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THE AFRICAN TODAY AND TOMORROW

LORD LUGARD writes in his Foreword: 'I recommend it cordially to all who are interested in Africa, both for the abundant information it contains on the facts of African life as they reveal themselves to a specially qualified observer, and for the sane and moderate views expressed on debatable questions.'

In this new edition of *The African Today* the facts have been brought up to date and maps and illustrations have been added.

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THE AFRICAN TODAY AND TOMORROW

BY

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WITH A FOREWORD BY

THE RT. HON. LORD LUGARD

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Gratefully dedicated
to the
UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND

FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION

WHEN seven years ago the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures came into being with the object of co-ordinating and focusing the results of the work and research which different European nations and individuals were carrying on in Africa, it was felt by its promoters that success in their object would to a very great extent depend on whether it could secure as its two Directors men of International reputation, who would be recognized as outstanding authorities on African problems. The choice with no dissentient voice fell upon Professor Westermann and Professor Maurice Delafosse. On the death of the latter he was worthily succeeded by Monsieur Henri Labouret.

The Institute disclaimed the role of a purely academic institution and set itself to the difficult task of serving as a clearing-house for information in regard to linguistic and cultural questions for all who were engaged in work in Africa—whether as officials (Administrative or Technical) or as missionaries, or in private enterprise. In furtherance of this objective it publishes a quarterly journal—*Africa*—with articles by selected writers in French, English, and German, of which Dr. Westermann is Editor assisted by the Secretary, Miss Brackett.

It also decided to publish a series of monographs

on various African problems. Several have already been issued, and others are in course of preparation. The present volume by Dr. Westermann, which has been unavoidably delayed by the Author's visits to Africa, is intended as an introduction to this series—and also to the programme of sociological research which the Institute is undertaking. It is the product alike of long African experience and of wide reading, and should be of great practical help to Europeans in Africa—whatever their calling—and to students in Europe of African sociology and psychology.

Dr. Westermann first went to West Africa as a missionary, and his remarkable linguistic ability soon enabled him to acquire several African languages and led to his appointment as a Professor at Berlin University. Obviously the first step in furtherance of the Institute's task of opening up common avenues for investigation and research to which Africans might contribute their share was to devise an orthography at once scientific and practical, and not overburdened with strange symbols, for the writing of African languages—a task which had baffled scholars for many years. Dr. Westermann's script has been widely adopted as fulfilling the desired conditions.

The next task was to ascertain the groups to which the various languages in the African babel of tongues belonged, as a preliminary to closer investigation and selection. With these objects in view he was invited

to go to the Gold Coast, to Nigeria, and to the Southern Sudan where the dialects of the Nilotic tribes offered a virgin field for linguistic study. The Governments concerned defrayed all expenses and have expressed most cordially their recognition of the services rendered. He has also visited East Africa and the Union of South Africa. The Institute then decided to invite original compositions in their own vernacular from Africans,—for which prizes were offered. Professor Westermann again was, of course, the reader and judge of these essays and stories.

He has always maintained that the language of a people is the expression of its soul, by which alone a key to their thoughts could be found. Possessed of this key he was able to obtain a deep insight into the life of the African, and to probe the meaning of much in his conceptions regarding the supernatural world, and the spirits of the dead—as the chapters on this subject show—of which the Negro is generally unwilling to speak to the white man. His work for the Institute, his recent travels in all parts of the Continent, his wide reading of books for review in *Africa*, have combined to deepen his knowledge and to familiarize him with the opinions of other Anthropologists—while his unassuming modesty has made friends wherever he went and opened the way for fruitful discussion.

The result so far as it can be packed into so small

x FOREWORD TO FIRST EDITION

a volume is contained in the pages of this book, which I feel it would be presumptuous in me to praise. I can only recommend it cordially to all who are interested in Africa, both for the abundant information it contains on the facts of African life as they reveal themselves to a specially qualified observer, and for the sane and moderate views expressed on debatable questions.

LUGARD

25 *January* 1934

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

THE object of this book when it first appeared was to provide an introduction to the present-day life of the African and to the problems of modern culture contact in the light of sociological and anthropological knowledge. Many appreciative comments have reached me and this, added to the fact that the first edition of the book has been sold out within a comparatively short time, shows that its object has to a certain extent been achieved. The book has also appeared in French and German translations, which may be regarded as a further indication of the need for some such general review of the situation.

The new edition is the result of careful revision. Inconsistencies of style have to a great extent been removed and the presentation of detailed information has been made more concise. This has made possible the inclusion of fresh material, particularly of anthropological interest, and information about developments which have taken place since the book first appeared. Other new features in this edition are the maps, drawn by Herr Heinz Sölken, and the illustrations which have been taken from the German edition.

The altered title of the book does not mean that it attempts to prophesy concerning the future of the African—all it does is to focus attention on the transformation which is going on under our eyes in Africa and in its peoples. The effects of this change

on a whole continent and its inhabitants show very clearly that for the Africans there is not only a today but also a tomorrow and that tomorrow they will be different from what they are today.

The short bibliography given on pp. 339-43 will afford guidance in the detailed study of the questions dealt with, which in many cases have been only touched on here. Expert information on problems arising in modern Africa in the field of sociology, education, and linguistics is to be found in *Africa*, the Journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, which also contains a bibliography of current literature in each number.

When this book was first published in 1934 the Institute was at the beginning of its 'Five-Year Plan of Research', and one of its tasks was to make the plan known as widely as possible to those interested. The problem to which the Institute decided to devote its main energies was that of the present changes in the cohesion of African society, as arising from the interpenetration of African life by the ideas and economic forces of western civilization. The scheme was carried out by sending a number of research workers to Africa who had previously received a thorough training in anthropology and linguistics. They were subsidized by the Institute and worked under its direction. Every worker was to make a detailed study of the life of a tribe or small group of tribes within a strictly limited area with special emphasis on the question of modern culture contact.

As a result of the knowledge gained in this way and the exchange and discussion of experiences, a method of research has been evolved which is new in many respects and has not been without influence in anthropological circles.

The idea underlying the foundation of the Institute was that a closer relationship between scientific research and practical work in Africa was required and that the results of research should be presented in such a form that they would be of assistance to the man engaged in immediate practical tasks. That this object has been at least in some degree achieved is shown by the fact that the Research Fellows have worked in constant collaboration with Government officials, educationists, missionaries, and other Europeans, as well as with Africans, and have in this way obtained fresh points of view which were of value for their investigations, and also material which would otherwise have been inaccessible to them. Their work has helped towards the solution of practical problems, as is shown by the requests for advice and collaboration which they have received. But the full value of their studies will only be shown when the results of their investigations appear in published form.

The practical aim which the Institute has set itself has in no way detracted from the scientific character of its work. 'Practical' or 'applied' was not intended to mean the opposite of 'scientific', but that present-day problems of culture change, which are also of

importance to the practical man, should be placed in the forefront of the investigations. No thinking man will deny that these problems can and should be treated scientifically, and that this is possible will be seen in the publications sponsored by the Institute.

Some of the results of the Fellows' investigations have appeared in the form of articles or supplements in *Africa*, and in other scientific journals; the remainder, that is to say the bulk of the material, will, it is hoped, appear in the course of the next year or two.

It is natural that most of the research work should have been of an anthropological or sociological nature, because this field covers the greater part of human life. At the same time it has been possible to carry out a considerable amount of linguistic work, both in the form of research undertaken by Fellows of the Institute, and of advice given to others. A number of publications already bear witness to what has been accomplished on this side of the work, and others will follow.

The completion of the work undertaken under the 'five-year plan' gives the opportunity for new developments in the work of the Institute. Africa is large and the problems with which it confronts us are not only constantly changing, but are also constantly growing. Lord Hailey's book, *An African Survey*, gives an overwhelming impression of the size and variety of these problems. In authoritative fashion it shows how far the various branches of

research have progressed and where the most urgent tasks lie. The book supplies a point of departure for a new epoch in African research, and the Institute will find in it invaluable suggestions for future activities.

The importance of Africa to the peoples of Europe and interest in the destiny of its inhabitants have been steadily increasing in recent years, and it is generally admitted that there is need for a serious study of the questions which arise from this new situation. The interest of the European in Africa may be principally political or economic in character, but there is another interest which is developing and becoming more predominant than in the past among the ruling colonial powers—and that is a sense of responsibility towards the African native. Africa is no longer merely a field for exploitation; it has become a moral obligation of the peoples of Europe.

Much has been said about problems in this preface, and in conclusion therefore it must be clearly stated that the object of the book is not to offer a solution to these problems, but merely to draw attention to them; to provide a survey and an introduction. The main emphasis has been laid on the African himself rather than on African affairs and institutions, because I am convinced that all African studies must begin and end with the people of Africa themselves. I have endeavoured to give an objective statement of facts and an unbiassed interpretation of them—in so far as they lie within my sphere—so that the reader may

be able to form his own judgement. If I have succeeded in making even a small contribution towards the understanding of the African and of his present situation, my task has been fulfilled.

My thanks are due to Herr Heinz Sölken for drawing the two maps, and to the Essener Verlagsanstalt who kindly permitted the use of the illustrations which appeared in the German edition of this book.

DIEDRICH WESTERMANN

BERLIN

January, 1939

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I

ANTHROPOLOGY AND PRACTICAL WORK IN AFRICA

1. European penetration and African civilization. Need for scientific preparation for study of the African.
2. Social anthropology and the study of modern problems. The practical application of anthropology.
3. The task of the anthropologist in the field. Importance of recording texts.
4. The aims of the Institute. The purpose of this book.

I

TO-DAY, and for a long time to come, the fate of Africa is indissolubly linked with that of the white race. Africa will become what Europe and America make of it. Under the complicated conditions of modern life Africans are not in a position to take their future into their own hands, nor is Europe disposed to surrender its control over Africa. The great riches of raw material, both vegetable and mineral, as well as the capacity of Africa for consuming European goods, surpass even the hopes entertained at the time of the beginning of the colonial era, but the enterprise and capital of Europe and America are indispensable both for the exploitation of these riches and for setting up the regular exchange of goods between the continents. The African is of necessity being drawn into this economic movement and is undergoing fundamental changes. The future of the African races will depend on the question of how far and in what manner

they are able to adapt themselves to the new conditions of life created by the white man's activity in Africa. The destiny of a continent and its inhabitants has been handed over into the white man's hand. In whatever position he may find himself in Africa, consciously or unconsciously he is taking part in the shaping of this destiny. In some way or other he is influencing the African, and this is the more true because the African is not only ready to work under and with the European and to learn from him, but even sees in him his ideal. This contact of two such different cultures creates a number of problems and at the same time a human responsibility.

European penetration is bound to undermine African civilization, thereby threatening the vitality and the moral basis of the people's life. The whole of Africa lives to-day in a state of transition from old to new. How the Natives will emerge from this conflict, whether they will be in a position either to retain the vital elements of their culture and racial qualities and develop them organically, or to adapt themselves to entirely new forms of life, will depend largely on the attitude which the white man adopts towards the African.

The European and the African are interdependent. Africa cannot be opened up without the co-operation of the African. Even where the climate permits the white man to establish a permanent home for himself, the work of the Native is indispensable to him, and this is true to a still greater degree of the tropical

regions. It is the African who builds roads and railways; he works in mines and plantations, on farms and in the white man's household, in workshops and offices, as teacher and preacher; he consumes our goods and sells us his produce; he takes a growing part in the administration of his country; he pays taxes for public purposes and is becoming more and more the efficient fellow worker of the white man in every sphere. As progress in Africa advances greater demands will be made upon the African, and his share in the volume of work will become more.

Just as the European cannot live and work in Africa without the help of the African, so the African needs the European. Africa and the Africans have during the last half-century advanced in many spheres, and this advance is largely due to the initiative of the European. Without his intervention the African might to-day be at the stage where he was centuries ago. In the future also he will not be able to dispense with European guidance and the white man's knowledge, skill, and dynamic force.

The co-operation of white and black in Africa has been described in the phrase: 'Black brawn and white brain.' There is some truth in this saying, but not the whole truth. From it we might conclude that for all time the African has been destined to serve and the European to rule. Even to-day, however, the African is doing brain-work to a not unimportant extent, and the distance between him and the European in this

sphere will diminish. The basis of a sound future will be a form of co-operation, in which all races living in Africa will find their places in accordance with their separate abilities, and will share proportionately in the prosperity created by their united efforts.

Not only utilitarian, but also ethical issues are at stake in the relationship between two races of a higher and lesser development, and we cannot afford to leave these latter issues out of account if we wish to keep alive the highest values in our own culture. But if this ethical issue is not to be allowed to degenerate into useless sentimentality, then we must base our knowledge of its demands on a sound knowledge of the facts. We must understand the African, his mind, his culture, and the conditions of his life. We should realize that the penetration of European civilization has come to him as a revolution, as a fundamental disturbance, which has deprived him of his natural balance and created for the time being situations which may appear to the European strange, contradictory, or repellent. If we are not to succumb to these impressions, and if we are to find a clear line for our actions, one thing above all is needful: a real, objective scientific knowledge of the actual conditions, their interrelation and their interpretation. Many errors of the past, involving wars and punitive expeditions, loss of both Native and European life, misunderstandings and bitternesses with all their consequences, would not have been committed if those

responsible had been in a position to understand the African and his motives.

If the study of the African is to be fruitful in results, it must fulfil two conditions. It must be unbiased; and it must not leave the human side out of account. Most Europeans are interested in the African, not for his sake but for their own, and they are therefore prone to import their own point of view into such an investigation. Even in important questions affecting the inner life of people, such as education, we are in danger of considering not the needs and interests of the African, but our own aims and views, whether these be political, economic, religious, or of a generally civilizing nature. They may not be openly expressed, but when it comes to practical organization, they are bound to play a part. Thus the real task and scope of education are perverted. It would be better, even for our own practical purposes, to take time to study the African as he is and to start our work on him from his standpoint instead of our own. The problem involved is great enough to justify a purely objective investigation.

It is, however, impossible to start such a study in the same way as one would initiate an investigation into the kinds of soil and the variations of climate of a country. We are dealing with human beings who both as a race and as individuals have their human value, their possibilities of development, and their destined part to play, and who cannot be regarded as mere instruments of European enterprise. Something

more than sentiment was involved when General Lafayette said: 'The last of the Negroes may always say to the first of the whites: "Am I not a man, a brother?"' Without making some such admission it is inconceivable that we should be able to co-operate with a strange race and treat it justly. This does not mean a minimizing of racial differences or of cultural variations. It does not imply an ignoring of the social gulf which actually exists between the two races and which corresponds to a great extent to the wishes of both. It does not deny that, as things are to-day, the white man must be the leader and the African the led. It does, however, recognize an ultimate common human factor which underlies all racial inequalities, and this recognition should be ever present in all our dealings with the African.

To the claim that scientific preparation is necessary for effective work in Africa and with Africans, the objection will be made that successful administrative, missionary, and educational work has hitherto been done without scientific or technical knowledge. That is true. Science is not a panacea. Common sense, personal tact, and practical wisdom, as well as sympathy based on an understanding of the human elements concerned, are all necessary. Many practical men have honestly sought out their own path and found it; great achievements in Native policy and education are due to men who had no opportunities for acquiring technical preparation as we understand it to-day. Among such men it is only necessary

to mention a name like Lord Lugard. Not every European, however, who comes to Africa is a genius. Moreover, it is just those people who have had to seek out their own methods who emphasize the necessity both of systematic study of the problems and of giving the prospective worker in Africa an opportunity of becoming familiar with them before he begins his work. It should not be necessary for every one to start from the very beginning, to learn by his own experiences, and to pay for his lessons out of his own pocket. He can profit from the work of his predecessors and from the knowledge of experts. The problems of to-day are too serious, complex, and urgent to be mastered by mere muddling through. The methods of practical men without technical training have too often consisted in transferring indiscriminately to Africa the institutions and customs of their own country; and these methods were bound to lead to mistakes and even to disastrous results.

2

Social anthropology is the science to which we look for help in our problem; we expect it to teach us a true knowledge of the African and his civilization. Anthropologists have rightly complained that in the past their advice has often not been heeded, and that misunderstandings and disasters might have been avoided if the lines of conduct laid down as the result of anthropological investigation had been followed.

This may be true, but on the other hand it must be admitted that anthropology has not always been able, nor found it necessary, to present the results of its studies in a way in which the practical man could make use of them. Some anthropologists definitely refuse to make their knowledge serve any practical purpose, because they fear that this will cause them to deviate from the road of science and will dull the keen edge of their investigation. It is true that scientific work is an end in itself and has to be faithful to its own principles and methods. On the other hand, no one will blame the practical man, confronted with the problems arising out of his daily duties, if he looks around for guidance and expects the science of anthropology to give him what he needs. Anthropology is the science of man, and, when investigations are conducted in Africa, it is the science of African man. When a science is dealing with a living problem such as man, and with an unexplored problem such as African man, it seems obvious that the result of such research should throw a new light on matters with which the practical man has to deal. No one will dispute the fact that biology is a science and that it has rendered eminently useful service. It would be strange if the same were not possible in the case of anthropology. It would be strange, too, if the anthropologist, like every serious worker in whatever sphere, did not feel a desire to make his work serve his fellow men. A science whose advocates decline to consider their task as being a service to mankind

should not wonder if its right to existence were questioned.

What we have in mind when we speak of applied or practical anthropology is a purely scientific method of investigation, which, however, does not consider present-day problems as unscientific and therefore overlook them, and which is not above presenting its results in such a way that the practical man can apply them to his problems.

The main reason why the older form of anthropology did not fulfil the hopes of the practical man is that it was too much interested in the past. Attention was turned backwards; the main concern was not man, but his civilization and its history. It was concerned with civilization not so much as it expresses and affects the life of the individual and the community, but rather as an object for comparison with other civilizations, in order to explain their interrelation and their origin. These problems are no doubt interesting; investigation of earlier forms of human civilization has a peculiar charm and will always claim attention. The study of the past may also be a means of understanding better our own present. The historical method of anthropological research has to fulfil an important task, but its pursuit involves the danger of neglecting matters which are of scientific interest and of much greater human, that is to say, anthropological import, because they deal with the actual life of man and its present changes.

The task of social anthropology is not only to study

the political organization of a tribe and from that to rebuild a previous phase of its structure. It must also raise such questions as the following. How does this organization work in the life of to-day? How is it related to the whole culture of the tribe in question? In what way has it been affected by modern foreign influences? What conditions of change, adaptation, or disintegration can be recognized, and what is the effect of this culture contact on the individual members of the group? It is necessary to understand not only the structure of the Family, but also the significance of the Family for its individual members and for the maintenance of communal life; whether it educates individuals to assume personal responsibility, or neglects this education, or makes it impossible; what factors to-day threaten the continuance of the Family. Land-tenure, and its meaning for the social cohesion of the group; the valuable and dangerous elements in the individual or communal form of ownership, and the effects of modern changes; primitive economics and jurisprudence; questions of population and hygiene; the new social order which is being evolved under the influence of foreign civilizations; the changing mental outlook; the emergence of individualism; the principles of indigenous African education and the effect of European education; the fate of the old pagan faith and the growth of new religions with their forms of community life; the indigenous beliefs underlying social cohesion, tribal allegiance, and obedience to tribal authority; the in-

centives to increased economic effort; problems such as these, and in fact all phenomena of cultural change and of a changing humanity, come within the sphere of work of the anthropologist.¹ He is the person who by means of his scientific equipment is able to study them, and he has the advantage of being impartial.

Even the representative of historical ethnology will do well not to ignore the problems of modern life. Those phenomena which seem to him to be old and autochthonous, and therefore a worthy object of his study, are in reality the results of innumerable past changes, and it should be of interest to him to be able to watch such changes actually taking place under his eyes and to see their effect on the life of the people concerned. A scientist whose whole aim is to find out the truth can hardly pass by opportunities such as these, for in them he can see factors at work which have been responsible for previous changes and can study their effects. It is true that the present-day transformations in Africa are different in kind and intensity from any previously known. They have often led to unpleasing distortions of Native civilization and even to its complete destruction, but that should not lessen their interest for the anthropologist. Even if cultures are destroyed men and women remain, and it is necessary for us to find out how they adapt themselves to a changed environment and create new ways of life.

¹ Cf. B. Malinowski, 'Practical Anthropology', *Africa*, vol. ii, p. 22.

3

Anthropological field-work is carried on not only by fully trained anthropologists but also by persons who, without possessing technical training, are anxious to obtain knowledge of the people among whom they are working, moved thereto either by scientific inclination or by the necessities of their calling. The majority of these are missionaries and administrative officials. The former have the advantage of long residence in the country and intimate knowledge of the language; their work leads them to live in close contact with the Natives and to make themselves familiar with their customs and life. Many excellent and well-known monographs on African tribes have been written by missionaries, and the work of professional anthropologists has in the past been largely based on the material so gathered. This co-operation will always be welcome. An investigator seldom remains long enough in the field to get a thorough knowledge of all phases of Native life, and he does not always learn a Native language sufficiently well to handle it with ease. If the missionary is at all interested in anthropological matters, has some experience in scientific work, and knows the language as he ought to, there will always be departments of life to which he will have access in a way quite impossible to any other investigator, however highly trained.

It is, on the other hand, intelligible that the anthro-

pologists, the more their young science develops, will make higher demands on field-workers and point out the deficiencies of the productions of non-professional workers. Amateurs lack technical training and a scientific approach; they are not sufficiently familiar with the actual problems at issue and cannot always distinguish between the important and the less important. This may result in essential details being overlooked or expressed with such lack of accuracy that the material is almost valueless. Unconsciously the amateur may succumb to the temptation of looking at things from the point of view of his own preconceived ideas, and the objectiveness of his statements will be endangered, or they will be represented in a wrong light. The amateur should, wherever possible, try to acquire at least the elements of anthropological training, and then his work will give greater satisfaction to himself and will be of more use to others.

While the missionary and the official as a rule confine their studies to a small region which they know well, the anthropologist may investigate a problem or a group of connected problems in their wider aspects, his object being to study the culture of a people, or of a group of tribes as a whole, in its structure, its function, and its interrelations. No culture is autonomous and autochthonous. All have been fertilized from without. The investigator who studies culture contacts will want to know how groups are influenced by their relations to each other; the attitude of one group towards receiving cultural elements from a

neighbouring unit; what contributions each has made to the total culture of an area; what constitutes the unity of a culture area; and in what way the single groups have separately assisted in the evolution of the culture common to all of them; how they have changed the cultural elements or allowed them to fall into neglect, and what are the causes of such processes.¹ It may be desirable to trace back into the past the growth of a cultural element and its contacts; in other words, to apply historical standards. The historical and the functional methods are not mutually exclusive but can very well supplement each other. The important point is that the present shall not be forgotten in the past, that it should in all circumstances claim the greater interest.

One means of collecting anthropological data is the recording of texts in Native languages. They will as a rule not be sufficient to form the basis of a complete anthropological picture of a tribe, but they are valuable as complementing the work of the technical anthropologist. It is our duty to let the Native speak for himself where this is possible, in order to see his way of expression, to understand his reasoning, and to pay attention to his explanation of facts and views. Documents of great linguistic, anthropological, and human value may in this way come to light. The collecting of such texts becomes urgent as the last opportunities of doing so are quickly passing in

¹ Cf. F. Krause, 'Ethnology and the Study of Culture Change', *Africa*, vol. v, p. 383.

the greater part of Africa. The younger generation of Africans take only a slight interest in their ancestral heritage and often know nothing about it. Since we Europeans have been the destroyers, we should feel ourselves responsible for collecting and preserving these evidences of a phase of humanity which is rapidly passing, and for making them accessible to students of future generations.

No one is better suited for collecting such data than educated Natives, provided they are able to write their own language and have received some training for the task. The growing interest which some of them show in the investigation of their own tribal life and traditions is to be welcomed and should be encouraged. Educated Africans are easily inclined to resent being regarded by Europeans as objects of study. The best remedy for this is to win their co-operation in those spheres of the work which they themselves can do better than the white stranger.

