina' oder 'Mazuna' genannt; beide Worte bedeuten im betreffenden Dialekte 'ich sage dass', mit welcher Redensformel jedes ihrer Gespräche beginnt.

'Bantu' ist für den Philologen stets ein Wort jener Sprache, deren er sich in dem betreffenden Augenblicke bedient. Es ist daher logisch, wenn ein Franzose dieses Wort 'Bantou' und im Plural sogar 'Bantous' schreibt; dies, obwohl freilich für mein auf Afrika eingestelltes Auge etwas beleidigend, ist ganz zulässig, ist diese Schreibweise ja nicht für den Afrikaner (der dieses Wort in diesem Sinne nicht kennt) sondern für solche bestimmt, die mit französischen Augen lesen. 'Bantu' ist bereits ein Gemeingut aller Sprachen; wollte man dieses Wort durch das weder afrikanische noch europäische 'Ntu' ersetzen, würde man sich nicht bloß einer ganz überflüssigen Pedanterie, sondern vielmehr der Verstümmelung eines uns schon längst ans Herz gewachsenen, schönen Wortes schuldig machen. Überdies, Pietät für das

Gedächtnis des Altmeisters der Bantu-Linguistik, Bleek, muss auch schwer gegen eine solche Änderung in die Wage fallen.

The attention of readers is drawn to the Report on the Progress of Work which appears on p. 90 of this number. Separate copies will also be available for distribution and will be sent on request to any one likely to be interested in the work of the Institute.

Owing to pressure of space the report appears in English only, but copies can also be supplied in French and German to any readers who so desire.

Binding covers have been prepared for Volume II of *Africa*, and can be obtained either direct from the offices of the Institute or through any bookseller. Price 3s. 6d. and 3d. postage.

A form is supplied with this number which can be used for ordering the binding covers.

Bound copies of Volumes I and II are also available, price £1 10s. per volume, and can be obtained in the same way as the binding covers.