4

The fact that modern Africa bristles with social problems which need a continuous study of the African and his speech led to the foundation of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. The work of the Institute as laid down in its constitution is to provide an international clearing-house for research in African linguistics, anthropology, and sociology, and to bring about a closer association between scientific research and the

practical problems with which persons working in Africa have to deal. The Institute has no intention of founding a new school of anthropology, but it proposes to draw the attention of anthropologists to existing problems, in the solution of which we require and ask their co-operation. It desires also to show the practical worker in Africa that he can derive advantage from the help of the anthropologist and will do well to learn from him.

From the beginning the Institute has been careful not to duplicate the work of already existing institutions, but on the contrary to help forward their work in every way possible. Neither does it intend to interfere with those anthropologists who are working along historical lines, as it is convinced of the value of such investigations. The Institute is, however, calling the attention of anthropological field-workers particularly to present-day conditions, because it feels sure that there will always be a sufficient number of investigators devoted to the historical method, who will see that this aspect is not forgotten.

In the following chapters an attempt will be made to focus attention on some of the problems that have arisen in Africa and to show their connexion with the science of anthropology. The anthropological facts mentioned are only given as illustrations. The subjects discussed have mostly reference to West Africa, with which the writer is personally familiar.

II

MAN AND RACE IN AFRICA¹

1. Common humanity and racial differences. The dangers of generalization.
2. The races of Africa. The main racial groups: Pygmies and Bushmen; Berbers and Hamites—their significance as cattle-owners and warriors; the Negro. Adaptability of races to new circumstances.

I

WHEN the Ewe in West Africa wish to characterize a person as friendly and kind, they say of him, *enye ame*, 'he is a man'. Inversely the phrase *menye ame o*, 'he is not a man', means 'he is selfish and cruel'. Both expressions correspond in their wording and sense to the Latin *humanus* and *inhumanus*. The human ideal is the same in the case of the ancient Roman and the Negro. The present-day European and African also partake of human nature, and to that extent are not essentially different. This implies that they are capable of understanding each other and of working together, even although for the time being the one may be the teacher and the other the pupil. We initiate the African into all our occupations, from factory-worker to university teacher, from simple artisan to senior official and doctor. We are also introducing him to our European literature and science, which are the purest expression of our own culture, and in doing so we

¹ Cf. C. G. Seligman, *Races of Africa*, London.

take it for granted that he can understand and assimilate them.

By this we do not mean to deny that differences exist, differences not only of race but also of culture, of innate ability, outlook, and mode of life, which can make themselves so strongly felt that they threaten to make a mutual understanding difficult and in some cases almost impossible. If the traveller on the Upper Nile steamer sees a group of Shilluk, almost or entirely naked, their bodies rubbed with cow-dung and ashes, their long hair bleached bright-red, with depilated eyelashes, lying on the bank in apparently complete apathy, he may well believe that here he is dealing with a wholly strange type of being, from whom he is completely separated. He would change his opinion, however, if he could talk with them in their own language and could learn that they have a tradition extending over 400 years, a complex, well-organized system of government with a king at the head, and a highly developed religion; and that they are as capable of being educated as any man and have a definite feeling for what is dignified and good behaviour.

While we recognize that there is a common basis of humanity in all races, we have no reason to ignore racial differences or to minimize them. We admire in them the richness of creation. Barren uniformity is not the goal of human development, but variety and an infinity of forms; to this every race may make its individual contribution to the common cultural heritage of mankind.

2

Racial and cultural differences exist not only between Europe and Africa but also within Africa itself, and strictly speaking the term African should not be used without qualification. The people of Africa are divided into a number of races, each of an individual type, and even within the races variations are found which have been caused by intermarriage, by environment, and by history. Indigenous races and civilizations have influenced one another, and moreover for thousands of years streams of foreigners and of foreign culture have flowed into Africa from outside. The result to-day is an extraordinarily rich diversity.

According to a new classification by E. von Fickstedt the main divisions of human races living in Africa are:

I. *Europid Races.*

Members of this group are Arabs and those sections of the Mediterranean race which inhabit North Africa, i.e. the Berbers.

A subsection of this division are peoples whose racial basis is Negro but who are blended with Europid elements and are called Europoids: Tuareg, Tibu; Nuba and other groups living in Upper Egypt.

The most important group of this subsection are the Ethiopids or eastern Hamites. The terms Hamites and Hamitic are linguistic ones and in this sense

include both the Mediterranean Berbers and the Ethiopids, but racially the two are to be distinguished. The older home of the Ethiopids is North-Eastern Africa as far as the Eastern Horn. About the end of the Middle Ages (fifteenth century) they began to invade Negro countries in Eastern Africa and farther south. Members of the group are: Beja (Bisharin), Hadendoa, Ababde, Beni Amer, Danakil, Tigre, Amhara, Gurage, Agau (Saho), Kunama, Kaffico, Galla, Somali, Hima (Tussi, Hinda, Kitwara, Nkole), Masai, possibly Lotuko and Turkana; Ful(ani).

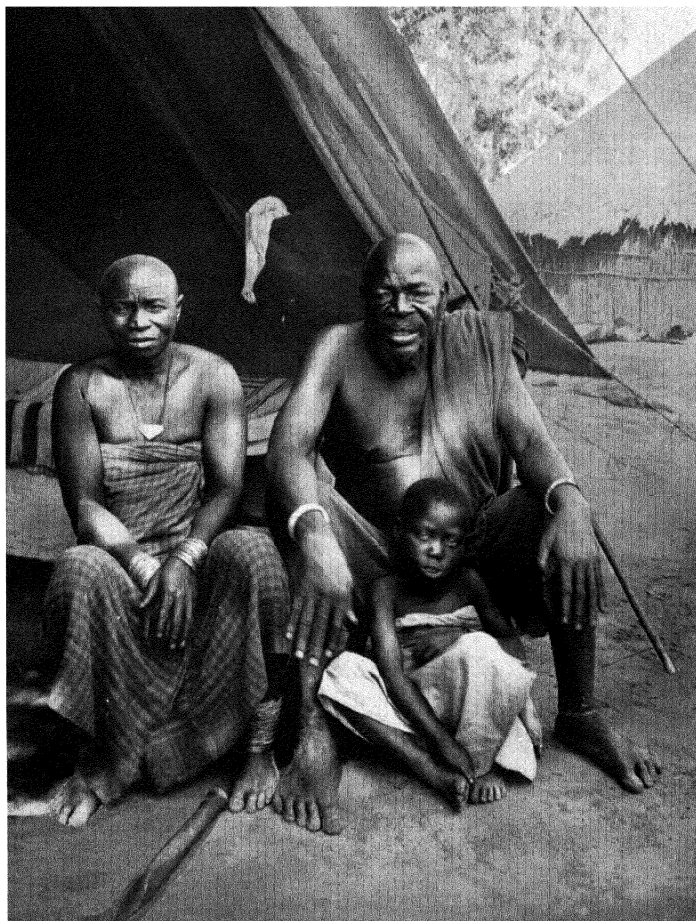
II. *Neo-Negrids.*

1. *Sudanids.* They are spread over the grass steppes of Senegambia, the Niger territories, and Nigeria: Wolof, Mandingo, Tukulor, Mossi-Dagomba, Ashanti, Dahome, Yoruba, Benin, also Tibu. The Songai belong to the group but have a Europoid admixture, while Borgu, Musgu, Vai, Kpelle, Kru, Ewe, and most of the forest dwellers in Togo, Dahomey, Nigeria, and Cameroon are Sudanids on a palae-negrid basis.

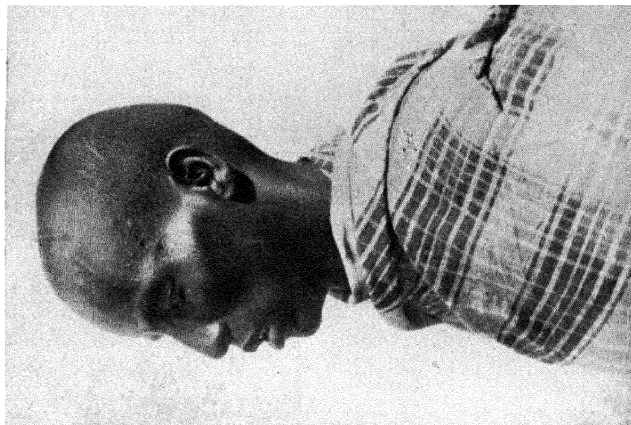
2. *Nilotids*, people of the Upper Nile region.

3. *Bantuids.* Mostly, though not exclusively, people who speak Bantu languages. The Karamoyo, who belong to the group, do not speak a Bantu language, while the majority of Bantu-speaking people are racially palae-negrid.

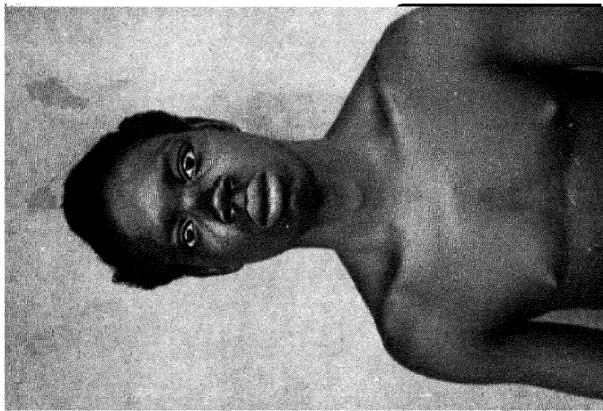
The Bantuids are Negroes who were influenced by Ethiopids coming from the north. The centre of dif-



SAGARA, BANTU NEGRO, EAST AFRICA



SOMALI, HAMITE, EAST AFRICA



WEST-AFRICAN NEGRO, EWE MAN,
TOGO

fusion of the group is the East and South African steppe-forest. Ganda, Hutu, Nyamwezi, Hehe, Gogo, Konde, Kua, several Swahili-speaking groups, Kongo, Luba, Lunda, Jagga, and in South Africa Zulu-Xhosa-Swazi, Sotho-Tswana, Herero, Ambo.

III. *Palae-Negrids.*

West and Central African forest zone.

IV. *Pygmids.*

They are perhaps no race, but represent variations within the Negrids, and live among Negroes in the Kongo forests.

V. *Khoisanids. Bushmen and Hottentots.*

For the subsequent discussion we do not follow von Eickstedt's detailed designations but speak of Negroes, Pygmies, Bushmen, and Hamites or Hamitic people, by which term the eastern Hamites or Ethiopids are meant.

Pygmies and Bushmen. The Pygmies are distinguished by their small stature. Their skin is light-coloured and covered with light, downy hair. They live in small groups in the Central African forest countries, mainly in the Belgian Congo. Here they number about 80,000. They roam about in small groups as hunters and collectors, each one in a definite district, to which they claim a right of possession. But at the same time the surrounding Negro tribes exercise some kind of control over them and exchange

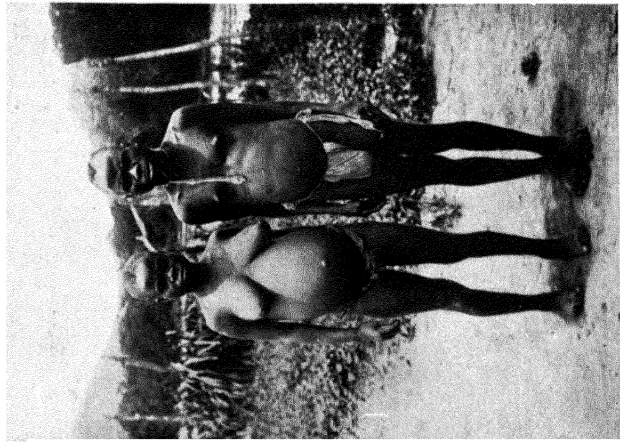
their vegetable foodstuffs for the Pygmy hunters' game.

The Bushmen in South-West Africa, Angola, and adjacent countries, though similar to the Pygmies in physical appearance, have cultural traits of their own, particularly in their rich mythology and in religious practice.

The Hottentots appear to be a cross between Bushmen and cattle-owning Hamitic immigrants.

Pygmies and Bushmen represent an old type of mankind in Africa. They were formerly more widely distributed in the continent than they are to-day; they retreated before advancing Negroes and Hamites, and either became their servants or entered into a relationship with them in which they exchanged their game for the agricultural products of the Negroes. The material culture of both Pygmies and Bushmen is poor, and their social organization primitive. How far and in what way the so-called Bushman drawings and paintings in South Africa are connected with the forefathers of the present Bushmen, and whether the Bushmen are linked up with such primitive tribes as, e.g., the Ndorobo and similar groups in East Africa, is not sufficiently known.

Both Pygmies and Bushmen stand at a disadvantage compared with Negroes, owing to their small numbers, their cultural inferiority, and their unstable mode of life, which avoids intercourse with strangers as much as possible. Their nomadic habits require wide areas for their subsistence, and these are taken



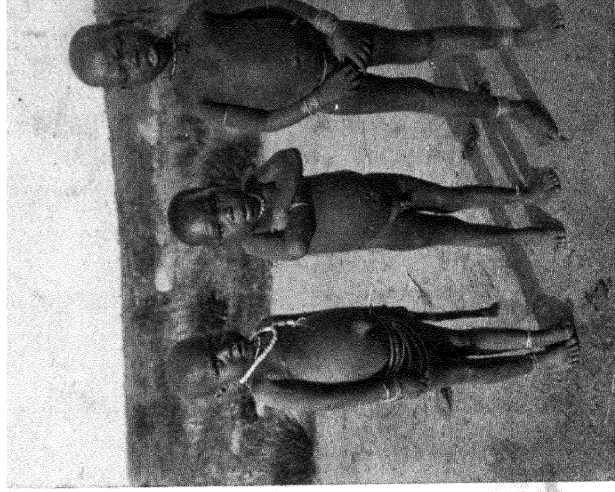
PYGMIES, EAST AFRICA, SALAMBANGO,
NEAR IRUMU



BUSHMAN, SOUTH-WEST AFRICA



BUSHMAN BABY, SOUTH-WEST AFRICA



CHILDREN OF THE KULLA, SHIRATI, EAST AFRICA

away from them in an ever-increasing degree. The invading Hottentots were the first to oppress and decimate the Bushmen. From the seventeenth century onwards both Hottentots and Bushmen were pressed by Europeans from the south and later by Bantu from the north. The South African Korana Hottentots are to all intents and purposes eliminated or bastardized. Of the Nama in the south-west, who have fought desperately against threatened extinction, an insignificant remnant of some 20,000 survives and these have lost any unity as a people. The Bushmen see their existence more and more limited. They give to-day the impression of an unhappy people living under precarious conditions in arid regions, into which they have had to retreat. Negro and European have contributed with equal cruelty to their downfall. Even to-day when the Bushmen have ceased to be every man's prey, they seem to be unable to adapt themselves to new modes of life. Attempts to settle them and so assign to them a place in the present order of things have had only moderate results. When for a period they do submit to the unaccustomed restraint, sooner or later the irresistible impulse to wander awakens and all good intentions are frustrated.

Berbers and Hamites.

These two are linguistically related, but anthropology distinguishes between them as belonging to two different racial groups. The Berbers are a section of

the people living around the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, and are European rather than African. One division of them, the Tuareg, lives as nomads in the Sahara. The eastern Hamites, linguistically also called Kushitic, inhabit the countries between the Red Sea and the Nile south of Aswan as far as the Eastern Horn. They are light-skinned, with straight noses, thin lips, narrow faces, soft and wavy or straight hair.

The significance of the Hamites in the composition of the African population consists in the fact that as nomads and conquering warriors they have not confined themselves to their original homes, but have pushed their way into the countries of the Negroes. Owing to their racial superiority they gained leading positions and became the founders of many of the larger states in Africa. Their influence is strongest in East and South Africa and in the Sudan, i.e. the territory between the Sahara and the forest lands. Most of the peoples living in these regions are a result of crossing between Hamites and Negroes.

The majority of Hamites are cattle-owners, and this has no doubt intensified their racial qualities. The calling of herdsman leads man more into the loneliness of the wide steppes than the sociable life of the farmer. Owing to the constant necessity of protecting himself and his cattle against human and animal enemies, he is thrown upon his own resources. He must look for fresh pasturage, and often enough win it by conquest. He has little to lose, with the exception of his herds, which can easily be moved, and is there-

fore more inclined to settle disputes by war than is the sedentary Negro. The Hamite is proud, reserved, self-conscious, and warlike. He has accustomed himself to live as an aristocrat among the Negroes, and to look on them as his subjects. Cattle-breeding is the only activity worthy of a well-to-do man; agriculture is left to the inferior classes. His relationship to the European is different also from that of the Negro. He does not see in the white man a superior being but a kinsman, and the Fulani addressed the first Europeans who came to them as cousins. This racial self-consciousness, which is quite natural to the Hamites, is still more marked in places where they have accepted Islam. They are less eager than the Negro to acknowledge European superiority and to adopt the white man's civilization. School and missionary work have achieved but small results among them. In recent times, however, several groups have shown an inclination to become sedentary and take to agriculture. Only gradually will this highly gifted race be persuaded to enter on the modern path of European progress. It is to be hoped that the wisdom of the administrator and educator will succeed in winning them over, so that they may occupy the place which befits them in the future life of Africa.

The Negro.

The Negro races form the bulk of African population. The division into Sudan and Bantu Negro is properly a linguistic one, but has lately been adopted

by physical anthropology. Owing to Hamitic and other racial influences, through endless migrations and shiftings, the Negroes have evolved diverse types which present an extraordinary variety in outward appearance, achievement, and temperament. They are physically well developed, their agriculture and their rich material culture are proofs of their inurement to regulated activity. They are willing and skilful workers, docile and of great adaptability. In contrast to Bushman, Pigmy, and Hamite the Negro found little difficulty in assimilating European civilization and adjusting himself to modern conditions, and so he has become in all spheres of life the pupil and helper of the white man. He has an outspoken artistic vein, but he is also an artist in life. His innate cheerfulness, his care-free nature, and his amiability help him to master heavy blows of Fate more easily than members of many another race.

III

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE NEGRO'S MIND

1. Negro characteristics. Results of intelligence tests. Proverbs and folklore in Negro culture. Technical abilities of the Negro. The Negro's absence of scientific approach to natural phenomena. Ancestor cult and tribal tradition.
2. The mental processes of 'primitive man'. Predominance of emotional thought. Mental attitude of individuals to group.
3. Adaptation of the African to changing conditions in work and in education.
4. Necessity for relating education to Native environment.
5. Need for research into attitudes towards work and mental adaptation to new environment.

I

ALTHOUGH the peoples whom we call Negroes do not form one race in the strict sense of this term, and in spite of the fact that they have evolved widely differing cultures, they share so many essential physical and cultural features that (with the necessary reservation) they can be called a unit, into the characteristic traits of which it is permissible to inquire. We are still not in a position, however, to do this with any definiteness. Investigations carried on up to the present do not afford a sufficient foundation for conclusive statements, because they have embraced only a comparatively small number of tribes, and most of them are inadequate in scope. They deal with the group and its culture and neglect the individual. The spiritual life of a group will, how-

ever, be fully understood only through a knowledge of the largest possible number of individuals, and a picture of the whole must be founded on such knowledge. Individual differences in temperament, endowment, and sphere of interest are as significant in the case of the Negro as in that of the European. We need accurate observations on the development of the characters of individuals, under the influence of the Family, of village life, of playfellows, of initiation and other groups, among which the individual passes his life. Comparison should also be made between the life-histories of persons who spend their days among the old untouched customs and those who live under modern changing conditions. Intelligence tests and other aids of modern experimental psychology can be useful, though they only deal with one side of the human being and not with his whole personality.

Another reason why we must be cautious in forming final judgements is that the Negro is only just beginning, after thousands of years of relative seclusion, to take part in the cultural life of humanity and to enter into competition with others and thereby to develop his powers. It is impossible for us to form any definite conclusion about his future evolution. Experience has already shown the falseness of many previous judgements, and the capabilities of the Negro have developed in a way that would have seemed impossible to most of us half a century ago.

It has not been proved that the Negro in general intelligence and 'educability' is substantially inferior to the white child. That, however, differences conditioned by race and environment do exist, appears to be evident from the intelligence tests undertaken by R. A. C. Oliver in Kenya. The subjects for his investigations were the pupils of the Prince of Wales School, Kabete, a secondary school for European boys, and those of the Alliance High School, Kikuyu, who are of Bantu stock. The two main facts emerging from this comparison are (1) that the average African score in the intelligence test is about 85 per cent. of the average European score, and (2) that about 14 per cent. of the Africans reach or exceed the median European score. According to the same author the average American Negro score is about 80 per cent. of the average white American score, and about 20 per cent. of the American Negroes reach or exceed the median European score; but the difference between these two averages is much less than the difference between the most able and the least able of either group. The most eminent American Negroes are probably the intellectual equals of quite eminent whites.¹ Mr. Oliver cautions us against premature conclusions from this result. It would be astonishing if children of peoples, who for centuries have enjoyed systematic mental training and have produced the present

¹ R. A. C. Oliver, 'The Comparison of the Ability of Races: with special reference to East Africa', *The East African Medical Journal*, September 1932, pp. 160-204.

world-civilization, did not exhibit superior mental capabilities to those who are the first generation to go to school and whose parents lead in many respects a primitive life. To obtain sure results, the investigation will have to be extended to a number of tribes living under various conditions and in different parts of the continent, and especially to such groups as have for several generations been in close contact with the active life of modern civilization, and who therefore have had an opportunity of developing their intellectual ability more fully than those living within their native confines. Even in this case it is doubtful whether the period of contact has been long enough to have brought about noticeable changes. In the meantime it would be premature to decide whether the intellectual difference between the two races is fundamental and permanent, or only temporary.

Thought and play of imagination, but also moral values, find expression in folk-lore. Its main forms are myth, history, folk-tale, proverb, riddle, and song. Myth corresponds to what in higher religion is called Holy Scriptures or dogma. It treats of supernatural beings, of divine providence, and the origin of things. Historical traditions keep alive the memory of leaders and heroes of the past and their deeds; they are an expression of tribal self-consciousness and self-respect. The typical African tale is the animal story, in which human passions and follies, sagacity, brutishness, and greed are depicted under the guise of animals. A rich repository of life experience, keen observation,

and sound reasoning is represented in proverbs, of which some tribes possess an almost incredible number and which seem particularly to appeal to the rationalistic sense of the Negro. They are often full of humour and sarcasm. There is no situation in life which could not be illustrated by a proverb or 'saying of the old people', and they are frequently used to regulate private and public life. The essence of their wisdom is human, not limited to tribe or even race. It is a remarkable fact that a large number of African proverbs have their exact counterparts in European ones. While stories are mostly told by mothers and grandmothers, proverbs belong to the sphere of men. They are a mental exercise and sharpen the wit, and a man has to learn how to handle them in public speeches. A Twi saying is: 'A clever child is told proverbs and not stories'; stories are a pastime.

Poetry in its narrower sense is intimately connected with singing. A poem is not spoken but sung. Universal throughout Africa are lyrical songs—generally very short and repeating over and over again one phrase. A second group are war songs and, related to them, praise songs, in honour of heroes and chiefs, but also, for example, extolling the exquisite beauty of an ox. Their real home is South Africa, but they are found in other parts.

The African is fond of extended conversation and loves discussion, partly as an entertainment on an evening round the beer or palm-wine pot, but also for the admitted purpose of exercising the mind. He

is an easy speaker, owns a natural faculty in mastering the richness of his language, and is free from embarrassment. The danger of breaking down in a speech is little feared, though it is not unknown, so a timid speaker is encouraged by the saying: 'one may die in child bed, but one does not die from delivering a speech.' Many addresses at public meetings deserve admiration for the impressive flow of words, the clearness of exposition, and the apt illustration by the use of proverbs. A weakness, however, is that in longer speeches the speaker seldom succeeds in following out one train of thought consistently to its logical conclusion. He easily gets lost in by-paths and may abandon his original subject altogether. This reveals a narrowness of outlook which makes it difficult for him to survey and control a larger whole.

The attainments and technical abilities of the Negro have reached a high standard. If that standard has been attained with the aid of external influences, it nevertheless required intelligence and skill to retain, assimilate, and develop what had been acquired in this way. The building of houses; the making of implements and objects of art; spinning and weaving; the obtaining and working of metals; agriculture and animal husbandry; social and political institutions; methods of the education of youth: these are the fruits of much experience and sane knowledge of life. The isolation in which he formerly lived helps to explain why the African has remained stationary at a comparatively primitive stage of civilization. The

tribe, or perhaps even a still smaller unit, led its own existence in a relative isolation. The African's culture circle was extremely restricted. His cultural possessions and inheritance were limited to achievements within this small circle, whereas in a larger cultural environment the store of attainments will be enriched by interchange. Even within a narrow community the atmosphere was not always favourable to cultural progress; an inventor might be admired, but he was also in danger of being suspected. Moreover, knowledge was transmitted orally and through casual teaching, thus exposing it to the danger of being only half understood or even of being lost altogether, especially so when it was kept within the jealous circle of a guild whose members were bound to strictest secrecy. The development and transmission of systematic scientific knowledge is tied to the art of writing and reading. Another determining factor was that innovations soon assumed a recognized traditional form, in which they were then handed on unchanged to the next generations.

If these limitations are borne in mind, the Negro's achievements in civilization are considerable. His sphere of activity is not confined to the immediate necessities of his existence. His material, social, and intellectual culture, his art, his poetry, and the forms of his recreation show that he has advanced beyond this narrow region and has always striven to gain knowledge of the world about him. He has found names for elements in his surroundings which are of

no immediate practical interest for him, and has thus given them a place in his life. There is scarcely a tree or a plant, an animal, a hill or a tract of country which does not have its own name. The individual's store of words is much larger than one would expect. This is to be explained by the fact that knowledge is not, as with us, split up among many social groups where the smith, the weaver, the carpenter, and the scholar each has his own peculiar terminology. In primitive society each normal individual is master of the whole knowledge and skill of his group, and therefore knows the proper name for everything.

Close contact with Nature has enabled the Negro to accumulate a store of accurate observation and experience, and his knowledge in these spheres is remarkable. It is inadequate, however, because his observation is often superficial; conclusions have been drawn from it in a most uncritical way; and instead of further thought on the matter, word-spinning has seemed sufficient. The African has never progressed so far as the knowledge of true causal connexions or natural laws. He possesses a certain amount of knowledge of Nature, i.e. the beginnings of natural science, but for the greater part it is pseudo-science—knowledge mixed with a child-like play of imagination. There is no lack of attempts to understand the processes of Nature and of human life. How to explain the creation of the world, of man, and of the different races of mankind as far as they appear on his horizon; the remarkable similarity

between men and apes; the origin of the constellations, of lightning, thunder, and the winds; the interchange of wet and dry periods, and the waxing and the waning of the moon; the sources whence man obtained the benefits of his civilization and how death came into the world: all these problems have moved the mind of the Negro and he has meditated on them. His meditation, however, easily assumed the character of an interesting and amusing entertainment. The interest in problems is there, but it is neither sufficiently intensive nor lasting to avoid being intimidated when faced with the necessity of real effort. A problem commands interest as long as it is a pleasant diversion, but not beyond that, and not for its own sake; and when it was a question of life and death that utterly baffled him, his only way out was the *salto mortale* of magic belief. The idea of an event happening from an inner natural necessity is difficult for him to grasp, because his imagination and thinking depend so largely on sensual impressions. Behind an occurrence there is for him not so much a cause as one who causes. If a tree or a human being dies, then some one, be it a spirit or a person or a 'power', has made him die. For inner necessity or natural causes a 'personal' will is substituted.

W. H. Bentley, the Congo missionary, reports that once on a rainy day one of his labourers was sitting in the open air exposed to a cold wind. On being asked to come into the house and change his clothes he replied: 'One does not die from a cold wind, that

does not matter. A person does not fall sick nor does he die except through the act of a sorcerer.'

The Negro has been blamed as being a person who is satisfied with living in the present and enjoying it without carrying the burden of his past or worrying about the things to come. That is only correct up to a point. Most of his economic pursuits demand foresight and planning. The complex systems of education which the tribes have evolved show a serious concern by the elders for the welfare of the coming generation. Magic practices and religious rites are performed to avert possible misfortunes. The fear of death is ever present. The living man makes provision for his existence in the other world, and even the idea of personal fame after death is not unknown. Likewise concern about the past is not altogether absent. Every tribe has its traditions, honours its ancestors, and knows their history. It is incumbent on the old people to transmit such knowledge to the young. Modern European education with its levelling influence has done much to eradicate this interest, but it has also, in individual cases, stimulated Africans to take a new pride in the life of their forebears and to investigate their history. A number of remarkable and, to some extent, highly valuable monographs of historical or sociological character, published by Africans, are proofs of this awakening interest.

But this is to speak only of the few; the average Native is far from possessing a clear picture even of

the near past of his own tribe or clan. Certain points stand out prominently : a hero, a great fight, a famine, or a migration. But when he tries to go back only a few generations, everything is clouded in an impenetrable mist. It is impossible for him to fix the date of an event because his calculation of time is poor.

2

The question whether 'primitive' man thinks and acts logically has given rise to much discussion. Regarding this the following should be said : in most of his actions belonging to the routine of his daily life and in everything within reach of his natural power and his practical experience the Negro reveals a completely normal, logical faculty, and the mental processes, as well as the actions resulting from them, cannot be distinguished from our own. Mary Kingsley's observation is correct when she says :¹

'The more you know the African, the more you study his laws and institutions, the more you must recognize that the main characteristic of his intellect is logical, and you see how in all things he uses this absolutely sound but narrow thought-form. He is not a dreamer nor a doubter; everything is real, very real, horribly real to him.'

The technical knowledge and skill and the complicated systems of his social and political institutions could never have been acquired if he were not a

¹ *West African Studies*, p. 124.

rational being. It is, however, evident that there are differences between the mental activity of the African and that of the European; some of these have been shown on preceding pages. A significant point is that primitive man is to a large degree dominated by unconscious or half-conscious impulses. In his struggle for survival he often finds himself in a situation where his knowledge and skill are defective, yet which he must overcome in some way or other. In such a case emotion takes the place of reasoned thinking, and the results may puzzle us and, at first sight, seem incomprehensible. This, however, is a peculiarity which does not form a barrier between primitive man and more highly developed races; it is a difference of degree and not of kind; it is found within Africa as well as in Europe in innumerable gradations. A great number of the concepts and customs of the African which have been stigmatized as illogical have their roots in religious and magical beliefs, and religious experience is not fed from intellectual and rational sources alone. It is true not only of 'primitive' African religions but of all religions, that experiences and convictions which spring from them may appear to the irreligious man as irrational. Where religious conviction is admitted as a fact, the beliefs are completely logical and consistent.

It is an infallible sign of emotion that it is of short duration and has the character of an explosion. The difference between emotional and logical thought

is therefore one between explosive and continuous mental activity. With the Negro emotional, momentary, and explosive thinking predominates. His emotions may lead to serious results. Suicide, for example, with the Negro is always a surrender to an overpowering emotion. More often, however, his emotion evaporates as quickly as it arose. Two people exchanging a storm of angry words end their quarrel by both bursting out into Homeric laughter. This dependence on excitement, on external influences and stimuli, is a characteristic sign of primitive mentality. Primitive man's energy is unstable and spasmodic. He is easily fired with enthusiasm for an undertaking and begins his work with great zest; but his interest dies down quickly and the work is abandoned. Many school and church buildings would have remained unfinished if constant pressure from the European had not been behind them. The energy which pursues its aim undeterred by disillusionment and unwearied by new obstacles is strange to him. Where the stimulus of emotion is lacking, the Negro shows little spontaneity and is passive. He waits for what is coming to him and evades what is inconvenient, or adapts himself to it, instead of bravely confronting the obstacles of life and mastering them. If he is forced into acts which awaken no response in his inner mind, his work is apt to be careless, and he tries to get out of it whenever he can. Such weaknesses must not be thought to be the personal fault of the individual; they are conditioned by inheritance,

environment, by the social background, and can only be overcome by education. When, however, his interest has been aroused and when the object is not too distant, does not demand too much sacrifice, and is at the same time desirable enough to outweigh momentary unwillingness; in other words, when his enthusiasm or devotion to a cause endures, then he is capable of great and even sustained effort. We need only reflect how long it takes to complete a work of art, a dug-out, a drum, or any implement. The work of the artist, the making of personal ornaments, and preparations for festivals demand a great deal of trouble and real perseverance; but behind them as stimuli are the satisfaction of vanity, the desire for personal dignity, the sense of beauty of form, or immediate utility. Agriculture, too, demands honest effort; but it occupies only part of the year, and when the season for it arrives, the Negro is drawn into the field-work as if by its own rhythm, and it is a natural thing to do what every one else is then doing. There is also the motive of rivalry with his neighbours urging him to keep pace with them. Moreover, the work is done intermittently, and an occasion is easily found to justify a respite from toil. Once the seed is sown, the ensuing work is made easier by the worker watching the results of his labours and seeing the crops grow and thrive.

It is otherwise when a man works for the European. Then it is a question of an activity in which he personally does not take the slightest interest. A continual

tension of the will, a perpetual fight with his quickly roused feeling of distaste are required, and it is this which so easily makes the demands of European civilization appear oppressive to him. This kind of work becomes a dull, laborious routine, and the white man himself a hard taskmaster who makes unreasonable demands. If the Negro does persist in his work in spite of everything it is either because of the force of necessity or the gradual assertion of the power of habit.

The same is true in the case of continued mental work. His interest in a question is seldom lasting, and his power of thought is easily fatigued. It is difficult for him to follow an argument of any length, or to think out a problem for himself with all its implications. He loves to place ideas superficially side by side without a logical connexion, or to connect them with each other according to external features. This lack of critical thinking and logical coherence makes it easy to understand why he does not feel contradictions as such. In his religious creed two mutually exclusive conceptions may exist side by side.

The Negro has but few gifts for work which aims at a distant goal and requires tenacity, independence, and foresight. He has never succeeded in larger undertakings, which need plans for a far future and a wider view of acting on a large scale; he works from day to day without clearly picturing the consequences. The Negro is therefore not a good

merchant. There are indeed traders enough in Africa, and individual peoples like the Hausa, Mandingo, Efik, Duala, Mbundu, Swahili, and others do business on a considerable scale. These, however, are principally tribes which have for a long time culturally, or by reason of a mixture of race, lived under foreign influences, and they too carry on their business, even where a large volume of trade is concerned, in a way which differs widely from the orderly and complicated processes of European enterprise. There is, however, progress. In 1936 there were between five and six hundred African retail traders along the Reef in the Transvaal, some of whom received high praise from wholesalers for their trustworthiness and business acumen.

We must approach the mental attitude of the Negro remembering always that he is above all a member of a group. The motives for his actions are predominantly social, not individual, and are deeply influenced by public opinion. His self-consciousness is rooted in his compliance with the community; it depends on the security of his daily life as guaranteed by the group, not on the independent action of the individual. Personal responsibility is avoided wherever possible. As far as this exists within the limits of the group, it results as it were of its own accord from the routine of daily life and therefore demands no great effort of will. Its omission would immediately break that rhythm and thereby shake the individual's position in the group; for this reason such duties are not

easily neglected. This responsibility has reference only to fellow members of the group, with whom he feels closely connected, and not to strangers, among whom is the European. It should therefore not astonish us if the Native is not conscious, in his relations with Europeans, of the same obligation to assiduity, truthfulness, honesty, and reliability demanded in his dealings with his fellows. He gives promises to a European without hesitation, even when he has not the least intention of keeping them, because that is the simplest way of getting rid of an inconvenient intruder. Moreover that which has not been decided by 'the old people', i.e. the representatives of the group, has no binding force for the individual. It should, however, again be emphasized that the features described here are not found in the Negro race alone. Every one knows that they are human characteristics and are met with in members and groups of our own race as well as among Africans.

3

Although the fact that the Negro is largely ruled by his emotions can be looked on as characteristic, this does not mean that a different attitude is impossible for him, and indeed we are observing to-day how he is changing in this respect and acquiring habits more pleasing to the white man. He is growing accustomed to regular continuous work, and he is becoming more reliable. If it were not so, he could not carry out the achievements which we see him

accomplishing to-day and which require a considerable amount of exactness, continuity, and regularity, and also of serious mental exertion. Every employer knows that he can educate his workers, that there is a difference between a Native who comes for the first time from the bush and a group of workmen whom he has trained, and who will return to him although they may interrupt their work at times. Among the thousands of employees who, year in and year out, work in offices, workshops, and stores, there are many who in every respect do satisfactory work.

The schoolboy, who without any external compulsion and often without encouragement from his parents, insists on going to school and stands by his resolve for years, shows that there is a new spirit awake and that young Africa is not lacking in perseverance. Though habit and the example of his companions may help him, it is no small matter for a boy to renounce the happy life of African youth and sit instead, day by day, on a hard school bench. It is but natural that many should grow weary on the long road to the goal, but there are others who in spite of all obstacles carry out their plan to the end.¹

¹ A West African teacher in describing his child life says: 'In my whole school life I never had a real joy because I was so poor. Although I was the leader of my class I was often the last to pay my school fees. Sometimes I had to borrow money and books from the teacher or from good friends, because I was not able to buy them. My clothes and blankets were torn and my hat was so shabby that I had really to be ashamed of it. With respect to food I was very poorly off.

The considerable progress which the Negroes have made recently is due to their contact with Europeans. This contact has provided the spark which kindled the fire, but, to continue the metaphor, the spark must be fanned to keep the flame alive. The achievements of Negroes in America show that the present evolution of the African is only a beginning. Although the majority of American Negroes, partly owing to the social disabilities to which they are constantly exposed, live on a lower level than the average of other races, a considerable number of them have attained high standards in business life as well as in arts and sciences, and have produced original achievements which stand comparison with those of any other race. To a great extent this can be explained by the fact that they have for generations had the advantage of living continuously in close contact with the permanent stimulus of western civilization.

4

The mental attitude of the Negro can teach us lessons as to his education. If it is generally true to say that the Negro can work successfully only when his interest has been aroused, and when he is able to enjoy his work, this is doubly true of the African

Often I had no more than one meal a day. When our school started boy scouting, I was the only pupil among 140 who could not take part in it, because I was not able to afford the money for the uniform.'

child. For him the school is at the outset something strange, which may for a time stir his curiosity, but is quite outside his previous sphere. He has no more than a vague notion that the school will bring him into closer contact with the life of the white man, which may be useful to him. It is important, owing to this attitude of mind, that it should be made clear to the child at the very beginning that the school and all that he learns there has an immediate relation to his own life and that of his own people. It must teach him to understand that life better, to shape it better, and to take pleasure in it. The child's natural environment should be the starting-point of the school; it is the centre round which it revolves and to which it always returns. Where this bond between the school and daily life does not exist, there is a danger of education leading to a purely mechanical acquisition of knowledge, quite unrelated to the inner life. Perhaps more than any other race the Negro has a tendency to imitate. Considering the poor pedagogical training of many Native teachers it is no wonder that their way of teaching does not appeal to the African child and never really attracts his attention. He does not learn because the subject has caught his mind and his thirst for knowledge is roused, but he is compelled to learn, and he does learn, in the hope that by continuing his tedious course he may finally gain an opportunity for a good money-earning position in life. Such inefficient teaching has hopelessly mechanized and utterly dulled

many a healthy brain, of teacher as well as of pupil, which was destined for better things.

The legitimate task of the educator in Africa as elsewhere is character-building, the re-creation of man. We want the pupil to become within his community a responsible personality with ideas and initiative of his own. To allow the vital sources of life within him to spring up spontaneously is of greater consequence than the imparting of knowledge, however indispensable this may be, so that he may develop his own powers of production not only in the material but also in the spiritual sphere, and thus bring his contribution to the culture of mankind.

5

Our problem has, however, a significance beyond the school and education in the strict sense of the words. The technical culture of the European is more apt than anything else to suppress the life of the emotions and to replace it by cold intellect and pure mechanism. Formerly, work was for the African a source of pleasure; even when it demanded real effort, it was such a stimulus to him that the effort became a sport rather than a task. This is in most cases not true when he works under modern conditions. It is difficult to see how a Negro who used to till his own ground or tend his own cattle, who in his leisure times went fishing and hunting, or practised some art, should enjoy work in the mines or on plantations. New pleasures may be offered him there, but they

are not related to his work. Even in the higher professions he often arrives at a point where he looks on his work merely as a daily routine, in which his personal life plays no part. It is not unimportant whether a man is able to enjoy his work because he shares in the proceeds or because the doing of it is a moral duty, or whether it is felt as a tiresome yoke borne unwillingly and solely as a means of subsistence. The latter must end in a blunting of the faculties, when the individual and the group have no values in life and no real aims to protect them from spiritual extinction. It is true that the European labourer finds himself in a similar position, but he has, or may have, within himself, a richer world of his own, which keeps him mentally alive. It is easier for him to take an interest in his work, and he has within his reach means and ways for sound, stimulating recreations and for improving his education.

Most of this is lacking in the case of the millions of African labourers who are in danger of becoming mere tools, instruments of European capitalism. Among the many questions arising out of such a state of affairs are the following: How, in the case of the African, is the transition from an emotional to a more rational and more prosaic attitude, from explosive to connected thinking, to be effected, without forcing the emotional part of his life into wrong channels, or entirely suppressing it? How can we succeed in making his life worth living under modern conditions? Which are the values in the old African

life? How can they be preserved, renewed, or replaced? On what system must the education of the African be based to transform him from a purely receptive creature to productive man with a cultural character of his own?

IV

THE ECONOMIC BASES OF LIFE

1. The Peasant. Native methods of agriculture. Intensive and extensive cultivation in relation to density of population. Modification in economic and social life involved in change from hoe culture to plough. Native attitude towards European 'improvements'.
2. Native grown crops for export. Relation to world markets and to food crops. Grounds of European opposition to Native grown commercial crops. Statistics of Native crops. Uses of agricultural schools.
3. Agriculture and magic. Agriculture in relation to social organization. Contrast with labour for Europeans.
4. The Shepherd. Hamites and cattle-breeding. Cattle as medium of exchange. Bride gift. Emotional attitude to cattle. Dangers from overstocking. Need for change to rational attitude towards cattle in order to achieve improvements in breeding, &c.
5. The Land. Tribal organization and land ownership. European encroachment and alienation of tribal lands. Ethical aspects of white settlement. Need for security for Native ownership and for study of Native land tenure.
6. Land situation in Nigeria. Plantation and mining concessions elsewhere. Situation in South Africa. Inadequacy of reserves in South Africa.
7. The Labourer. Work for the chief under tribal rule. Contrast with work for European. Dangers of detribalization. Statistics *re* Native wages and efficiency. Need for research by Institute into economic changes.

I

The Peasant.

THE Negro is a peasant; he loves the cultivation of the soil and in it finds his real vocation. In a number of agricultural tribes the same expression is used for 'to work' and 'to cultivate the field'. Other

occupations, such as hunting and fishing, rearing cattle or plying a craft, are only subsidiary to the agriculture which nourishes every household and is the foundation of all material life. The boys go from their tenderest years to the fields with father or uncle, and it is their greatest pride when, after they have reached the age of 10-12 years, the father allows them to start a little field of their own next to his, and helps them to take the first step to economic independence. It is a serious deprivation to the old man when he notices that his strength no longer suffices for joining his family in tilling the garden. In many West African tribes chiefs and other well-to-do people consider it an honourable duty to help in farm work.

The stages in the evolution of agriculture differ according to soil, climate, and the character of the people. In parts it is poor and backward, producing scanty results, but frequently the cultivation shows a high degree of application and experience, observation of nature, and ability in husbandry. In some parts of Africa one can go for days through well-tilled, carefully weeded, and fertile fields; generally speaking, and considering the primitive resources which are at the disposal of the African farmer, we have to give him credit for having reached a high stage of perfection with the means at his command.

As a preparation for tilling fields the Negro considers one measure indispensable, which in the eyes of many Europeans is a barbarous procedure, namely,

the burning of the bush. This is practised throughout the whole of Equatorial Africa at the height of the dry season. Although to the Native farmer it seems indispensable, yet in many ways it is most irrational. Its purpose is to clear the land of grass and bush, lighten the hoeing, fertilize the soil with ash, destroy snakes and other dangerous vermin, and make hunting easier. One useful effect of the burning, besides the fertilizing with ash salt, is that on pasture land coarse, less valuable grasses are in this way destroyed and the growth of fine nourishing species encouraged. At the same time there are harmful effects from this method of clearing land, seen in the destruction of the forests, the favouring of steppe-formation and the ensuing gradual desiccation, decrease in protection from wind, lack of shade, and deterioration in the quality of the soil. The re-growth of trees is made impossible by firing, and in this way large parts of Africa have been deforested. It is natural that the Natives should cling to their bush-fires, and it may be true that a piece of land can be used continuously for several years only on account of the fertilizing ash. None the less this method is wasteful and primitive, and inconsistent with intensive agriculture. It will only be possible to eliminate it, however, if we enable the Natives to manure their fields regularly, and it will be a long time before that is possible since the majority of farmers have no cattle and therefore no manure, and artificial manures are too dear.

The working of the ground is done with the hoe, the almost ubiquitous farm tool. The general procedure is for one family to cultivate a strip of land as long as it yields a profitable return. The land is then left to recover for a number of years; it becomes covered with grass and bush, and after that is made use of once more. Where it is a matter of woodland, the larger trees are cut down or burned at the root, and the wood is left to rot, or is burned. During the period of cultivation, either the same crop is grown each year, i.e. 3-5 years of sorghum or maize continuously; or there is a regular rotation of crops, during which leguminous plants, ground-nuts or peas, are planted for the enriching of the soil. The amount of land required for this shifting cultivation is disproportionately large, as one part is always fallow.

Careful cultivation is found where a dense population or the scanty ground make it necessary to use the soil to its best advantage. The Kabure in the hilly country of North Togo have stone walls round their fields; irrigate them with skilfully constructed ditches; and make use of manure from cattle kraals. The smallest piece of land is used, even when numerous stones have first laboriously to be removed. The whole country, in spite of its mountainous nature, gives the impression of a large, carefully tended garden. Similar examples of a really intensive agriculture are to be seen in other parts of Africa, and they show that the African peasant is capable of improving his methods.

The plough in an ancient form has spread from the east and north, perhaps in the train of Islamic expansion, right to the southern extreme of the Sahara and the Eastern Promontory. It has not, however, reached the Negro country, not even in those regions where the presence of cattle, as for example in East Africa, would have made its introduction possible. The Negroes have preferred to hold fast to the old system, and they still do so to-day. Where changes have taken place, they are to be ascribed to the direct action of the Europeans. In large areas of South Africa the plough has almost entirely taken the place of the hoe, and attempts to bring about the same change are being made in many parts of the continent. The success of these efforts will in tropical regions largely depend on the results of the warfare against the tsetse fly. The use of the plough involves a far-reaching modification not only of the economic system, but also of social habits. In contrast to previous custom it makes the men responsible for the larger share of agricultural activities, and therefore creates a new division of labour between the sexes. In spite of the progress of the plough, hoe cultivation will for a long time to come hold its own in many areas.

A peasant is naturally conservative, and the African peasant doubly so. All important food plants are still cultivated to-day in the same way as they were many centuries ago, and we cannot think ill of the Negro for refusing to abandon with a light heart the result of his long agricultural experience. He is

accessible to innovation if it can be adapted to what is already existing, i.e. if it can be easily assimilated and means real progress. From the sixteenth century onwards several food plants have been introduced from Central and South America into West Africa by the Portuguese, such as maize, manioc, sweet potatoes, ground-nuts, pawpaws, Cayenne-pepper (chillies), and tomatoes. Most of these have spread throughout the tropical part of the continent, and in many regions have become an indispensable part of the daily diet. It was possible for these plants to spread slowly and imperceptibly because they involved no change in the customs of the farmer and fitted into their place in the existing system of agriculture.

In contrast to this the attempts made by Europeans to improve agriculture have had only a moderate degree of success. Too often one finds pupils who have had excellent training on model farms following the old indigenous methods on their own fields. To them there are two differing systems: one good for the European, the other equally good for the African; they lack a connecting link between the old and the new. This may partly be due to the belief that the European, owing to his greater magical powers, is able to achieve what is denied to the black man. In fact, however, the agriculture of the white man rests on a mass of scientific knowledge that is for the moment not accessible to the black man, who is not able to appreciate the advantages of this knowledge.

Moreover, the method taught by the European demands more concentration, precision, and care than the Negro is accustomed to or likes. He has to fight many battles against his own indolence and deeply rooted habits. Instruction will become more efficacious if experiments in farming are carried out on the farms of the Natives by Native farm demonstrators, with the constant co-operation of the farmer himself, because in this way he will more readily be brought to see that it is a question of his own affairs and not the white man's. As soon as he has convinced himself that the innovation is really useful to him, his innate realism will recommend its acceptance.

2

Conditions are different in the case of commercial crops; they are unrelated to Native domestic economy, are not burdened with traditions and habits, but are purely a matter of modern finance. In these circumstances it seems natural to the native that he should work under European guidance, but he is just as prone to lapse into his old easy-going methods. On the whole, however, it must be admitted that the Africans have succeeded to an astonishing degree in acquiring the skill necessary for large-scale commercial production. The best-known instance of this is the cocoa-growing of the Gold Coast and in other parts of West Africa, an industry which is exclusively carried on by Native planters, and which has in a few decades developed from insignificant be-

ginnings to one of the important industries of the world, the Gold Coast alone supplying nearly half the world's consumption of cocoa. Cotton in Uganda, and to a lesser degree in Tanganyika Territory and other African countries, has undergone a similar development. Other important Native exports are ground-nuts, copra, tobacco, and in recent times coffee. In the years 1921-31 non-Native agricultural exports from Tanganyika amounted to £11,312,000 and Native to £13,881,000 approximately. No less than 68·8 per cent. of the value of coffee exported is purely Native grown.¹ In all these cases the inducement of earning money has been strong enough to encourage the Negro to increased activity without any external compulsion. Even in earlier times, before the beginning of the colonial era, the Natives produced great quantities of goods for which they found a market with European merchants. Palm-kernels, palm-oil, ground-nuts, wax, hides and skins, rubber and ivory have always been important articles of export.

The entry of the Native producer into the world market meant a great change for him. It put an end to the autarchy in which each family and each village led an existence independent of the rest of the world. The Negro farmer is becoming dependent on factors which lie beyond his control and which he does not understand. He has to take an interest in the inter-

¹ From Sir Sydney Armitage-Smith's Report on a Financial Mission to Tanganyika, quoted in *East Africa*, 24 Nov. 1932, p. 247.

national scale of prices; the art of reading and acquaintance with newspapers are becoming important for him. When the cultivation of an article for export assumes larger proportions, the planter no longer finds time to raise cereals for his own food. He has to purchase them, and thus specialization finds its way into agriculture. He cannot work the plantation with his own people and has to call in the help of workers from outside, thus becoming an employer. This situation can be seen in the cocoa crop on the Gold Coast, and the ground-nut harvest in Senegambia. Some of the workers from other areas settle permanently in the country, and colonies of strangers arise, whose inhabitants intermarry with the indigenous population. The homogeneity of the group is in this way decreased, but at the same time their outlook is widened.

If the cultivation of a product brings in large profits, every one wants to take it up, and, not unjustly, people have spoken of the cocoa-fever on the Gold Coast. The desire to earn money quickly so takes possession of the population that interest in anything else threatens to die out. It is dangerous from an economic point of view for a country to be dependent on a single product and to neglect other useful commodities as has been done with the oil-palm in the Gold Coast. On the other hand, the reaction of the Native planter to a sharp fall in prices is so radical that he loses all pleasure in his farm and is inclined to let it go to ruin; or he bitterly accuses

the white trader of cheating him out of the fruits of his toilsome labour.

Where in one area the same crops are cultivated both by Europeans and Natives, there is not infrequently a certain opposition from the white planters to the black. This may partly be explained by the fact that the Native planter is considered an unwelcome rival who can produce more cheaply. The complaints that the plantations of the Natives become a danger to their European neighbours, on account of their bad condition and faulty precautions against pests, are, however, not always unjustified. Another factor is that Native crops are lacking in quality, their preparation often being careless. Sometimes the Natives cannot refrain from their habit of adulterating a product by childish devices for increasing its weight, which may result in damaging the reputation of the produce of a whole colony. Sir Gordon Guggisberg in his account of the Gold Coast¹ gives as the four problems with which the cocoa industry is faced: (1) Deterioration in the fecundity of the trees owing to too close planting, careless methods, and lack of attention to the soil. (2) The abandonment of plantations owing to low prices. (3) The falling off in humidity owing to too great a clearance of the forests. (4) Serious diseases. In the same report (p. 41) the author points out that according to the opinion of the experts the successful combating of disease could

¹ *The Gold Coast, A Review of the Events of 1920-26*, Accra, 1927, p. 44.

not be completed in less than thirty to forty years and at a cost of between £20,000 and £25,000 per annum.

There are similar difficulties in the case of other Native export products. They are not such that Native cultivation should be discouraged. They will grow less with the improving education of the Native, but they show that the African will remain for a long time dependent on the help and the teaching of the white man. Products destined to compete on the world market require a degree of technical knowledge, exactness, care, and ceaseless work such as the Negro to-day does not possess. Where he competes with the European planter he will only rarely succeed in supplying as good a quality of the product as the white man. Certain products require the investment of so much capital, and demand such specialized labour and machinery, that they are not suitable for production by the Native.

Although independent Native production is important economically and deserves every encouragement, the systematic development of a colony makes direct white co-operation desirable and in many cases imperative. The productive capacity of a Native working within an organization and under constant direction is, according to the *Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture* (Tanganyika Territory),¹ many times greater than where the same man works alone. In the Lindi Province, non-Native production from a few estates employing about 6,000 labourers

¹ Dar-es-Salaam, 1932, p. 5.

accounted for 50 per cent. of the value of exports for 1931; the balance of the population, some 350,000 souls, supplied the other half. 'Practical support to non-Native enterprise in a Native territory such as Tanganyika is well worth while, and to achieve steadiness of out-turn and of trade each should be equally supported, as they are in effect complementary and not opposed.' The same Report indicates (p. 16) that while in Bukoba, despite several years of educative effort, the coffee plantations of the Natives are still in poor condition, on Kilimanjaro a far better state of affairs obtains, 'possibly because of the nearness of many non-Native plantations'.

Agricultural schools have been established in many parts of Africa and are doing valuable service in training Native instructors and demonstrators, and in forming technical assistants for large-scale agricultural enterprises. But it is of even greater importance that their influence should reach the bulk of the population. The time of slothful and easy-going farming has passed even for the bush-dweller. Land is becoming rare and valuable. If the African wants to keep it and to live from it, he will have to learn to handle it with care and make the best use of it. This he can be taught only by the white man and through systematic instruction. Agricultural institutions have, however, to guard against the danger of being too scientific and too specialized. The pupil should not be taught things which lie beyond the horizon of his future life as a village farmer and should not be

urged to use tools and methods which he cannot easily employ in home surroundings. He will have to do what his fellow villagers do, only with better knowledge and improved methods, so that they will be stimulated to adopt his new ways. It is better that progress should proceed slowly, as it were imperceptibly and as part of the community life, than that far-reaching innovations should suddenly be introduced which do not appeal to the slow imagination and the sceptic attitude of the black farmer.

Such a simple and natural form of instruction in agriculture is best given in the elementary school; it is an excellent means for establishing the necessary close connexion between the school and daily life, as well as that between school and home. Botany and zoology, nature study and geography, cattle-raising and horticulture have their natural point of departure in the home field and garden, in bush, steppe, and forest. If the instruction is given in the right way, it will be so interesting to the children that they will speak about it at home, and repeat on their own fields or on those of their fathers some of the experiments which they have learnt in the school garden under the supervision of their teacher. This will to a considerable extent contribute to making the school of a Negro village a centre of culture, from which fresh life would radiate to the whole community. The flight from agriculture is general and is a serious symptom. In the main it can be explained by the upheavals of to-day which mislead the Negro

into hoping that away from his home he will be able to acquire a fortune very quickly. This migration is encouraged if education, by its academic attitude and its ignoring of village life, drives the pupils away from the village into the large towns. The Native has too often been led to believe that farming and going to school are two different things, unrelated to each other, or even mutually exclusive. The boy who is going to be 'only' a farmer does not need any schooling, and the boy who goes to school does not do so with the intention of becoming a farmer. Let any class of schoolboys be asked who among them wish to be farmers and remain in their Native village, and the answer will be quite unambiguous. This means that the intelligent, energetic, and cultivated section of the youth is turning away from agriculture, and this tendency will gain strength as the school system grows. It is to be welcomed that lately education authorities have successfully endeavoured to adapt elementary schools to an agricultural community and thus to give them their true place in life. In the interests of the African we can hope for nothing better than that his land should remain a land of farmers, and that well-populated farming villages with an educated and progressive population will be its chief wealth. We should make it our object to prevent the Negro from losing his joy in agriculture, and also to hinder the growth of a prejudice, which is fortunately being overcome to-day in Europe and America, that anybody who cannot get on at

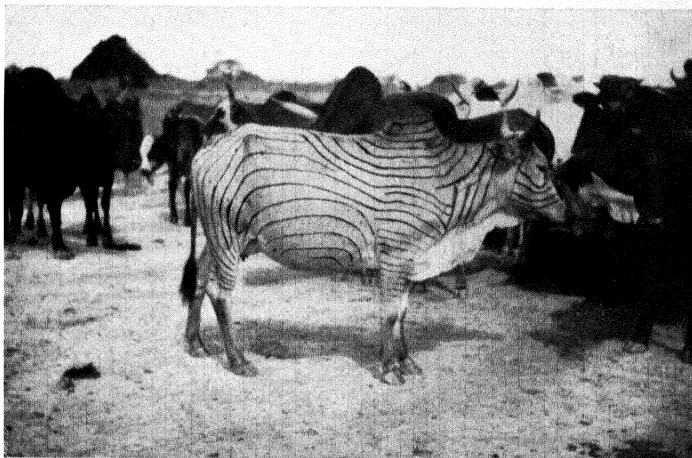
school is good enough to be a farmer. The remedy for this is to show the African that a thorough training is not only advantageous but indispensable for the farmer of the future.

3

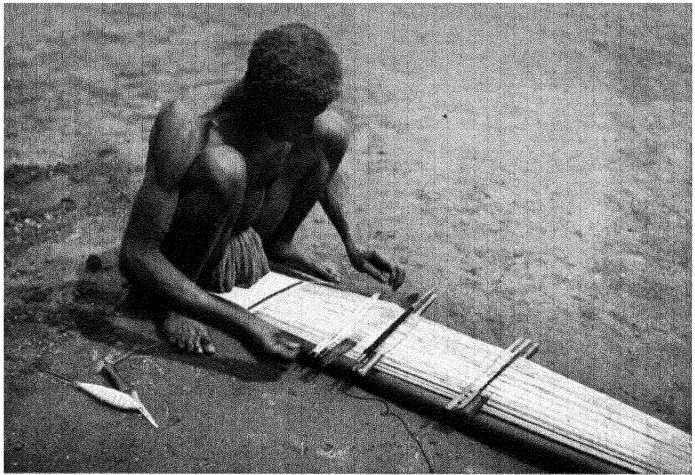
Agriculture has from time immemorial been closely connected with religious and magical beliefs and practices. For a work of such importance, on which the whole existence of the group depends, the powers of man will, in spite of industry and care, not suffice. The greater number of West African tribes worship the Earth as a divinity which is the giver of all fruitfulness. The priests or chiefs offer sacrifices to the Earth at all important agricultural seasons and ask her blessing. When new fields are put under cultivation, they point out the right spot and the best time for the beginning of the work. Even the individual father of a family does not begin his work without sacrifice and prayer, be it to the Earth, to another deity, or to the ancestors. Magic serves to exorcize the hostile powers of rival neighbours or of evil spirits, and to attract beneficent powers, especially that of rain in due season. The planting of seeds is generally left to the women, because they have the gift of fruitfulness and can transfer it to the crops. Among the Ewe, a young girl with her friends has to plant the maize on the field of her future father-in-law. This is her first step into the family of her future husband. Many tribes of Liberia, the Kpelle for



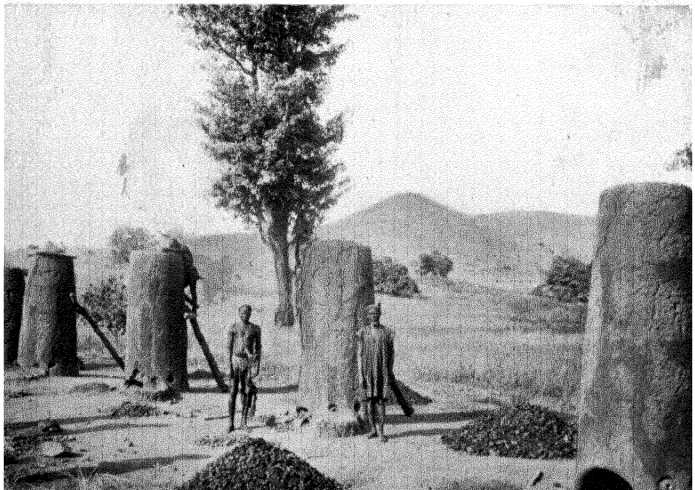
ZULU WOMEN WORKING ON FARM, SOUTH AFRICA



COW WITH ORNAMENTAL BANDS, GOGO, EAST AFRICA



WEAVER, BAMUM, CAMEROON



FURNACES FOR SMELTING IRON, TOGO

instance, require a wife to confess to her husband before the beginning of the field work if she has been unfaithful to him, because otherwise harmful influences will hamper the growth of the crop and lead to disasters in the working of the field. The greatest feast of the year is, for tribes who practise agriculture, the Harvest Home, in which gods and ancestors participate and receive their thank-offerings.

The social aspect of agriculture is as important as the religious and magical. The days of field work and the bringing in of the crop have, in spite of the toil they involve, a festive character. The whole community works the field of the chief; the young men together till the garden of each member of their group in due succession; the youth is helped by boys of the same age in his work for his father-in-law; and every day such co-operation is celebrated by a meal with the beer-drinking that belongs to it, and finishes with song and dance. In the case of larger groups of workers a drummer is often installed on the margin of the field, and the rhythm of his drum regulates the work and incites the workers.

These emotional elements fade into the background not only when the Native works on a European plantation, but also when he begins to rationalize his agriculture and to cultivate commercial crops. It is no longer a question of the maintenance of a group for which he feels himself responsible, but of the earnings of an individual; in place of mutual help there is now paid labour; for the prospering of the

cocoa and coffee plantations the aid of the ancestors and gods is no longer invoked, for they have nothing to do with such matters. The cultivator relies on the lessons he has learnt from the European. Thus even for this progress a price must be paid. It eliminates many a superstition and much sluggishness in work, and compels the soil to greater fruitfulness, but at the same time it destroys much of the religious sense and feeling of social responsibility. It creates differences between the poor and the rich, which tend to create social friction.

4

The Shepherd.

Among the varieties of cattle living in Africa today, three have importance: (a) *Bos primigenius*, which is derived from an undomesticated form in southern Egypt, and which spread over East and South Africa as well as over the Sudan and parts of Central Africa; (b) a hump-backed breed (Zebu) which was imported from southern Asia and is distributed over large areas of Eastern, South, and Central Africa, reaching as far as Senegal; (c) a small, almost dwarfish, short-horned breed, limited to two areas, viz. Liberia and Cameroon. The breed named under (a) has spread on account of the wanderings of the Hamites. Where these peoples mixed with Negroes, the latter took up cattle-breeding side by side with agriculture. This is particularly true with regard to East and South Africa, where large coherent groups of cattle-breeders are found, beginning

in the Upper Nile region, east of the Congo basin, southwards to the lower Zambezi and Limpopo, the eastern half of South Africa, and reaching to the west coast (Nama, Herero, Ambo). Besides oxen and kine, sheep and goats are often bred in large numbers. The cattle are generally of no great value economically. The milk yield is small and the flesh often poor. Milk, and sometimes also butter, are important elements of food. Many of the Nile tribes drink the blood of living animals; and the hide serves for clothing and ornament. Nevertheless, it is not the economic value of cattle that occupies the first place in the mind of the Native. This can be deduced from the fact that even the owner of large flocks seldom slaughters healthy animals for the purpose of eating the meat, except on particular occasions, such as sacrifices, initiation rites, marriages, and funerals. Cattle are rather a possession. The wealth of a man and of a group is measured by the number of cattle owned, and the wars in the past were mostly cattle-raids or conflicts for pasturage. A characteristic distinction between agriculturists and cattle-breeders is expressed in the fact that while a number of agricultural tribes use the same term for to work and to cultivate a field, the Kipsigis in Kenya, a pastoral people, employ the same word for going to work as for going to war, for the object in both cases is to obtain cattle. Cattle are the only medium through which commercial transactions on a large scale can be carried out, in other words, they are a substitute

for money. Above all things, cattle are, in all cattle-breeding tribes, the 'bride-wealth' by which a wife can be acquired. If a father has four sons, he and his sons must take care to acquire enough cows and bulls to enable them to marry four wives, and he hopes that the marriages of his daughters will bring him in a corresponding number of cattle. Cattle therefore are perpetually being exchanged between the various groups. They represent capital, the decrease of which must be prevented by all possible means. This capital has been entrusted to the present owner by his ancestors, and he must leave it to his descendants unimpaired. A group without cattle is doomed to ruin.

Old rock-carvings in northern Africa seem to point to the fact that a worship of cattle existed there in the past. Traces of such worship are to be found even to-day, for instance, in the customs and traditions of the Shilluk. The influence of such ideas may perhaps be traced in the extraordinarily close, almost personal relationship, which an owner has with his cattle in East and South Africa. The Nuer boy receives an ox from his father at the end of his initiation. The name of this ox, given on account of its colouring, becomes henceforth the boy's favourite 'praise name'. Any one visiting him greets him with the name of this ox. The two 'grow up together'; he will stroke and caress it, and dance round it in wanton leaps and bounds. If one day it should be slaughtered, he will not touch its flesh.¹ The boys spend their youth in the wide

¹ Cf. P. Crazzolaro, *Africa*, vol. v, p. 36.

steppes as guardians of the herds and take the happiest memories from them into life. For a man there is no pleasanter occupation than to be among his cattle, admiring them, stroking his favourites and inventing pet names for them. The conversations of the old men in the evenings over a mug of beer will inevitably turn on the quantity, kind, and peculiarities of their oxen. It can easily be understood that with such an attitude the economic value takes a second place. The breeder's object is not weight of meat or yield of milk. There is no reason why it should be, since the object is not to slaughter the cattle, and since in exchanging them it is the number and not the quality which is decisive. The owner's object is rather the size and form of the horns or the colouring of his cows. The Shilluk have a special craftsman, the horn dresser, whose task it is to give the horns of the young oxen the shape which the owner desires. In circumstances like these separation from a favourite animal is a real sorrow, and the idea of slaughtering it for a merely material purpose strikes the owner as cruelty.

In former times an excessive growth of head of cattle was prevented by continuous cattle-raids and by the cattle-plagues which often claimed hundreds of thousands of victims. The transition of most of the Masai groups around the Meru to agriculture can be explained by the loss of their cattle through rinderpest, and their consequent impoverishment. Both factors have vanished to-day. Wars have ceased and

diseases are successfully combated. The result is that the Native ownership of cattle has considerably increased. Bechuanaland has, with a Native population of 260,000, 426,000 head of cattle, not counting the numerous young beasts. In Kenya the Native population of 2,838,000 has a round 5 million head of cattle, over 4 million goats, and 3 million sheep. The Native population of the Union of South Africa owns approximately 49 per cent. of the Union's cattle.

Many pastures are overstocked, the cattle are badly nourished and of poor quality. What is of greater consequence, the pasturage is damaged by excessive grazing and trampling of stock, resulting in soil-erosion. This has become a serious threat in large areas of the continent: it is not caused by cattle only, but also by bush fires, by cultivation on slopes without conserving the soil, or by felling trees in mountainous regions. But its main cause is evidently the superabundance of cattle which are to a great extent economically useless. The Natives will have to realize that this cannot go on and that they must learn to adapt their cherished customs to new requirements. This process is beginning, though slowly, and it is, as in the case of agricultural progress, due entirely to the intervention of the white man. He has created a demand for meat in the large population centres; here the herdsman can sell his cattle as well as other produce of animal husbandry. The white man helps him to improve the quality of his herds, to protect them against pests, he teaches him how to produce

saleable milk, butter, and cheese, and he buys them from him. These stimuli and the necessity of 'buying' money for paying taxes work together in converting the emotional attitude of the cattle-owner towards his live stock into a more rational one, and this is indeed the only possible way of keeping his wealth from shrinking into insignificance.

The number of tribes who live exclusively on cattle-breeding seems to be diminishing. Various groups in eastern Africa and elsewhere have through raids or diseases lost their herds and taken to farming; others, e.g. certain sections of the Fulani, have evolved a tendency to become sedentary and to add agriculture to their stock-keeping. On the other hand the numerous Negro tribes with whom the wandering Hamitic herdsmen came into close touch learned from them the keeping of cattle. So in a large part of Africa development tends towards an economic status of mixed farming and cattle-keeping, in which the woman has, in the main, the agricultural work, while the man cares for the cattle, until such time when this division of labour may again be altered by the adoption of the plough (see p. 54).

5

The Land.

Although in former times there was land in abundance in most parts of Africa, yet each political unit, or each clan, knew the boundaries of its territory and guarded them jealously. Even in the case of

stretches of primeval forests the boundary was usually fixed. This had practical significance in the right of gathering forest products and timber, and the duty of maintaining the roads, which secured a peaceful commercial intercourse between the tribes. Apart from such factors the claim to the ownership of land which had never been actually used had only a theoretical character, and it is surprising that, in spite of this, wars were not infrequently waged for this claim. It was felt to be an unendurable challenge when a strange group wanted to settle in a country which had hitherto been looked upon as the property of one's own group.

For a large part of Africa the conclusions apply which were made by the distinguished author, M. Delafosse,¹ concerning French West Africa:

'One of the most outstanding principles is that there is not an inch of land without an owner, not one inch over which a proprietor, and, most of the time, also an occupier, does not claim his rights. On this point, peoples of the north and south, both sedentary and nomadic, all agree, and this is no doubt the reason why even the Moslems are little inclined to adopt the rule of the Maleki law, which permits up to a certain point that vacant land can be "without a master". Moreover, all Natives are unanimous that if the chief of the political body is the proprietor of the land, it is only as the administrator of the territory and the legal representative of the group to which in the last resort all the rights to the soil belong. Thus, among Moslems as well as among animists, the chief

¹ *Haut Sénégal-Niger*, vol. iii, pp. 14 ff.

can alienate no lands on his own authority, except those which he cultivates himself and which constitute in a sense his private property.'

This, however, does not mean that the whole of Africa had been divided up among the Natives before the arrival of the Europeans. There were vast tracts of woods, marshland, mountains, and steppes, completely uninhabited, to which no one laid any claim. If such regions were within the political sphere of a greater power, that power could call it its property, but that is not the same thing as the claim of a community which needs the soil for its own existence. The Colonial Governments were justified in declaring such territories as Crown Land and in thus preventing unlawful use of it. It was likewise their duty to protect forest tracts from destruction through wasteful farming and to reserve lands for afforestation.

Although the African is always ready to defend his land against an unwelcome intruder, and although disputes about land between neighbouring tribes or clans were not at all uncommon, he has never handled the land question in an ungenerous way, but has always been ready to grant hospitality to people coming from abroad. In all the larger towns quarters for strangers are established, in which members of foreign tribes or peoples live either temporarily for the carrying out of trade and industry, or as permanent settlers. The right to settle is granted by the chief or, in his name, by the owner of the land, to whom the stranger has to give regular compensation

either in products of the land or the hunt, or by paying him cash in recognition that the land does not belong to him.

The idea is therefore not alien to the African of renting land to strangers, so long as it is conceived as the privilege of a guest. In the same manner the first Europeans, traders or missionaries, were received as honoured guests and were assigned a place for their habitation. If they did not pay a regular rent, it was expected from them that from time to time they should make a present to the chief or the landowner. This was usual even in cases where the white man wanted a piece of land as permanent property, e.g. for a farm, or a site for a mission station. Consent for such settlements was given the more readily because it was hoped that the granting of such advantages to the foreigner would result in the introduction of commerce into the land and in the learning of unknown arts. The alienation of land became a problem, however, when its economic value rose or when the Natives began to fear that the basis of their lives was being drawn away from under their feet and the future of their group seemed to be threatened.

The white settler or planter came into the land, often dispatched by his Government or invited by Concessionaire Land Companies, in the hope of gaining a livelihood in Africa or finding a profitable investment for his capital. He found fertile land in abundance, sparsely populated or uninhabited. What

could be more natural than that he should wish to appropriate this, with the excuse that he would win from it far better produce, and thus be able to contribute to the increase of prosperity far more than the present tenants could do? It was not only the right of the stronger, but that of the more capable, which he could plead on his own behalf. A just compromise had to be found between these claims and the interests of the Natives. There are parts of Africa where there is room for both black and white, where the population is so sparse that for an appreciable time it will not be able to exploit the land at its disposal, and therefore a part of such land can be given over to European settlers and planters without a qualm. It appears contrary to reason to allow valuable land to lie fallow when there is somebody who has the will and the means to develop it. In individual cases it may be necessary to dispossess the Natives of land which they already cultivate and on which they live. Such transactions should, however, be avoided whenever possible. For the African his land is not so much a valuable economic object which can at will be exchanged for another, but it is rather something which has been entrusted to the present generation by the ancestors and must be handed on to the descendants. It is, as the Ewe say: 'The great thing which God has given to mankind to be bequeathed to one's children.' It is the resting-place of the ancestors, the home of the gods, and we can understand that a group is sorely averse to parting with its soil.

The loss of land will necessarily have disintegrating results on the cohesion of the group.

Though these considerations are important, their significance must not be over-estimated. The Africans, not excepting the agriculturalists, were in the past not so exclusively rooted in the soil as is sometimes assumed. Many tribes migrated into their present territory a few centuries ago, or less than one century, and in so doing often ousted other groups. Until the most recent times there were movements of population even within the boundaries of their present home. Another place was sought for settlement because the soil had been exhausted; because disease or haunting spirits made further stay unsafe; or because a stronger neighbour was threatening.

When the white man finds it desirable to deprive the Native of part or the whole of his land, he may feel an impulse to justify his proceedings by saying that the land did not 'originally' belong to the Natives, but that they had in turn taken it away from their predecessors; or that they had forfeited the right of ownership by opposing European domination or by not fulfilling their obligations; or that they had not made a good use of the land. These arguments are futile, for they start from European ideas which cannot be transferred without qualification to African soil. It is unreasonable to think that land-rights of the Natives deserve greater respect because they are akin to European views, because land is owned individually, or because land can be bought and sold;

and that where such conceptions are lacking, one may take away land with an easier conscience. It is evident that with the arrival of the European the holding of land was bound to undergo the same fundamental changes as happened with all other conditions of life. It is equally clear that a government, having taken possession of a colony, also takes on the responsibility for the present and future well-being of the Natives. It follows that a readjustment must be undertaken which will regulate the relations between white and black, and provide for the due consideration of the needs of the Natives as the weaker party. In dealing with the land question the leading principle should be that the Natives keep their land, and this should only be departed from in exceptional cases. Enough land must be left them to afford the possibility not only of feeding the present generation, but also of providing for future increases. Secure titles must be granted to the Natives, so that the tenure of their lands, whether collective or individual, will be safe, and governments must by legal enactment prevent the Natives' land being sold heedlessly and without their fully realizing the results.

The rules and laws underlying land tenure are in most tribes a complicated affair. They can be studied only in connexion with the tribal structure, the ethnic composition, the social institutions and the past history of the group in question. They are linked up with kinship, laws of inheritance, paternal or maternal right, the position of the chief or of ruling

families, the possible existence of a dominating and a subject race. The relations between clan, tribe, and village community, between chiefs and sub-chiefs, may have to be considered, and also there may be perhaps ancient rights arising out of mythological tradition and religious beliefs. A solution which will satisfy the Natives, lead to a lasting peaceful settlement instead of to the breaking-up of the social unity, and will leave no bitterness behind, can be arrived at only through a patient and thorough study of all the factors involved. And it may well be said that peace of mind and goodwill among the Natives depend on nothing more than a satisfactory arrangement of the land question.

The question whether individual or communal land tenure is preferable cannot be answered in general, but will always depend on local conditions and prevailing custom. Individual ownership is not necessarily better because it is European and modern, nor should it be taken for granted that communal landholding is better for the African because it agrees with the older view of land tenure. Individual ownership generally affords more scope for personal initiative than communal tenure: where the tribal fabric is no longer unimpaired and social cohesion has ceased to be a decisive factor in community life, where the interests of a chief and his people are no longer felt to be interdependent, communal tenure may lead to neglect and thus to a dangerous deterioration of the soil.

On the other hand it must not be forgotten that communal ownership is never absolute. Even when the tribe or clan or chief is theoretically the owner of the land, every family or family group cultivates a plot of land which for all practical purposes is its property and is inherited within the family; crops are never communal, but always the private property of those who have grown them. In the case of pasture lands communal holding may be the best thing, just as up to this day in highly developed European countries there are community pastures and forests.

6

The difficulties are least in the purely tropical regions, in which it is impossible for a European to settle permanently; and in those regions where the population is so dense that alienation of the land seems practically unfeasible. Here the force of circumstances will make the Natives keep their land. In Nigeria the land question is settled in the following way. In southern Nigeria all land belongs to the Natives; when the Government claims land for public purposes, it pays the owner generally somewhat more than the current market value. Crown lands exist in small quantities, and they may be sold only with permission from the Secretary of State. Forest lands are also regarded as the property of the Natives. If products are taken from the forest which are regarded by the Native community as the property of an individual or family, the owner must be paid.

As it is desirable to keep a forest reserve for the preservation of the necessary humidity of the soil, and as the Natives will frequently take no steps to create such a reserve, the Government has been forced to declare certain forest areas as reserves, all possible care being taken not to infringe on Native rights. In order to protect the Natives from ill-considered sale of their land, a Native Land Acquisition Act lays down 'that no person who is not a Native of Nigeria shall acquire any interest in land without the Governor's approval'.

In northern Nigeria, too, the whole of the lands are, whether occupied or unoccupied, Native lands, 'and all rights over them are placed under the control and subject to the disposition of the Governor'.¹ This implies that the Governor may sell land to Europeans, but this privilege has been exercised to a very limited degree.

When, in the beginning of the colonial era, the Colonial Powers saw no means of developing the enormous tracts of country assigned to them, they had frequent recourse, especially in thinly populated tropical districts, to the idea of assigning great parts of these lands to Land Companies. Certain rights were allotted to such Companies, with obligations regarding means of transport and treatment of Natives. For the rest they enjoyed a large measure of freedom. The possibility of making such a vast possession profitable was doubtful because they were working

¹ *Lands and Native Rights Ordinance, 1916.*

under new, unknown conditions, and had to combat great difficulties. Their officials felt themselves bound to make a profit at all costs, and frequently that end could be attained only by getting the Natives to work at the lowest rates, that is, by forced labour. Where large plantations were organized, they had the right of evacuating the population, who then had no other course open than to become labourers of the white man. The whole system of these large Companies often led to flagrant abuses. It was later found necessary to restrict the amount of land allotted to Companies, and to restore part of it to the Natives. Even to-day, however, some of the abuses connected with the system have not been remedied.

Owing to these and similar experiences Africans have taken up a new attitude on the land question. Formerly they were care-free and casual. They sold their land for a mere nothing, and allowed the foreigners to live with them and share their property. Now they have become distrustful and jealous, and look with suspicious eyes on every Government Regulation connected with the land question. They may even raise objections when a mission begs for a piece of land for a school. A West African chief said: 'Our land is as dear to us as the apple of one's eyes,' and by this he expressed what many people feel to-day. This way of thinking is most clearly observable in East and South Africa because here, in growing numbers, alien races have settled, which in almost every respect are superior to the Negro. Here it was

not a question only of using unused land. The Native was alienated from his property, and the foreigner took his place. The Native had to be content with the land which the foreigner assigned to him, or he was invited to settle on the land of the new owner as a labourer. Sometimes the only escape left to him was to leave his native soil altogether and become an industrial worker. The chief differences between South and East Africa consist in the fact that in the latter only parts of the land are suitable for European settlement, and it will always be a question of European and Native landowners living side by side. Moreover, here the problem was recognized in good time and forces are at work with the object of evolving a just compromise. In South Africa, on the other hand, owing to the greater age and larger diffusion of European settlements, conditions have been stabilized in such a way that changes of a radical nature can scarcely be expected. The situation is made clear by the simple fact that in the Union of South Africa the nearly seven million Natives own less than 10 per cent. of the land, while the remaining 90 per cent. are the property of the two million Europeans. The rural population of the Union is estimated as approximately four millions, of which some 2,270,000 live on Native land and the rest as squatters or labourers on farms of the whites. This means that 87 per cent. of the Native population are still rural, and about 600,000 live in towns.

A new situation has been created in the Union of

South Africa through the introduction of the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936. This Act established a South African Native Trust to be administered by the Governor-General, in which are vested all Crown lands reserved for Native occupation and all new lands to be acquired by the Trust. The amount of land reserved for use by Natives was, previous to the Act, 11,000,000 morgen; this, by the 1936 Act, will be increased by 7,250,000 morgen.

The policy of the Trust is to purchase the land, to retain its ownership, to develop it as far as this is desirable or as the means of the Trust permit, and to rent it to Natives. The rents will be fixed later. Only in exceptional cases will Natives, whether tribes or individuals, be permitted to purchase land from the Trust or be assisted by the Trust to acquire land in released areas from private owners. The primary aim for which the new land will be used is that of 'affording relief, in so far as possible, to the existing locations, so as to enable the necessary remedial measures to be instituted and to afford them an opportunity to recover'.

The plan of the Trust seems to be to let the land preferably to tribes or tribal groups, instead of to individuals. It is to be hoped that private ownership or holding will not be altogether excluded, for there are certainly progressive farmers who would like to work their own farm and to develop it with their own means. In regions where the tribal entity is no longer strong and European ideas have taken hold

on the population, communal holding of land is wasteful and rather out of date. It paralyses personal initiative and may stand in the way of sound progress.

The Land Act will work as a relief and will help to mitigate the tension under which many Natives live in Reserves as well as on farms and in urban areas. But it will be far from fulfilling all the expectations maintained by Natives with regard to it. To do that the area would have to be much larger. A white Paper of February 1937 says: 'It is notorious that the Native Locations and Reserves are congested, denuded, over-stocked, eroded and, for the most part, in a deplorable condition'; and again, referring to the Crown land now in the care of the Trust: 'It must be emphasized that much of the particular class of Trust land already carries a sufficiently large number of Natives and this, speaking generally, cannot be regarded as available for the accommodation of landless Natives or of the surplus population from congested areas.'

Even the addition of the whole extent of new lands to the previously existing Reserves and Locations will not nearly be sufficient to enable a considerable part of the population to live within their own territories as independent peasants subsisting on their own agricultural or pastoral production. Practically all of them will, as at present, be obliged to earn part of their livelihood outside their areas.

As part of the new settlement of the land question the Trust is also starting schemes for the develop-

ment of Native areas, by providing a sufficient water supply, combating soil erosion and cattle diseases, and, most important of all, giving Natives a sound agricultural training. As in other parts of Africa, de-stocking of cattle farms, that is, a reduction of the number of cattle admissible on a farm, is being tried as a means against deterioration of the pastures. While it is certain that many Native pastures are highly over-stocked, this is not necessarily so in every case. In South Africa the 'over-stocking is not so much due to an excessive amount of stock held by each family as to the congestion of population which makes the grazing of even a moderate amount of stock per family impossible'.¹ It is characteristic of the attitude of Natives that even the improvement of farm lands meant entirely for their own benefit is apt to raise their suspicion; they fear the developed land might become too valuable to be allowed to remain in Native possession.

Labour tenants living on farms of Europeans have as a rule to render ninety days' service to the white farmer, in return for which they enjoy certain grazing rights, a plot of land on which to sow their own crop, and the use of the farmer's oxen for ploughing their plot. In the Lydenburg district the service was in 1938 raised to 180 days. Under such conditions it is difficult for a labour tenant to make arrangements for working for cash during his free days, which may, in certain cases, actually be reduced to three

¹ Rheinallt Jones, in *Race Relations*, vol. v. 3.

months annually. His earning capacity is thereby diminished out of all proportion to the benefit the farmer is able to draw from the increase of service rendered by his tenant. Though there is no obligation in the Act for a farmer to require free service, the general practice is that the tenant is paid no wages.

Squatters, i.e. rent-paying tenants, will be permitted to remain for thirty years, on payment by the owner of the farm of a licence which rises from 10s. to £5 per annum per squatter. No more such squatters will be allowed in the future, i.e. a man's son may not succeed him.

7

The Labourer.

Paid labour was, until the arrival of the European, almost unknown to the African. The chief had the right to demand certain unpaid labour from his people as service to the community or as a contribution to the support of himself and his court: his people had to keep up roads, to work his fields and build his house or public buildings. This was, so to speak, a labour tax, and it scarcely ever became a burden to the population. It lasted only a short time, and part of it fell in the months during which field-work was at a standstill. The community had an interest in seeing these works carried out. The reputation of the tribe would have suffered had they been done negligently or not at all. It was a matter of honour to supply the chief so amply with foodstuffs that he

could without let or hindrance receive guests and therefore attract business and traffic to the country. It is, of course, possible for a chief to exploit his claims on the working power of his subjects for selfish ends, but such abuse can be remedied by the administration.

Europeans are inclined to call this kind of communal work forced labour—and on the strength of this expression European employers have argued that forced labour is a familiar idea to the Negro from of old. It is a custom of the tribe, they say, and therefore the European Governments can claim this right to forced labour not only for public but also for private purposes. It is, however, evident that the two cases are fundamentally different. It is universally admitted to-day that forced labour is bad labour both from the point of view of the employer and the employed, and it has therefore been abandoned almost everywhere. Up to a certain point it may be permitted for public ends when it is a question of important enterprises which cannot be executed in any other way. We should not, however, expect the Native to do such work for nothing. From our point of view it might be in the public interest to construct a railway or a motor-road; for the Native it is an undertaking in the interests of the European whom he must serve with his labour. In any case such forced labour must not be paid at a lower rate than free labour. It is remarkable that the local Native Councils in Kenya have started the gradual abolition of

forced labour, and have voted money for the payment of road labourers.†

Although work for foreigners was something new for the African, he willingly entered their service. Wherever a European settles down, he immediately becomes an employer of a number of Africans, and he could in fact not exist without their manual work. The desire to acquire some of the white man's goods, to see new sights and learn unknown things, the example of their fellow tribesmen, were strong enough to lead hundreds of thousands to the working centres created by the white man. Considered as a whole it is admirable how the Negro has responded to this call and what an enormous volume of work he is doing to-day. As long as work for the white man is no more than a subsidiary pursuit for the Native, and the centre of gravity of his existence remains in his home community, this mass movement towards a more intensive activity of the race is to be welcomed.

The situation becomes more difficult when the worker loses his connexion with his native soil, leaves behind him the natural bonds which bind him to his group, and becomes an individual labourer. It means so radical a change in the conditions of his life that even with the greatest care and most honest efforts it may be many years before a real adjustment can be found. In regions with large white settlements the question becomes more complicated because the Negro appears as the competitor of the white worker

† *East Africa*, 15 Dec. 1932, p. 336.

and by improving his skill may be able to undersell him in a free labour market. Then the Government may feel obliged to protect the white labourer in order to enable him to maintain his European standard of living. The range of work to which Blacks are admitted is restricted, or a differentiation in wages is made, not according to the work done, but according to the colour of the persons who do it. If black labourers have become completely urbanized their cost of living is not much below that of white workers and they claim higher wages, which again leads to conflict.

The Report of the Economic and Wage Commission of 1925 sees as the characteristic feature of South African economics that it is organized 'on the basis of minimum employment of high-rated skilled labour and maximum employment of low-rated general labour'. The latter is composed of Natives and to a small extent of the coloured people, whereas the skilled labour is almost exclusively in the hands of the whites. The average wages of the white labourer are £1 a day, those of the Native the tenth part of that. The low wages of the Native are justified, apart from his lower standard of life, by the fact that he makes an income from his farming, to which the majority return after the end of their period of work. The Natives are told, therefore, that they need but little land because they are labourers, and as labourers they need only a small wage because they are also farmers. Yet the number is increasing of

those Native labourers who live continuously in the towns, who have adapted their mode of life more or less to that of the European, and who have to depend on what they earn as labourers. The Wage Board in Bloemfontein has shown that 75 per cent. of the 26,000 Natives living in this town are detribalized, 'they are no longer connected with any tribe and regard themselves, and expect to be regarded, as individuals'. These naturally try to rise into the higher class of labourers and so increase their income. They are obliged on account of the higher cost of living in urban centres to insist on higher wages, and these are refused on the ostensible ground that the high rates of pay claimed by the Trade Unions for the white workers would then be impossible. Their situation is made worse by the competition of workers from the Reserves, who offer their labour at so cheap a rate that the urbanized Native cannot possibly live on it. During the Great War many mines were forced, with a view to reducing the cost of production, to expand the field of work of the black labourers and to engage them also for machine work. As was to be expected, the Natives showed themselves equal to this new work, and the Report of the Mining Regulations of 1925 bears witness to 'the Native's almost phenomenal advance in efficiency during recent years'. The Report states that if this development were allowed to continue unhampered the result would be 'the elimination of the European worker from the entire range of mining operations'. This

apprehension led to the promulgation of a law according to which only whites, coloured people, or Malays, but no Natives, were to be allowed employment in a number of stated occupations. This example does not stand alone. Indirect as well as direct methods of exclusion can be applied by setting the wages for half-skilled labour so high that it does not pay employers to engage Natives at the price. It is easy to see that this is nothing but artificial prohibition from the evidence given by the Wage Board of Bloemfontein for the year 1929:

‘It is common knowledge that in many undertakings Natives and non-Natives are doing the same class and kind of work; in some instances they work side by side. If the Board were to make a recommendation for Native employees as a class of employees, it would, in effect, be singling out certain employees only from a group of employees in the same way as it would if it dealt only with red-haired and blue-eyed employees. The Board holds that employees cannot be classified as Natives and non-Natives, although they may rightly be classified as skilled or unskilled.’

One may admit that the Native is not always an efficient worker, nor is his work always worth more than is paid for it, and also that employers are not in the position to pay good wages for a large number of unskilled labourers. Yet the difference in the payment of white and Native work is often unnaturally large and is not justified by the actual work done; and frequently the income of the Natives is below the

minimum for their bare existence. Housing conditions are bad, and living conditions in many large towns are so hard that the Natives do not appear to be able to adjust themselves at the present stage of their civilization. Many degenerate into proletarians, and there is a danger that their vitality will suffer under these circumstances. They are dependent on every fluctuation in the industrial situation, and today are suffering severely from unemployment.

It is quite possible that these may be transient phenomena. The abiding and most oppressive feature of such conditions is the attempt, which has been conceived on a large scale and is supported by legal means, to exclude the Native from better-paid work and therefore to make his rise impossible. It must be confessed that there are difficulties on both sides, but the means employed up to the present do not seem calculated to overcome them.

V

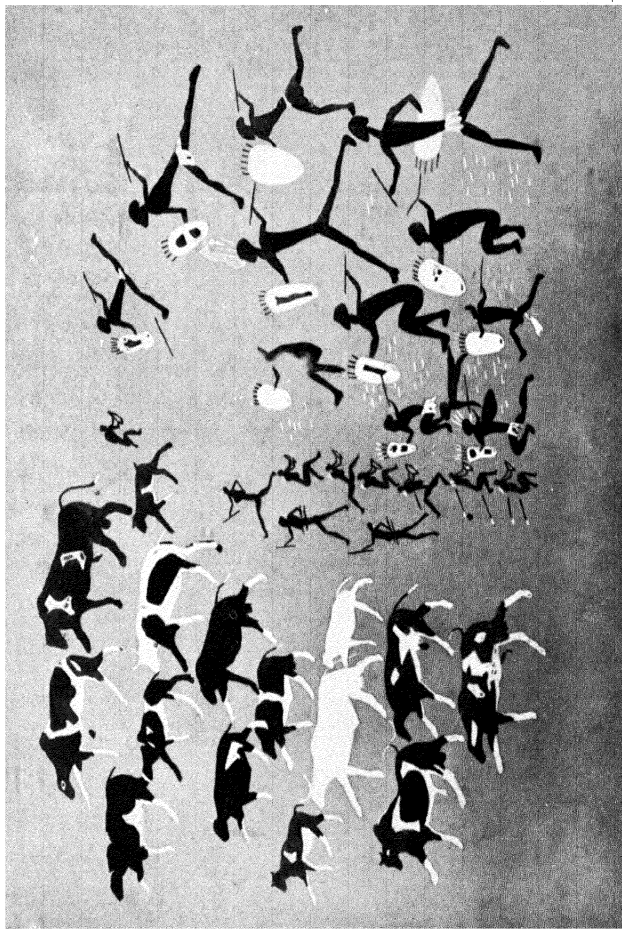
ARTS AND CRAFTS

Place of industries and crafts in Native economic life. Relation of artistic craftsmanship to social life. Art among Bushmen. Art in big Native states under court patronage. Art and magic. Destructive effect of European penetration on African art. Native preference for western goods. Suggested methods for fostering African art in view of loss to Native life. Need for research by Institute into African art.

THE Negro, like most other human beings, prefers to work intermittently. This does not mean that he spends long periods doing nothing. Men may occasionally be seen in a village sitting about in a leisurely manner—a picture which can also be observed in a European village on a Sunday afternoon or a winter's day. It would be unjust on that account to accuse the Negro of being lazy, for at other times all the people, men, women, and even children, are to be found restlessly busy. At the season for tilling the fields the villages are completely deserted, except for the decrepit old men. Every one is out in the gardens and they often remain there for weeks on end, living in temporary huts so as not to lose time returning home every day. One might speak of laziness if the Native neglected the activities falling to his lot, which is really not the case. Apart from those hours of a *dolce far niente*, so natural in the Tropics, his time, even when resting from work in the fields, is occupied, and is never lacking in variety. Nearly

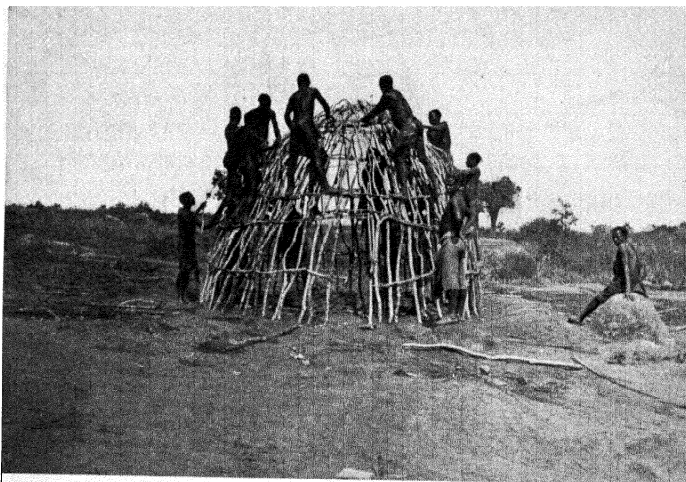
every man is in his spare time hunter or fisherman; he has bags, baskets, and hats to plait, nets to knit, cloth to weave and sew; there are drums, dug-outs, and mortars to carve; the house has to be thatched, a new fence round the homestead to be made, and a thousand other things want to be done, so that work is never lacking. The men have in addition to give their time and thought to the administration of public affairs. They are summoned to councils or other meetings, which often last for days; they may have to carry out some office at the chief's court, in the town, in the initiation bush, or in building and repairing roads. Special events such as funeral ceremonies, sacrificial feasts, or public games may require days of preparation.

It is especially the practice of industries and crafts which pleasantly and usefully occupy the leisure times of the year. The simplest form of these is the so-called house-craft, in which the members of the family prepare raw material collected by themselves for their own use, as, for example, plaiting, netting, manufacture of calabashes or pots, and other simple utensils. In most of the crafts there soon develops a tendency to distribute the work and to specialize. Individual craftsmen spring up, or social groups engage in some special craft, with the result that a tribal, caste, or local industry develops. These are conditioned not only by natural gift and inclination, but also by the occurrence of suitable materials, such as certain plants, clay, iron, salt, which are exploited by a

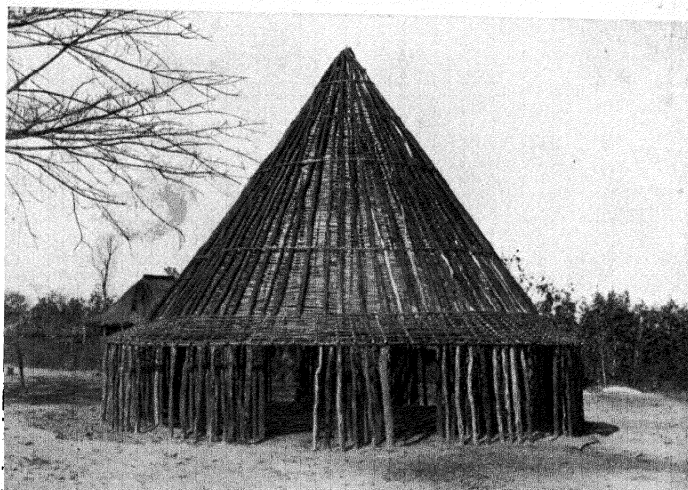


BUSHMAN PAINTING

Bushmen being pursued by Herero after raiding their cattle



BUILDING A HUT, KARA, EAST AFRICA



MEETING-HOUSE IN CONSTRUCTION, COKWE, ANGOLA

group and the finished articles traded to neighbours. Such tribal or group crafts are, for example, in West Africa those of the smith, gold-smith, weaver, potter, wood-worker, leather-dresser, rope-maker, boat-builder, and also the trader. In the central and western Sudan there exist also the professions of musician, singer, and juggler who wander from place to place, performing their arts. Smiths and weavers at times ply their trade as wandering artisans. In a similar way Arabs are found in parts of the central and western Sudan and even on the coast as shoe-makers and workers in leather, and Hausa travel about as tailors.

The boundaries between industries, crafts, and art are not rigid. The African loves to make even the simplest domestic utensil with care and to give it a decoration however modest. He may devote a good deal of time to the preparation of a tool, and he values it accordingly. It is produced entirely by his own hand, is wholly his own possession, and will last him for his lifetime. It thus, as it were, becomes part of his personality; where desire for money has not been awakened he parts unwillingly with such an object; and this is still more the case if he has inherited it and it is consequently considered as something sacred.

The artistic sense of the African is highly developed, and exhibitions of African art have found admirers in Europe. His great powers of receptivity and assimilation are brilliantly in evidence in the sphere of art, and

his command of form in sculpture and in music is remarkable.¹ The African, besides being a master in wood-carving, learnt metal-working at an early epoch and was by the use of this material enabled to impart to his artistic work a variety such as is seldom found in primitive peoples. The quality of his work is not always in richness and variety of invention equal to that of other backward peoples, a fact which perhaps may be explained by a certain predominance of the practical sense peculiar to the Negro, in comparison with which his imagination is less highly developed.

We know little about the development of African art and its dependence on other factors in life. One of these is the economic situation of a tribe. It has been said that the art of people at the collecting stage of economic life who are dependent on accurate observation of Nature is naturalistic, and that of the herdsmen and agriculturalists imaginative. This is so far true that the drawings and paintings of the Bushmen are preponderantly naturalistic. Apart, however, from the fact that there is no agreement as to the origin of the Bushman art, such a division is too general and in no way universally true. Even the Bushman art has imaginative products, as, for instance, fantastic human beings with the heads of animals. Nor is the art of the agriculturalist by any means without naturalistic traits. It is sufficient to

¹ Cf. E. M. von Hornbostel, 'African Negro Music', *Africa*, vol. i, pp. 30 ff.

remember the numerous portrait-heads of the art of Benin and many pictures of animals. A definite connexion with economic life can, however, be traced in the fact that the agricultural tribes with their fixed abode, their more highly advanced material culture, and their developed world of religious ideas are the real African artists, whereas the cattle-breeders have been barren and have even exercised a paralysing influence on the development of art through their nomadic life and their warlike tendencies.¹ Apart from bodily ornamentation and a certain care in the production of their few domestic utensils, they have produced almost nothing; and they have, during their migrations from north to south along the east coast, often mutilated and destroyed the surviving works of African art. Livingstone realized this relationship, and he traced a direct connexion between the presence of artistic work and the spread of the tsetse fly, which makes cattle-breeding impossible.

Favourable conditions for the development of artistic life are found where social and political cohesion is more complete. The caste system mentioned above, which allots certain crafts to certain social groups, leads to a far-reaching division of labour which makes it possible for the individual to devote greater attention to the crafts or to art, and to lift them on to a higher plane than is possible under

¹ Cf. H. Baumann, *Afrikanisches Kunstgewerbe* (Hassert, *Geschichte des Kunstgewerbe*, vol. ii).

simpler conditions of life. Still more fruitful has been the influence on artistic creation of the formation of large States such as Loango, Congo, Kuba, Lunda, Luba, the Cameroons grasslands, and in Upper Guinea, Benin, Yoruba, Dahomey, and Ashanti. Here it was the ambition of the rulers to foster art and to adorn their palaces and capital with works of art. Artists and craftsmen were summoned in order to work at the king's dwellings and to represent the prowess of the ruler on panels of bronze, as in Benin, or in drawings in relief, as in the royal palaces of Dahomey. The artists enjoyed high favour and were often rewarded with offices at court, or promoted to the nobility, with the effect, however, that their craft became a courtier's art and was estranged from that of the people. No one but a ruler had the means for producing the precious works in bronze, ivory, and gold,¹ such as are found in West Africa, and as the best artists gravitated more and more to the court, so artistic production in the rest of the land waned. Certain crafts were monopolized by the rulers and made not unimportant sources of revenue. The Bamum chief Njoya had his own dye works and as many as 300 looms working on his account, and the production of certain coloured patterns was forbidden except in his own workshops.

Like all other forms of activity, art is closely allied to tradition, as can be proved from the fact that it

¹ It may be said that the art of Benin was to a large extent dependent on the wealth acquired through slave-trade.

takes its most important motives from religious life. It is conservative. Although the personality of the artist will sometimes assert itself, it will seldom occur to him to deviate from the accepted norms. The invention of new shapes, or the creation of works into the production of which he has not been initiated, seldom suggests itself to him. Skill in art is regarded as a magical power, and only those works are produced for which one has the necessary 'medicine'. This does not exclude all individual invention, as, for instance, in the case of many pictures of beasts and the portraits or symbolical representations of men, but such invention is limited to certain well-defined spheres, and is almost entirely excluded in representations of religious and magic life, where suitability for purposes of ritual depends on strict adherence to traditional form. The richly developed West African art of figure sculpture represents the fathers and mothers of the group, and therefore is the handmaid of ancestor worship, to which this art is indebted for its finest fruits. These sculptures are at the same time examples of the influence of social institutions on art. In regions where mother right prevails female ancestors, and in patriarchal countries male ancestors, are the more common subjects.

African art has had many stimuli from abroad. In East Africa it has felt the influence of Arabian, Indian, and Persian art. In the Congo and the coast of Upper Guinea the effects of a culture stream which seems

to have emanated from the South Seas make themselves felt. The so-called Sudanese cultures, which cut straight across the continent from the Nile to the Upper Niger, show a certain homogeneity in that they have been culturally fertilized for thousands of years from Europe and the Near East by way of North Africa, Egypt, and Abyssinia. To them belong the famous bronze castings in Benin, and the beautiful terra-cotta figures from Ife, for which we may assume oriental or Indian origins. In West Africa, however, they have been reproduced in such perfection, both with regard to artistic form and technical workmanship, that they may rightly be regarded as authentic African works of art.

Although Africa in its artistic creation has not been inaccessible to foreign influences, its connexion with Europe in modern times has had hardly any fruitful results. In the ivory works of Loango there are European and Christian *motifs*; and similarly the artists in Benin have copied European models. European melodies have often been introduced, and in South Africa have almost ousted Native music, but all this cannot be called an enrichment or fertilization. The efforts to introduce European forms of utensils by technical schools affect only small circles and have no relation to popular art.

The chief reason why the contact of Africans with European civilization has been so lacking in results for African art, nay more, threatens to ruin it, is that European penetration destroys the foundations

on which African art has hitherto been built. Art flourishes best in stable and secure conditions, in a certain prosperity which gives the artist, even if he be only a simple farmer, sufficient leisure and freedom from care to be able to devote weeks, even months, to the production of one vessel. This peace of mind can no longer be enjoyed to-day. New tasks and aims monopolize the mind. One hears old people complain that their children no longer have time to learn the traditions and customs of their tribe because they go to school and have to learn so many other things. The complaint is justified and applies to art also. Young people who wanted to devote themselves to art or to a craft had to go through a long apprenticeship before they could be accepted into the guild. To-day such apprentices are found only rarely because money and reputation are more easily obtained in other ways, and who is anxious to choose a craft as his life-work which is obviously dying out and is daily losing in esteem? The chiefs have no longer either the inclination or the means, as they had before, to attract to their courts artists and craftsmen who would labour for years on end at a single work of art. Even in Africa the pace of life has become too rapid, and the chief has new duties to fulfil. He is a busy official, collecting taxes, hearing cases, supervising his subordinates, and dealing with a variety of affairs. At the same time he can add more lustre to his name by filling his house with European things. He can hand on his image to posterity more

beautifully by means of an enlarged photograph than by a wooden statue. Moreover, the religious roots of art are withering. Where ancestor-worship ceases and the worship of the gods decays, man ceases to depict them.

To this we must add the great superiority of European utensils of all kinds. They are not always beautiful and may at the beginning offend the cultivated taste of the African, but they are practical and durable, and therefore nothing can interrupt the triumphal progress of European ware all over Africa. Up to the end of the last century raw material was frequently introduced from Europe and worked up by the Native. Copper for the Benin bronzes for the greater part came from Portugal. African smiths worked up European iron in addition to the Native product. The weavers to-day mostly use European yarn. Thus the blast-furnaces of the country were put out, and women gave up spinning, but the craft of the smith and the weaver continued to flourish, but they, too, are gradually being submerged by the invading stream of ready-made European goods. Some crafts may continue to live on. The goods produced by African weavers show such distinguished taste and are so durable that they still have no difficulty in finding purchasers; and this is particularly true of the beautiful gowns and embroidered shirts which are worn by the Mohammedan inhabitants of the Sudan. It will be a long time yet before the last African pot and calabash, mat and basket have

disappeared from household and market. Certain branches of artistic crafts prolong their existence by working to satisfy European lovers of curiosities, but in such cases the art work, which up till now has been surrounded by a halo of myth, becomes a purely secular trade carried on for the purpose of profit and loses its religious meaning, easily involving the degeneration of its form.

It will be regretted that African crafts are, if not wholly, at any rate very largely doomed to destruction. The development is, however, inevitable. The Africans are travelling the same road from primitive to civilized technique as we and other peoples have done, only in Africa the transition is lacking in intermediate stages.

We should, however, not look exclusively on the negative side and should not speak of the destruction of African craftsmanship without pointing out that under European guidance new crafts have arisen out of the old, and are to-day giving to many thousands of Natives opportunities of developing and applying their good taste and technical abilities. The time is not in sight when Negro Africa will be a manufacturing country. It will primarily remain a market for European goods. At the same time there is room enough for such productions as can be made by the indigenous craftsman. The rule should be that anything which can be made as well and as cheaply in the country itself must not be imported from abroad. Under these conditions the Negro artisan will always

find a sufficient local market, apart from the many opportunities which he will have of practising a craft in larger European enterprises.

The situation is not so simple with regard to art in the strict sense of the word. No one can say whether it will survive or have a new birth; all that is certain is that at the moment it is threatened with rapid decay. It cannot be otherwise in a phase of transition, and no one can be made responsible for it. African art drew its best powers from religion. We might therefore assume that the new religion, i.e. Christianity, would also stimulate creation, as it has done in the Middle Ages in Europe. Will it be the same in Africa? The grounds for judgement are few. The African is too ready and too docile a pupil of the European, and too firmly convinced of the superiority of the white man, to assert his own genius. Only few Europeans have an eye for the possibility of enriching the Christian life of the Natives and making it more part and parcel of their being by means of African art. It should be a noble task for the missionary to summon a recognized artist, as, for instance, a sculptor in wood, to his aid in the construction of a church or any similar building, and to entrust him with its adornment. It certainly would be possible for the African artist to give artistic expression to his Christian faith in this way. Hitherto Christianity has for the majority of Africans been a European institution, and so they are inclined to think that the more faithfully its representations follow Euro-

pean models the better. In this view the African is consciously or unconsciously confirmed by many missionaries. It is only when the new religion has succeeded in really striking roots in the heart of the African people that we may hope for an African Christian art.

The Government, too, can assist in the fostering of art. It would, no doubt, rejoice the African's heart if the co-operation of Native arts and crafts were demanded in the erection of representative public buildings; if exhibitions of African works of art were organized in the large centres; or if educational authorities were to offer prizes for works of art. Attempts have been made in the schools to have recourse to African *motifs* in painting, drawing, modelling, and carving, and to consider African taste. Experiences in this field are encouraging and show that the artistic sense has not died out in the youth of Africa. Similarly, individual missionaries have striven to open the doors of schools and churches to African plastic art and music, but their efforts have not found many imitators. Translations of European hymns, European church music, and musical instruments have long ago made so secure a place for themselves in the African churches and are so much appreciated that their banishment is unthinkable. Hymns in particular have become an integral part of African Christian self-expression, more so since many of such European tunes are sung to texts composed by Africans.

It is specially regrettable that the Africans themselves have lost their belief in their own art, and that the educated classes are showing a bad example in this respect. As long as they have no appreciation of the wealth of beautiful things that their own race has produced and content themselves with adorning their houses with newspaper illustrations, we cannot have much hope.

The decay of African art represents a loss in values of life. The question arises how can it be avoided? Is there any means of preserving the art? Can it be revived and newly fertilized by influences from Europe? Can European art take the place of African art, and in what way, and by what means? Is there, on the other hand, enough vitality in the artistic endowment of the African? Is it deep enough to bear new blossoms when the unrest of the transition stage of to-day will have passed away? Has his artistic productivity been definitely doomed to death, and will it be his fate in this sphere, as in others, to be confined to imitation? These questions deserve to be pondered. The necessary condition for answering them is a real knowledge of African art, from which we are still far removed.

Art is an integral part of African life and in the past gave it colour and verve and fertilized the imagination. Are we only to be destroyers and, like thorough utilitarians, sacrifice the ideal to the momentarily useful? What will be the attitude of educated Africans?

Do they feel no obligation, and are they not beginning to realize what they are about to lose? It would seem that many of them have less understanding of this fine flower of African genius than the peasant in his bush village.

VI

LIFE IN THE FAMILY

1. Position of women in family and tribal life. Women's part in food production and preparation. Development of economic individualism in the family among the Ewe. Obligations of marriage. Dissolution of marriage. Polygamy as a mark of wealth. Variety in forms of marriage. Evidences of male domination. West African proverbs showing ideas about women.
2. Women and child-bearing. Marriage as a public institution. Patrilocal and matrilocal marriage. Relation between methods of acquiring wife and estimate of her value. Working for father-in-law. Bride-gift in terms of cattle.
3. Restrictions on marriage. Clan exogamy. The importance of economic aspects of marriage.
4. Effects of modern influences on marriage and family life. Cost of weddings. Conversion of bride-gift into cash. Growing independence of wife as result of man's absence in mines and of town life.
5. Native ideas on marriage and family. Importance of bride-price in stability of marriage. Christian missions and bride-price. Polygamy and missions. Radical effects of change to monogamy. Tribal case for polygamy. Non-existence of unmarried woman under polygamy.
6. Importance of education of girls and women. Influence of Christianity in home life. Scheme drawn up by Institute for study of family life in Africa. Need for enlisting Native help in such a study.

I

WHEN some fifty years ago the question arose in an Ewe chief's family whether one of its sons named Foli should go to school, an old grandmother was asked for her advice, and her counsel ran as follows: 'Our forefathers who settled in these lands

knew nothing about books, but they knew how to rule the towns; even although you, Foli, do not learn from books, you yet remain the son of a king. If it is the will of God that you one day become king, sit upon the royal stool and rule the country, it is in the hands of God, not in the hands of men. My ancestor Lako knew no books when he came from the Gold Coast to Glidiy Kpodyi and founded the town there, and he ruled the town until God called him to himself. Therefore I myself do not approve of Foli learning from books; for the son of a king does not wear shoes nor carry an umbrella before he is a king. If now he goes to school and learns to read, he will adopt the white man's custom, he will wear shoes and carry an umbrella, and in doing these things he will break the sacred laws of our family. Therefore it is better that he should not go to school.'

This is the voice of the African mother. She is the conserver of old customs and is honoured as such. The woman as mistress of the home comes into contact with public life and foreign influence less than the man; she mistrusts it and clings to old-time ideas and usages. The heritage from the past is more secure with her than with the man, and she it is who, as a mother and a grandmother, first instructs the children about that which was formerly held right and proper.

Older women are mostly held in great esteem, and the influential position of the king's mother among

the Ashanti, for example, is well known. Among the eastern Ewe the maternal aunt of the king is considered one of the leading personages in questions related to the royal family. The hut in which the sacred symbols of the tribe (stools, drums, trumpets) are kept is entrusted to her care. Where clan organization is still active in West Africa the oldest woman in the group usually enjoys as much respect as the leading male member. In times of crisis, or when an important decision has to be made, her advice is sought. When in 1866, in the hinterland of Liberia, the slaves of a chief were to be sold in order to pay off the debts of a deceased member of the chief's family, they revolted and fortified themselves in the town allotted to them. Their resistance, however, weakened and they would have surrendered if one of the women had not roused them to resist to the very end. Women may have within the tribe their own organization headed by a woman who is responsible for the conduct of the female members of the group and settles all affairs relating to them. Among the Yoruba the *iyalode*, 'mistress of the court', occupies among the women of a community a position analogous to that of the male village chief. Disputes between women are brought before her and are settled by her and her female counsellors. Within a household the *iyale*, 'mistress of the house', is responsible for the settlement of any affairs of the female members of the household. Certain tribes (e.g. Sukuma, Nyamwezi, Shambala, Mende) admit women to the

position of chief in default of a male heir, and it would in such cases occur to no one to pay less respect to his ruler because she is a woman. That the woman as ruler is regarded as an exception, however, is seen from the fact that she may not bear children. She is virtually a man and holds her office as the representative of a man; as such she may even 'marry' women.

The woman has her well-established place in the family and community, and she knows well enough how to assert her position and her rights. She is primarily the mistress of the household, responsible for its maintenance, for the provision of food, and for the upbringing of the children. "The mother acquires her position in a savage society by virtue of her production and preparation of food" (Audrey Richards, speaking of the Bemba). Between man and wife there is a strict division of labour. The man does the work which demands greater physical strength, such as clearing the bush, constructing the wood-work in the building of a house, the making of fences, the cutting of roads, and the work connected with cattle. He has also to provide meat by hunting and trapping. Field-work is usually distributed among both sexes, but there are tribes in which the wife does no field-work at all except a little help in planting, and others in which the whole of the agricultural labour falls to her share. The division of work is sanctioned by tradition, and neither the man nor the woman would wish to deviate from it.

It is not a question of socially lower or higher work, but of man's work and woman's work, and both are held in equal respect. Where the old order still exists the woman will refuse to allow the man to undertake part of her work or vice versa, because public opinion would not approve of it. Men may in exceptional cases help their wives with work which strictly speaking should be their share alone. This is, however, in the nature of a personal favour, and the man does not like doing it openly because he might be laughed at and suspected of being under his wife's thumb.

In most tribes, and particularly in agricultural communities, the heavier share of the work falls to the lot of the woman. Her work is continuous, while the man works for shorter periods and can always separate them by intervals of rest. The wife has to provide the daily food for the family and so is occupied from early morning till late at night. Assisted by her daughters she must every day fetch water and firewood, often from a long distance. As the supply of food is in West Africa mostly kept in the field, she has to carry the daily ration into the village. It is a common sight to see the woman returning home in the evening with a heavy load on her head, and a child on her back, while her husband and protector walks in front, or follows her, carrying nothing but his gun or possibly an umbrella. The preparation of the food, the toilsome grinding and pounding, the gathering of firewood, the manufacture of utensils such as pots,

gourds, baskets, and personal adornments, the spinning of cotton, the care of the children, occasional fishing and gathering of fruits: all these make ample demands on her time. During part of the year she has to work in the fields, and one cannot help admiring the woman who hoes her farm from morning until late in the afternoon, bent almost double over her work in the blazing sun with a child on her back or one left crawling about in the shade of a tree. Shortly before sunset she returns to her home, and has to prepare the chief meal of the day, heat water for her husband's bath, tend the children, and perhaps grind corn for the next day. With all that she still finds time to spend hours over her own or her neighbour's coiffure, to take part in the village dance, to tell stories to her children, and to trade.

This seemingly excessive amount of work has, however, not made her the slave of her husband; every African woman would reject such an insinuation with scorn. On the contrary, it is because she bears a heavy responsibility that her position in the family and with her husband is an assured one. She supports her husband and his children, and her husband shows his recognition of this service by complying with the woman's wishes and plans in household affairs. If he is taking part in a meeting of the village council, and it continues beyond the hour of his meal-time, he feels ill at ease, because he knows that his wife is waiting for him with food, and may give him an unfriendly reception if he comes late. If he makes

certain disrespectful remarks about the quality of the food, without good cause, this gives the woman a legal right (among the Ewe) to leave her husband. The man depends on his wife not only for his meals, but also for his comfort and his peace of mind. The women know how to prevent decisions of the community council which appear to them unjust from being carried into effect. They depart in a body and betake themselves to the place of some neighbouring chief, until such time as their husbands have changed their minds and begged them to return (Ewe).

The fact that the family is not a completely independent economic unit, but only a common household, has also favourably influenced the position of the wife.¹ Every adult member only contributes a part of his work to the expenses of this household, whereas the proceeds of the remaining amount are his own. In this respect an extraordinary individualism has developed within the family. The husband as well as the wife, and also the children as they grow up, all have their own property. The crops in the common field belong to the husband. He sets aside a part of them for the maintenance of the family, the other part the wife sells for him, gives him the money, and herself receives a commission. The wife has, besides the common field, a little personal plot of land, the fruits of which she sells on her own account. It is not unusual to find a wife carrying on

¹ In what follows conditions among the Ewe are described.

a regular farmer's business independently, engaging men and women to cultivate a field for her, whom she pays with a part of the profits. Further, there is hardly any woman who does not trade, and many make considerable profits. Thus a woman, besides her duties as a housewife, can acquire a fortune to which the husband can lay no claim, and it is not unusual to see a wife who is the creditor of her husband. Similarly, the children, especially the boys, try to acquire a little capital by working a small plot of land, by selling fuel, rowing the women to market, rearing fowls or goats, and doing sundry small services for relatives or friends. The remaining expenses for the household, for the clothing of the children, and for paying a magician or a doctor, and in short for all the incidentals of daily life, are rigidly divided between the husband and the wife.

The far-reaching economic independence of both husband and wife makes it difficult for any close union to arise between them. This is especially the case in polygamy, where each wife in turn cooks for four days for her husband and shares his home, but for the rest is comparatively independent. Husband and wife live in a common homestead, they share the children and at least partially the work in the field. For the rest the main interest of the husband is with his equals in age, his economic undertakings and matters of public life; whereas for the woman her centre is, apart from the younger children, her intercourse with the other wives and neighbours and her

own relatives. The fact that she remains a member of the clan in which she was born is of practical importance for her social position. Her people take care that no injustice is done to her. She feels herself more closely linked to them than to her husband and his family, knowing that she will always find a refuge with them. In religious matters, too, husband and wife are usually independent, since each one serves different gods, worships other ancestors, or belongs to another cult group. In the case of the illness of a child, husband and wife together will make a pilgrimage to the shrine of the husband's god, where the priest will offer sacrifices and prayer for them. These are, however, almost the only occasions which husband and wife share in common. At public celebrations or meetings men and women each have their own place and find their way separately to the place of meeting. It is thought unseemly for husband and wife to be together in public.

The wife is expected to obey the husband. In case of disobedience, disorderliness, and the suspicion of unfaithfulness he may beat her; he may also bind her hand and foot so as to give her time to reconsider herself. But he is careful in taking these measures, for she will complain to her family, who may threaten him with taking her away. The wife's method of address to her husband is *fofo*, which means 'elder brother'; she kneels as she gives him his pipe. This submissiveness has, however, vanished to-day except on certain ceremonial occasions. Husband and wife

treat each other as a rule as equals and often as friends.

The obligations entered into on the conclusion of a marriage do not end with death. The woman and her offspring remain the property of the group into which she has married, and a brother or other relative of the deceased husband may take her as his wife.

A marriage can be dissolved by a wife running away from her husband, or by his dismissing her. If efforts at conciliation fail, a separation is pronounced, and the rule applies that the party desiring the dissolution is the one that suffers economically. If the wife runs away, her clan does not get the bride-gift back, but if the husband dismisses his wife, he has to give back the bride-gift. The woman who has left her husband is received by her clan or family and easily finds an opportunity for a second marriage. Dissolutions of marriages are, however, not frequent. Immediately after the outbreak of a quarrel the group leaders begin to use their endeavours to restore peace. Everybody is anxious to avoid scandal, not to disturb the amicable relations between the two groups, and to prevent above all things the endless negotiations concerning the return of the bride-gift, because these may easily lead to lasting enmity. Thus many a wife is forced to remain with her husband even if she has good reasons for complaining of bad treatment.

Polygamy under the form of polygyny is a universal custom. The rule is that he who has sufficient

means marries more than one woman. Those who do not are rare exceptions. The woman first married is pleased to see her husband take a second wife. For her it means an improvement in her position, as in this way she becomes the chief wife and mistress of the house, who exercises supervision over the other wives. With her husband she has a privileged position, and generally enjoys his confidence in a particular way. At the same time it means for every individual woman a relief from work, for this is now divided among several and every one has more time for her own affairs. The man marries his wives, except perhaps the first one, generally with a view to acquiring more property. In pre-European times wives and slaves represented for the agriculturist the only possibility of investing capital. The man who had them in considerable numbers was rich and respected. That this system might also have its disadvantages is shown by a proverb of the Ewe: 'When he had married twice, he bought meal, but with the third he had himself to work the grindstone.' Even his personal welfare is not secured by polygamy: 'When a husband of many wives gets sick, he will die of hunger' (Twi). Marriage with several wives is, however, recommended on other than economic grounds. The wife wishes in patrilocal marriage to see her relatives from time to time, and these visits extend over weeks and months, especially if her home is in a distant place. If her father or mother dies, she must keep the death-vigil of four to six

months in the house in which the dead is buried. In some places the wife goes some months before the birth of her child to her parents and there waits for her confinement. Soon after the beginning of her pregnancy up to the weaning of her child, the man must have no connexion with his wife, that is to say, during a period of from two to three years. All these obstacles, rooted in ancient customs of the people and therefore insuperable for the individual, to which in the case of some women are added a certain unruliness and obstinacy, make it seem advisable to the husband not to be dependent on one wife only.

The forms of marriage are various. The most common in West Africa was the betrothal of children, by which a man assured a wife for himself or his son. There were few girls who had not been promised to a man in childhood. An Ewe man would throw a little stone at a pregnant woman with the words: 'If you bear a daughter, she shall be the wife of myself or my son.' If after the birth of the child the mother accepted from the man the presents usual in such cases, the child was looked upon as promised, and as soon as she grew up her people would tell her: 'That is your husband.' Before the marriage the girl was asked for her consent, but more as a matter of form. The girl had already known for a long time who was her bridegroom, she had consistently accepted presents from him, and her refusal would have been condemned as perversity and disobedience to her

parents. But there are also tribes in which the first step towards marriage is an agreement between a young man and a girl which is then ratified by the parents of one or both of them.¹

Though the division of labour between husband and wife does not by itself express a different evaluation of one sex over the other, the man in many respects dominates the woman and feels himself her superior. This results from his greater physical strength, the consequence of which is that the man alone bears arms and is looked on as the protector of the woman. The defence of the common weal and also the administration is in the hands of the men. The husband represents his wife in the law courts. In public worship the woman recedes into the background. No woman can dispose of herself. In questions of marriage the woman's advice is asked, but it is the man who decides. The husband has the right to chastise his wife. He is in law the owner of his wife and thus in the legal sense adultery is possible only on the part of the wife, for it is a damage to the husband's property, for which he can claim compensation.

The value placed on the woman's character is illustrated by proverbs which in similar forms are found among many tribes. It would be a mistake to consider them as the only criterion. Much that is said may be meant half playfully, but they give indications

¹ Cf. Lucy Mair, *An African People in the Twentieth Century*, p. 78; deals with the Ganda.

of the judgements a man passes on women.¹ 'Woman is a mat which must be beaten.' 'Woman is a thorn that pricks.' 'Woman is a misfortune.' 'If a woman looks nice, it is through her husband' (he had to pay for her finery). 'When a woman makes a drum, it leans against a man's house' (woman depends on man). 'All women are alike.' 'Women like to be where there is money.' 'When women say to you, "you are handsome", that means debt' (when women like you, you are sure to get into 'women palaver' and will soon have to pay adultery-fine). 'All the man's earnings are spent by the wife.' 'If a woman is left alone, a scamp marries her.' 'Whoever follows the counsel of his wife will drown.' 'Woman is cold water that kills, deep water that drowns.' 'No one trusts anything valuable to a woman.' 'Whoever has a sister does not know what will be his nephew's clan-name.'

It is quite possible that similar criticisms on men and their ways may be a topic of conversation in female circles, though they have not been crystallized into stereotyped forms.

2

The most important task of a woman in the life of a tribe is child-bearing. For this task she is prepared as a girl usually between the ages of ten and fifteen. The preparation consists of the young girls receiving

¹ Of the following proverbs the first three belong to the Ewe, the following five to the Twi, the remainder to the Fulani.

instruction from older women, possibly from their own mother, about sexual and marital life, about their conduct towards their future husband and their duties as housewife. In some tribes they undergo certain ceremonies, the chief purpose of which seems to be to secure fertility and to facilitate delivery. In these an excision or similar surgical operations take place. The operations are often injurious to health and may endanger the survival of the mother or the child. In many parts of Africa the preparation for marriage is confined to the seclusion of the girl for a certain period in a special hut, where she is well nourished and instructed by her mother or her father's sister about the duties of married life.

Marriage is an institution of public life, which for the security of both parties is surrounded by definite customs and laws. In it one group delivers one of its members to the other for the purpose of the propagation of the group. The separation, however, is not complete, for the departing individual remains a member of her or his former group, which continues to have an active interest in his or her well-being. This means that both the contracting groups normally stand in a friendly relationship to each other, and this is frequently expressed by the fact that children of the one group regularly marry into the other.

The married couple may reside in the man's village (patrilocal) or in that of the woman (matrilocal), or there may be compromise, such as is found among the

Kpelle, when the couple first live with the parents of the woman, with frequent visits to those of the man, but usually in the end, after some years, settle in the man's group. In purely matrilocal marriage (the terms matrilocal and patrilocal are applicable really only to the children, as these grow up in the mother's or the father's place) the dominant idea is that the group does not wish to part with a daughter, but that rather she is to bear children for her own group. The husband has therefore to live in his wife's group as a guest, or only a frequent visitor of his wife and her people. His position is thus somewhat shadowy, and he remains an outsider in his wife's family. His chief merit is to cause as little annoyance as possible by behaving himself suitably. His interests are, as before, in his own group, while his own children belong to their mother's group and her brother is responsible for their education. The husband may also have other wives in other groups. The position of the woman in such a marriage and within her group is naturally a commanding one, for she it is who assures the continuity of her own group.¹ The matrilocal family is found in matrilineal groups, i.e. in groups where family relationship is determined by female descent. Likewise in those matrilineal groups which are patrilocal, that is, those in which the woman follows the man to his place, the man has only a limited power over his children, for they like-

¹ Cf. W. C. Willoughby, *Race Problems in the New Africa*, Oxford, 1923, pp. 102 ff.

wise belong to the mother's group, and are brought up by it. These forms of family life seem to be on the decrease in Africa, and it appears unnatural for a father not to have control over his own children.

When a group hands over one of its daughters to another group it is obvious for it to expect compensation for the loss of one of its members. The most natural course appears to be that the group A receives for the daughter given away to group B a daughter of group B, who is then married to a son from group A, so that a regular exchange of women takes place; this arrangement is practised, for example, by some Ewe and Guang groups. In this as in every other form of marriage, however, the man or his group has to perform certain services or to give certain gifts to the group of the bride. A form widely distributed in West Africa is that the young man, together with the members of his own age-group, helps his father-in-law for several years in working his fields, and has in addition continuously to make presents to the girl and her people. Among pastoral tribes the bride-wealth consists of cattle. The idea of compensation is, however, not the only point of view in the handing over of bride-wealth. It is at the same time a form of insurance for the good treatment of the daughter, a pledge for friendly relationship between the two groups, and it contributes to the respect felt for the bride and her group among the man's group. In each case it is the act legalizing

marriage and is consequently of great social significance.¹

The Africans rightly defend themselves against the assertion of superficial European observers that women are bought and sold by them. If it were so, the woman would be the slave of the man, which is true neither in law nor in fact. The husband has no unlimited rights over his wife. Once he has legally married her, the Ewe cannot sell even a slave-woman, much less a free woman. It is open to him to 'pawn' his wife, but only with the expressed consent of her family, and generally only when this family is in the husband's debt, so that his wife is at the same time his 'pawn', a condition from which certain rights in the economic work of the wife accrue to him during the time that she is pledged.

The wife herself estimates her value and the consideration which she will enjoy from her husband and his family according to the amount of the bride-wealth paid for her. The position of the husband to his wife and her relatives is from the very first ambiguous if his payments were small, or if any part of them is still owing. He must be prepared on the occasion of their first quarrel for his wife to reproach him sarcastically with his unpunctuality and to threaten to cease to do her duties. But in some tribes the family of the bride prefer to have the payment of the bride-price postponed because this is a means of

¹ Cf. Gordon Brown, 'Bride-Wealth among the Hehe', *Africa*, vol. iv, pp. 145 ff.

retaining their influence on their son-in-law. For the African who has not been influenced by European ideas, a marriage concluded without bride-wealth means a humiliation and even dishonour to the wife, and even the educated, and most of the Christian, Natives, adhere to this view. The modern entry in a Register of Marriages and the service in a church are gladly accepted as a valuable addition, but they do not make the contract between the parties superfluous, for it seems to them to give a better guarantee for an orderly married life than the sanctions derived from Europe.

3

Although institutions of family life are in their nature of a conservative character, they have in the course of their history undergone changes. This is also true of rules and customs connected with married life. All tribes have marriage ordinances which prohibit the marriage of persons within certain degrees of relationship. Primitive man has a deep aversion against incest, perhaps born of the experience that sexual relations between members of one family would mean death to the unity and harmony of the family, the most sacred of all human ties. The term incest has for him a wider meaning than with us; it may interdict marriage between persons who according to our views are but loosely related to each other. Most tribes practise exogamy, i.e. the partners of a marriage must belong to different clans (among the

Ganda exogamy prohibits marriage within a person's father's or mother's clan), while in others marriage is endogamous, that is, both a man and his wife may be members of the same clan or of two closely related groups, provided they are not 'of the same blood'. A marriage preferred by many Africans is that between cross-cousins, a man's daughter marrying his sister's son. In such a case the fathers as well as the mothers of the two marriage partners belong to different clans and therefore are not of one blood.

A number of Ewe tribes prohibit marriage between persons who observe the same avoidance (taboo) because they are looked upon as near relations. Other tribes of the same people do not only allow such connexions, but favour them on the ground that the avoidances are mostly food restrictions; therefore, if man and wife come from different taboo groups, there will be inconvenience in the preparation of meals. The children inherit the taboo of the father, but their mother is pledged to follow the taboo of her own family. So cases will arise in which she is not allowed to partake of the food which she has prepared for her husband and children. If, however, man and wife observe the same avoidances, these difficulties are avoided. It is also given as a reason for marriage among related families that the property remains in the same group instead of being given away to strangers. These purely rationalistic considerations are certainly a late development and a departure

from older and more binding rules, but they are to-day frequent occurrences in many parts of Africa.

Natives in various parts of Africa assert that monogamy was the universal rule in earlier times. It will hardly be possible to prove that this is true. It is, however, certain that the possession of many wives by one man became possible only where economic conditions were so far developed that individual property played a great part in social life, and an aristocracy of property was evolved. If this property was invested in women, it was inevitable that the woman herself should become an article of property. That happened frequently, and from it customs were developed which to a large degree deprived marriage generally, and not polygamy alone, of its value. If the man has not sufficient means to acquire a wife, he borrows part of the cattle or money required from a relative. For the lender that is a safe investment of his capital. When the woman, who has been married with the aid of his money, has daughters, and they in their turn marry, then, if not earlier, he or his heirs receive back the loan with ample interest. The result of such loans may be very complicated debts and claims which drag on through generations, so that a man can be responsible for liabilities arising from transactions in connexion with a marriage which took place long before he was born.

The position of the wife too is influenced by the fact that in marriage economic considerations are placed in the foreground. She becomes the property

of the group into which she is married. If she does not fulfil the expectations placed on her, for instance, if she is childless and shows herself incapable of work through frequent illnesses, she can be sent back as worthless, and her group tries to give another woman in exchange for her. A man's wife, like any other property, passes to his heirs, and it is not rare to find a man marrying the wives of his father, with the exception of course of his own mother. It is rare that a widow remains unmarried. The rule is that one of her late husband's relatives marries her. In some tribes she may herself declare which one among them she will take, in others she is allotted to a new husband. If a girl has been betrothed as a child, her husband may easily be forty or more years older than she. As a rule he will have other wives, and the young girl will have to live in subjection to them. It has happened over and over again that a girl has refused to submit to such unnatural compulsion and has begun a liaison with a young man and remained true to him in spite of all threats from her parents. In such cases the group will come into the painful position of being compelled to return the presents and other payments made years before for the girl. If the daughter, however, like an obedient child, gives way, then after the marriage the relationship with the earlier friend may be continued, with the result that the guilty party has, when discovered, to compensate the husband.

4

As a result of modern developments the economic conception of marriage has been strengthened, and at the same time the moral values inherent in the old institutions have been weakened. Through the introduction of European ideas of money, 'bride-wealth' may reach a sum which makes it almost impossible for a man of limited means to acquire a wife, or involves him in such debts that he cannot free himself from them to the end of his days. Absurdly high expenses are often incurred in the wedding celebrations, which have also to be borne by the bridegroom and may exceed his financial resources. This has resulted in such intolerable conditions that colonial governments have seen fit to limit the bride-wealth by legal enactment. The result has been that the amount, which was meant to be the maximum, has in the eyes of the population become the average or rather the minimum under which no wife can be had, and to which the bridegroom must add 'voluntary gifts'.

It is no longer the two clans which make the marriage but two small groups out of each clan, perhaps two families, and often it is the bridegroom as an individual who negotiates with the bride's parents. Marriage from being an affair of the community has become individualized.

Under former conditions, close relationships, which both parties were concerned in maintaining, were

created between the groups in question by a marriage. The bridegroom was obliged to visit his bride and her relations at regular intervals; he was bound to work in the field of his father-in-law; and from the yield of his hunting and fishing he had to give a part to the parents of his bride. He had to make himself pleasant to them and to retain their favour, and thus opportunities arose of getting to know each other intimately. The educated Native no longer has time for all this. He pays the bride-price in cash, or perhaps sends it to his father-in-law in a postal order or a cheque. The arrangement is thus in danger of becoming a commercial transaction. Where polygamous marriages are frequent and therefore girls are in great demand, there is a tendency to lower the marriageable age in order to secure as soon as possible the high bride-price offered for the girl. Such a practice may seem justified by the fact that sexual maturity may set in before the body is fully developed, but it is of course harmful and should be discouraged.

The relationship between man and wife is also changing. If the husband is absent from the home for a part of the year as a worker in a European business, the burden on the wife can become even greater than it was formerly, because she alone becomes responsible for the work in the house and in the field. While formerly the maintenance of the family was dependent on the joint farm work of both husband and wife, it now devolves in an increasing degree on the cash earnings of the man. He becomes

the bread-winner of the family and has to support his wife and children. This is true to a wide extent, not only of employees and labourers, but also of artisans and of most town-dwellers who work regularly in the service of Europeans and have fixed salaries or wages. The woman may contribute by trade or handicraft to the expenses of the house-keeping, but the chief part of the burden now, quite differently from olden times, falls on the shoulders of the man. Similar developments may take place in rural districts, for instance, where the plough replaces the hoe. Only the man can handle the plough, and the agricultural activity of the woman is thereby reduced to a minimum. The same thing happens where commercial crops are produced. For such work, which extends over a large part of the year and demands a certain technical skill, the strength of the woman alone is not sufficient. The man must help regularly, and perhaps even engage labour, and often it is not long before the principal share of the work falls to him. Even among the purely rural population the custom is rapidly growing that the man takes a larger share than before in the field-work, so that the woman can more often remain at home. One might welcome this by assuming that the wife would now devote herself better to her household and the upbringing of her children, but this as a rule does not happen. It could only be expected if the wife had been trained for it, which is seldom the case. Her demands grow greater the more she gives up the character of the peasant and

becomes a townswoman, who no longer 'soils her hands in her husband's field' and has much free time. She expects her husband to provide her with the means for acquiring clothing fitting her rank. When he is not able to do so, she tries to acquire the necessary means herself by starting a trade. Many wives of educated Natives sit for hours every day in the market, where there is plenty of entertainment, and perhaps do less for their household and their families than they used to do when they came home from the field late in the afternoon, and the whole weight of the housework was on their shoulders.

5

The family is the centre of the social organism. If the Africans succeed in preserving it intact during the transition period, in purifying it from unhealthy elements, and in saving it from degeneracy, there need be no anxiety about their future. Here in the first place we must think of the small family, consisting of husband, wife, and children. The larger units also, such as the extended family and clan, may preserve their significance for a long time to come; but it is a necessary consequence of modern developments that the small family should stand out more clearly than in the past from other social groupings and gain in value in the estimation of the Natives. From a purely theoretical point of view it matters little whether the family is patrilocal or matrilocal, i.e. whether the children are brought up by the father

or the mother's brother. Practically there is no doubt that the future belongs to the patrilocal family, and it is easy to understand that progressive Natives, and also missions, prefer it because father, mother, and children belong together, and it seems the natural duty of the father to take the responsibility for his children.

The intervention of the European in indigenous questions is a delicate matter. Many efforts at reform have been directed by people ignorant of Native life and have done more harm than good. Often enough beautiful customs have been destroyed by unthinking enthusiasts, and the interference of missionaries has misled the Native into disguising his real attitude and becoming dishonest. It is also true that the African family in particular has borne the chief burden of community life, and it has developed so many good qualities that we can only speak of it with respect. It was adapted to the manner of life carried on before the advent of the Europeans, but it was not for that reason in every respect ideal. Together with much that was admirable, it included elements that were barbarous and backward. It is, moreover, decaying, and it is evident that something new must arise to take the place of what is declining. To smooth the path for such new development is the task of the educator, and he may thus be compelled consciously to guide the new development into channels other than the old.

The starting-point of the family is marriage. There

are two aspects of this institution which have become the objects of discussion: bride-gift and polygamy. Few Natives wish to discontinue the payment of bride-gift. It seems indispensable to them to ensure respect and durability in marriage. The family represents a public interest, and it can only fulfil its task if it is established on a life basis. Even under existing sanctions it happens that marriages dissolve. These cases, however, will be far more frequent, it is argued, if there is no guarantee by means of bride-gift, which has to be repaid if the wife of her own free will returns to her clan. One result of this view has been that marriage has become to a high degree a matter of public law, and that the personal element is made to recede into the background. Cases are frequent in which a man does not marry a girl of whom he is fond, or whose friend he has been, but one whom the clan has chosen for him. It cannot be denied that, although many such unions have resulted in lasting and happy marriages, they still imply a suppression of personality in favour of the community and a loss of dignity for the wife. This is clearly shown when a young girl is forced to marry an old polygamist; or when the wife passes by inheritance like other goods and chattels, which almost always means for her an entry into a polygamous household; or when her clan will not release her from a marriage which has become impossible for her; or when the father applies the bride-gift obtained for his daughter to purchasing another wife

for himself in addition to those he already has. In some West African tribes, the Guang in Togoland for instance, the corpse of the dead husband is carried around the village and made to indicate by certain movements who, among his male relatives, shall defray the funeral expenses and as a reward marry his widow or widows. Endless time and ingenuity are wasted in cases of succession in following out the complicated threads of the claims and obligations arising from the bride-gift. The whole system of payment for a bride is degraded by the fact that greed plays such a vital part in it, and that every feeling of personal dignity may be lost through it. The bride values her bridegroom, as she does herself, not according to his personal merits or achievements, but according to the price he is able to pay for her. A change has, it is true, recently occurred in this case in so far as girls who have enjoyed a school training are preferred, especially by educated young men, but a correspondingly high gift must be given for them, so that from this point of view even the education of a girl can be turned into a source of profit by her father.

Even in Christian communities the attitude to this custom has hardly undergone any essential change. Many missions are fighting against it, but hardly anywhere with complete success. The idea that the bride-gift is necessary for the making of a legally valid and lasting marriage is too deeply rooted to be eradicated in a few generations. It is true that resolutions are

passed in the Church Councils forbidding or regulating such payments, but as long as they are due to the initiative of the missionary and not to an expressed desire of the Natives themselves, they will have but little effect. The question therefore suggests itself whether the custom cannot be retained in a purified form. In itself there would seem to be little objection to the young man or his family making a present to his wife's parents on the occasion of his marriage. One might compare this with the dowry usual in Europe, but the difference is that in the latter case the dowry is an advantage to the young couple and destined to help them to start their own household, whereas the African bride-gift rather has the character of a payment to the 'owners' of the girl. But this is not always so. In many West African tribes the groom, besides his payments to the relatives of the bride, makes personal presents to her consisting of fineries and a chest of clothing.

The custom of the bride-gift exists in a peculiarly rigid form among the cattle-owning tribes, i.e. among the Bantu in East and South Africa, where the price is paid in cattle (*lobolo*). This question Knak has discussed in his book, *Zwischen Nil und Tafelbai*, pp. 215-43. Knak is of the opinion that the custom could be maintained in an improved form, and lays down the following principle as the chief condition. The bride-gift must bear the character of a voluntary offering, which the father or the relatives of the bride may not claim by right, and the bridegroom must expressly

declare that he or his heirs will in no circumstances base any claims later on the handing over of the gift, i.e. that he cannot demand the repayment of the gift if the marriage is for any reason dissolved. As a matter of fact a transition to such a freer interpretation of the custom is observable in West Africa. The educated Ewe prefers to call the bride-gift *akpedanu*, which literally means 'thank-offering', an expression of thanks to the parents for the great care they have devoted to the upbringing of their daughter. Many, though not all, prospective husbands look upon these gifts as a present which is given without the hope of a possible repayment later. Whether it is better that the gift should be given by the bridegroom personally, or by him and his parents, or with the co-operation of the clan, must be decided entirely according to local conditions. In West Africa, where the clan has not the same social significance as among the eastern and southern Bantu, it is the father or perhaps the mother's brother who will help the young man in the fulfilment of his obligations, though it seems justifiable and desirable on educational grounds that the obligation should fall chiefly on the bridegroom. The participation of the clan, where it still exists, can be of value, because the clan as such feels its responsibility for the welfare of the young couple. The recipients of the gifts should, however, be wherever possible only the parents of the bride, because in any case the husband will find it easier to discuss the matter amicably with them than with the whole clan.

Because all the Churches look upon polygamy as incompatible with Christianity and aim at abolishing it, the problems arising from this institution are distinct from those of the bride-gift. It is not so universal a custom as the paying of bride-gift, for the majority of marriages are monogamous. Nevertheless, polygamy is a social institution, recognized in all tribes and deeply rooted in African life. A woman does not feel she loses dignity by living in polygamy, and according to the old view it is natural for a well-to-do man to marry more than one wife. In a polygamous household, family life as we know it is not possible: it is a denial both of the respect due to woman and of Christian standards. Jealousy and strife among the wives is far from uncommon. But experience shows that a man may live in real harmony with several wives, and the wives live together like sisters, mutually helpful to one another. The children of one wife are often treated by the others as their own. 'It is most unusual to see a woman feeding only her own children,' says Monica Hunter of the Pondo.

If the Churches want to maintain their ethical standards then they cannot tolerate polygamy. But they should realize that in seeking to abolish it, they are attacking and undermining an essential section of society, and they should carefully avoid unnecessary hardships. If the missionary requires a husband, who wants to join the Church, to dismiss all his wives but one, then he compels him to dissolve

legal marriages without an adequate reason recognized by the standards of society. He also destroys a family unit. The divorced women will return to their families, and they may find another husband or husbands. But what of the children? Whatever their fate, they will not be brought up by their father and mother.

A man may find himself in a conflict of conscience when, as a married Christian, the duty falls on him to marry his deceased brother's widow. If the wife of a polygamist wishes to join the Christian Church, she is as a rule not in a position to dissolve the marriage, since she has not the means to repay the bride-gift, and her family will not recognize her grounds for separation as justified and therefore will refuse to consent to it. Many Churches have compromised by receiving the wives of polygamists as members, but this regulation can only be looked on as a transient phase. Monogamy is also made more difficult by the long continence which is expected of the man during his wife's pregnancy up to the weaning of the child. It may be objected that this difficulty has always existed in the case of monogamy; but actually the fact is that, at least in many tribes, the continence of the husband and wife is confined to intercourse with each other but not with others. It is rather a moral than a social problem.

For the Churches the obligation to monogamy has at present the result that their male members are in a minority. The number of couples married according

to Christian rites is small, while those men who cannot be full members of the Church on account of their conjugal relations still maintain a loose connexion with it, and, as they frequently belong to the well-to-do classes, even contribute to a considerable extent to the expenses of the congregation. The consequence is that the large majority of the full Church members are women, especially in places where the wives of polygamists have been admitted into membership.

Where European and Christian ideas begin to prevail, polygamy seems to lose some of its time-honoured respect in Native society. Sophisticated Natives have occasionally pleaded for the inclusion of polygamy in the Church's tenets. But the idea is spreading that it does not harmonize with an educated mode of life. According to Schapera, among the Kgatla, a section of the Tswana, where Christian influence is strong, not more than about 5 per cent. of the families are polygynous.

In tribal life the chief reason for marrying more than one wife was an economic one. But under modern conditions, in non-rural communities, this motive has lost its force. Polygamy becomes for a town-dweller either a luxury or a burden.

The introduction of monogamy creates a new social problem in the shape of the woman who remains unmarried. Thanks to the arrangement of polygamy every woman found a husband, a state of affairs which would be changed if monogamy became

general. A small number of unmarried women, but by no means all, could be absorbed in new pursuits. The old African society had no place for the unmarried woman, and the separated wife or the widow was married again as soon as possible. There were isolated cases of a woman refusing to take a man to whom she had been allotted, and these easily fell into prostitution. It is to be feared that this will be more frequent under modern conditions, especially where the clan life has been broken up and therefore gives no support to the independent woman. Hardly anything is left for her but to go to a large city and there earn her livelihood as best she may.

Colonial Administrations have tried to intervene and make regulations concerning bride-wealth and polygamy. It is, however, vain to hope for any considerable success from such measures. Even among Christian communities family life and married life labour under disabilities and difficulties and are far from being ideal. It will be a long time before the missions succeed in conquering polygamy and creating a family life which corresponds to the Christian ideal. But in any case it has succeeded in making for many Africans the idea of the monogamous family a goal to be aimed at. The conception that Christianity and monogamy belong inseparably together is so universal in Christian communities that they would vigorously oppose any relaxation of the marriage bond.

6

For creating a healthy family life the wife and mother is primarily responsible. She bravely filled her place under the Old Dispensation, and if she is to be able to do the same under the New, she needs preparation to fit her to meet the new demands which will be made on her. The school education of girls has lagged far behind that of boys, especially in rural districts. Here the idea is still held that daughters belong to the house and are to be kept away from contact with foreigners. It is contrary to African conceptions that girls should be instructed by a man, and along with boys. Schooling may be good for boys, for it will help them to make a living, but it is considered useless or harmful for girls. The task of the girl is to become a wife and a mother, and for that she can best be prepared by her own mother. The mother needs her daughters in her daily work, and one cannot blame her that she is unwilling to part with them after they have grown up under her care to an age when they can be of help to her. There is no real stimulus for girls to attend school. When a girl has been for two or three years to a village school, which is directed by a male teacher and intended for boys, such training can be but moderately successful as a preparation for her future work as housewife and mother. Nevertheless, we should welcome even this amount of teaching. It will contribute to the awakening of the girl's mind and to making

her more accessible to later instruction. Conditions are different in large centres, where girls more readily find opportunities of making use of what they have learnt at school either in a profession or by marriage with a man from the educated classes. Here and there it will also be possible in rural districts to arrange for a girls' boarding-school, from which, if it is properly directed, a good influence can spread over family life in a whole district. It is necessary, however, that the teaching in such schools shall concentrate on what the girls need in their rural surroundings. The school must be in closest touch with its environment. It must not aim at being more than a complement to the mother's training in the home. The idea should be combated that the school withdraws the child from the training given by the parents, and thus relieves them of their responsibility. The two must work hand in hand, and the school will have to take great care not to interfere with the authority of the parents, and especially that of the mother.

The efforts of those concerned with women's education should be devoted as much to the adults as to the girls. Such efforts will probably be of a personal and sometimes of a casual character, and the idea would be to appoint fully trained women teachers who would devote themselves to the adult women as well as to the girls. Often the task will fall to the woman missionary, the missionary's wife, and her native helpers. Even if their influence extends only

over a small circle, it is still not without effect on the outer world.

Although in most parts of Africa Christianity is still in its initial stages, the influence of Christian family life is noticeable. In many Christian families there is an atmosphere of cleanliness, freshness, and sometimes of an altogether new life. The Christian husband has learned in the school or the catechumens' class about the Christian order of life and has been taught to regard his wife not only as an instrument for work and for child-bearing, but as a companion and a personality. This teaching and the new spiritual atmosphere in which he moves will not be without significance in the relations between husband and wife. The woman's attitude too will change as she develops greater self-confidence. In the Christian community she enjoys the full right of membership and finds in it, perhaps in a deeper sense than many men, a new home, which will help her to develop her personality and free her from the inferiority complex under which many African women are suffering. Within the Church women have their own independent sphere of activity and responsibility, and it is not at all exceptional to find that they are the driving power in the Christian community.

Professor H. Labouret, one of the Directors of the Institute, has published detailed suggestions for the study of the African family, copies of which may be obtained from the Institute. They will be helpful in

collecting material on the subject. Here again the investigator should not be content with stating the data, but should try to understand the process of change that is going on. The transformation within the family, the dangers by which its integrity is threatened, do not only form an outstanding subject for the scientific observer, but they also preoccupy many serious Africans, women as well as men, and the problems cannot be effectively studied without their co-operation. After the investigator has made himself sufficiently acquainted with the facts and has gained the confidence of the Natives, he should, where possible, together with other competent Europeans in the country, such as administrative officers, educators, and missionaries, invite small groups of experienced Natives, and in such circles the subject might be discussed. It might also be suggested that the Vernacular Paper should open a discussion and Native contributors be asked to give in written articles their opinion on the subject of the Family. In this way not only would further material be obtained, but the Native point of view would find full consideration, and at the same time the matter would become of interest to the leading classes of Natives and would incite them to further thought on it.

VII

THE GROUP AND THE INDIVIDUAL

1. Importance of the idea of the community in Africa. The individual family and its function. Extended families under patriarchal authority.
2. Clan descent and organization. Father-right and mother-right in African tribes. Clans and land ownership.
3. The village community. Importance of local settlement.
4. Communal life seen in education, security, mutual courtesy, and service. Disintegration of social units due to conquest and to modern influences of wealth and education.

I

AFRICAN society is characterized by the prevalence of the idea of community. The individual recedes before the group. The whole of existence from birth to death is organically embodied in a series of associations, and life appears to have its full value only in these close ties. Though there is in them a well-ordered gradation between persons who command and who obey, yet the prevailing feeling is that of equality. Class distinctions as we know them are absent or but feebly developed. They may be of greater weight in countries where there is a marked distinction between a ruling group and a subject people, but usually within a social unit the consciousness of a strong sense of solidarity is predominant. The group imposes duties on the individual, but it also grants privileges; it takes from its members much of their personal responsibility and offers them its protection. 'Of whatever kind a committed crime

may be, it is never the perpetrator only who is held responsible, but likewise all his maternal relatives', says H. Tönjes of the Ambo, who follow matrilineal succession. Membership in a communal bond which involves fellowship with the co-members and connexion with the ancestors gives the individual peace of mind and a feeling of security. The introduction into a conscious participation in the communal life of the group, and a knowledge of the rules of behaviour resulting from it, form an essential part of education. The most important group formations are family, clan, and village, to which, for many parts of Africa, must be added age grades and men's associations grown out of them.

The family in its simple form consists of husband and wife or wives with their children. They form an economic unit in so far as they co-operate in the maintenance of their common household. This co-operation is not necessarily complete, for very often husband, wife, and even half-grown children have their own individual property, to which they devote part of their work. On the other hand, the family unit is not only economic, for the members, by sharing common work, care, and experiences, grow into a real living community in which love and self-sacrifice are not unknown. The family ties are less close in matrilineal marriages, where usually the husband does not become a member of his wife's household, but divides his time between his own group and that of his wife. The ties may also be lessened by the narrow

relations of each individual to wider groups. These find expression in the terminology of kinship names. Most relationship terms are applied not to the individual but to a group of persons, who in the Natives' view stand in a class relationship to a given person. For a child, his father's brothers and his mother's sisters stand in the same formal relationship to him as his real father and mother, and hence an African will often speak of 'his fathers and mothers'. If *A* is my father, then his brothers are also my fathers, and I must honour them as my father, and behave to them as I do to my father. This does not, however, mean that the personal attachment and affection between a child and his real parents is not closer than that existing between him and those persons who are in a more formal way his 'fathers' and 'mothers'. In a wider sense all members of the same generation within a group of relations, or group regarded as relations, may call each other brothers and sisters. Those of the preceding generation are for them fathers and mothers, while they call sons and daughters, nephews and nieces of the first and second degree, their children. Since, however, relationship in the male or female line is distinguished, and there is also a gradation between elder and younger, the relationship terms are in this respect even more definite and detailed than ours. The father's elder and younger brother and sister, and likewise the mother's elder and younger brother and sister, and their respective children, have each their own respective designation.

The child has to learn and to use correctly all these names and the corresponding behaviour to his relatives. This makes him conscious of the fact that he is a member not only of his family but of a larger group which influences his existence on all sides. Even in patrilocal families the child's home is not exclusively that of his parents. He may live for months together with his grandparents, his mother's brother, or some other relatives who wish to have 'their child' with them for some time. Frequently a child is given away as a servant to some elderly person within the group who lives alone and is no longer able to look after himself.

Besides the small family there is the enlarged or extended family. A man lives with his wife or wives, their children, and the husbands of their children, so that there are three or perhaps four generations in one compound or group of compounds. The eldest male member is the head of the group and all must honour and obey him. The group may be an economic unit, though not as a rule; but the members of the younger generation are bound occasionally to help or make presents to the older people, and especially to the head of the extended family, who in turn has a moral responsibility for them. Under normal circumstances each small family has to care for itself.

2

While in the small and the extended family members of originally different groups are by marriage united into a new unit, the principle of descent is strictly observed in another institution, viz. the clan. The clan is a group of people who feel themselves united by common origin, in which descent either from the father or from the mother is decisive, so that father and mother clans are distinguished. From the standpoint of the children it is a question of patrilineal or matrilineal right of inheritance. When the children belong to the father's clan, the father or his clan is responsible for their upbringing, and his children are his chief heirs. In matrilineal succession the children are the property of the mother's clan, and the responsibility for them is borne mainly by the mother's brother. His sister's children are his inheritors and—so the Ewe argue—he has in consequence the right to dispose of them. In parts of West Africa he may pawn them, and formerly might sell them in a case of financial difficulty, which was impossible where his own children were concerned, because the brother of his wife would have objected. An Ewe man once declared that in old days a man would appreciate the children of his slaves more than his own, because he could sell them! It was, however, exceptional that children were sold, although they were in danger of being seized for debts when they went to neighbouring towns unprotected.

Most tribes show traits of both father- and mother-right. Among the Ewe the children belong to the father's clan, and they inherit houses and lands from him. His movable property is inherited by his sister's children, and the father cannot dispose of his children without the assent of the mother's brother. Since they are their uncle's heirs, they are also responsible for his debts.

The clan organization of the Herero is based on two family groupings on a totemistic basis, one being matrilineal (*eanda*, pl. *omaanda*) and one patrilineal (*oruzo*, pl. *otuzo*). Membership in an *eanda* is transmitted from mother to children, and property (mainly cattle) is inherited within the *eanda*. Membership in the *oruzo* follows the paternal line. They form religious and political associations so that the office of a priest and a ruler is transmitted through the *oruzo*.

Mother-right or matrilineal succession has two centres of diffusion: a zone stretching through the breadth of the continent between the southern part of South-West Africa and north of the Lower Congo in the west, and in the east between the Zambezi and Lake Nyasa. The second centre comprises the Akan group (Agni-Ashanti), the tribes living on the southern Ivory Coast, and the Egba, a sub-tribe of the Yoruba. Matrilineal organization is also prevalent among the Berbers in North Africa.

Totemism, that is, a mystic connexion between a human group and an animal, a plant, or some other object, is found in parts of Africa. It is generally

coupled with exogamy. The relation between human group and animal species may consist in an assumed common origin, while in West Africa a prevailing view is that an ancestor of the group was saved by an animal, which henceforward was held sacred by all members of the group. The rule is that the totem or protective animal must not be killed or eaten. The totem is practically always inherited from father to son, even in communities which otherwise follow mother-right. This suggests that totemism originated among people with patrilineal succession.

The clan owns a piece of land which is divided by the elders according to the requirements of the single families. The land cannot be alienated, for it was handed down by the ancestors, and they are the real owners. The present holders are no more than trustees who have to transmit it undamaged to the coming generation. A member of a clan may have lived abroad for years, but when he returns to the land of his ancestors, a place to live and to make a farm will always be assigned to him.

The natural course of development has tended towards the evolution of private ownership of land. If a man cultivates a piece of unused land it becomes his property. Likewise clan land may become the private possession of a family which has had its usufruct for a number of years. The situation to-day in many agricultural districts is that a man's land only reverts at his death to the clan should he himself have no heirs. In other cases his lawful inheritors

receive it and divide it up among themselves. In parts of West Africa development has gone farther: a piece of land which through the process just mentioned has become a man's private property may be bequeathed by will to a person, generally to a child, outside the regular hereditary succession. From this there is only one more step to the sale of land. This is allowed when the owner has fallen into heavy debts. Such a sale can only be carried out, however, with the assent of the leading men of the clan, and after they have confessed themselves unable to pay the debts of their brother in any other way.

The clan organization of the Yombe¹ (Belgian Congo, Mayombe) furnishes a good example of how the system works in practice. The Yombe live in matrilineal clans. The natural head of the clan, called Khazi, is the oldest mother's brother. But this is not necessarily so. In his place another man of the clan, noted for his wisdom, honesty, his knowledge and interest in matters relating to clan life, may be given the office. 'Outside of his clan the individual has no social life of his own. He exists only in the functioning of the community to which he belongs and to which he owes practically his whole activity and all the produce of his work.' The Khazi, up to a point, disposes of the property and the life of all members of the clan. In a restricted sense there is

¹ N. De Cleene, 'Individu et collectivité dans l'évolution économique du Mayombe', Institut Royal Colonial Belge, *Bulletin des Séances*, vol. ix, p. 1, 1938.

private property, but the possessor must be ready to give it up for the sake of the general good at any time. Up to recent times the clan possessed a common fund to which each member had to contribute, and which was administered by the Khazi for the good of those who might need assistance.

‘The family consisting of father, mother and children had no existence by itself. . . . Husband and wife looked upon themselves pre-eminently as representatives of two different, though related, social groups to which each felt tied in such a way that even during their union it ruled all their acts and their relations.’ This predominance of the clan is to-day weakening through the growth of individualism. The family, though matrilineal in succession, is patrilocal, i.e. the wife lives in her husband’s clan and their children are born there. But since they are the property of their mother’s clan, at the age of eight years they leave their native village and go to live with their mother’s clan. This custom meets nowadays with opposition. The idea of the family asserts itself against that of the clan, the father trying to retain his own children, or, if they go to the mother’s clan for a time, to re-unite with them later.

3

The village community may originally have been identical with that of the clan or a section of the clan, but to-day the majority of villages or towns are inhabited by people of different extraction. Many clans

are scattered over a large territory, and very often the village community is, at least in its social significance, more important than the clan. It forms the natural grouping in the daily life of its inhabitants in their work and their recreative activities. It is also the base and centre of the many other associations which claim the individual as their member, such as play-groups of children, work-groups of the young people, age classes, drum and dancing clubs, religious cults, guilds of trades.

4

As the education of the individual concentrates on preparation for the life within the community, in the same way this communal life has itself been the most important educative factor. In the communal life the most valuable characteristics of the race were developed and thus became the inheritance of successive generations. The individual learns willingly to conform to the group and to serve it; he submits to its authority because only in this way can the community live. On the other hand, the consciousness of being an organic and well-protected member of a group gives the individual a definite self-consciousness and dignity. The African is highly sensitive to blame, contempt, and mockery. He knows no crawling humility, no slavish flattery, and he is not easily embarrassed. Within his own circle he is never in a position where he does not know how to behave or what to do. In a primitive community

work is not specialized in the same way as with us and therefore the non-expert 'layman' who is helpless in everything that goes beyond his special field of activity does not exist. The African is able to enlarge with ease on any subject; in public meetings he deports himself with dignity, and has no difficulty in expressing his opinions in well-turned phrases. He does not suffer from social disabilities, for there is hardly any economic dependence, nor is there a distinction between servant and master, rich and poor. Hence nobody suffers from an inferiority complex. Every individual is aware of being a valued member of his group, subject to no one, and it is natural for him to maintain this same self-assurance when dealing with the white man, to whom in many ways he feels himself superior. It is natural for him to express his real personality, for everybody knows everybody else, and no one can therefore permanently conceal his nature. That again compels him to be careful in his daily life, as he may be sure that his mistakes will soon be discovered and that he will fall in the public estimation accordingly. He becomes a social outcast if his actions always run counter to the community's idea of right conduct.

Just as he may expect consideration from everybody if his conduct is normal, so he must respect all the members of his group in accordance with their position in the group. In mutual intercourse there is an expressed courtesy; every one is considerate of every one else, and no one does violence to traditional

ceremonial. No West African receives a gift without expressing his thanks, and if possible repeating them on the following day in the company of a 'thank-helper' who assists him. A familiar feature in African life is the visit, paid by a sick man after recovery, or by a woman after her confinement, to those who have shown them kindness during the past weeks. Children from an early age are trained to good manners, and at the age of ten to twelve years they know how to behave with as much decency and dignity as an adult. The highest praise which can be given to a child, or even to an adult, among the Ewe is *ebu ame*, 'he respects people'. It is considered offensive to give way to passion and to shout at any one. Whatever is said in a state of excitement or in noisy tones is not taken seriously, and the speaker harms no one but himself. Self-control is a virtue which is expected from every one, and on the acquisition of which great stress is laid in education during the period of initiation.

Every one is under the obligation to help his fellow members. It would be indecent to refuse a hearing to a petitioner or to any one in trouble. Even children do not accept a present without giving part of it to their friends. Among adults it goes without saying that one must lend one's utensils to one's neighbour; help him in his work, and be useful to him in emergencies, as for instance in the case of a death or any other occurrence in which the individual must rely upon the help of his fellow man. This consciousness

that one is surrounded by friends and can always rely on their support helps to give to every one both in his attitude to life and in his manner that self-reliant assurance which strikes every one as so pleasing in the 'uncivilized' African.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the fact that the conditions and qualities described here are not the only ones. They come into conflict with, and yield to, less amiable traits. The disturbing factors are, however, looked upon as unseemly, and efforts are always made to remove their causes. This can only succeed, however, as long as the life of the community is but slightly influenced from without. When social distinctions become more marked; when there is a difference between rich and poor; when individual inequalities begin to show themselves clearly in inclinations and aptitudes; and when a regular system of rulership arises in place of the purely democratic association headed by the chief with relatively slight material powers: then all those unpleasant phenomena of communal life appear which seem to be indissolubly connected with every higher development and which complicate life so infinitely.

VIII

OLD AND NEW GOVERNMENTS

1. Basis of tribal organization. Authority and functions of the chief.
2. European administration and tribal rule. Policies in the Protectorates and Reserves in South Africa. Native chieftainship under Indirect Rule. Methods of government under Indirect Rule. Its advantages.

I

THE tribe is in many parts of Africa the typical political unit. As an agglomeration of groups and individuals, not necessarily related, it forms a cultural and political unity through living in a common territory, having a common leader, one language, and similar customs and usages. In West Africa a tribe will often consist of three elements: the group which migrated to the district; the original inhabitants of that district; and later migrants composed of offshoots from other groups. Though each of the component parts may be conscious of its origin, they have all been welded together into a close union. The tribe is ruled by a chief, and each individual settlement by a sub-chief who is dependent on the chief in a greater or lesser degree.

Development has not progressed everywhere in Africa as far as the tribal State. There are families or family groups who live independently by themselves and recognize either the father of the family, the priest, the rain-maker, or the magician as their chief, or regulate their communal affairs by means of a

council of elders. Such primitive political stages prevail among Bushmen and Pygmies, but they are also found in parts of the interior of West Africa and among most of the Nilotic tribes. On the other hand, several tribes may be united under a paramount chief or king. Such larger units mostly originated through conquest, and their continuance was largely dependent on the personality of the ruler. If he was weak the artificial structure would easily break down and the state dissolve into its earlier units, because its binding forces were not equal to the centrifugal tendencies of the component groups. When under favourable conditions the composite state endured, the associated tribes tended to assimilate each other's culture and to give up their distinctive life.

These were, however, rare cases, only possible where common language, tradition, and culture made such living together easier. Even where such conditions were fulfilled, it by no means always resulted in real unity. True national states, uniting because men felt themselves one and wished to be one, were exceptions. The rule was that the conquerors settled as a dominating caste in a country; they formed a feudal state, the provinces being administrated by regents or governors, or in a more autocratic and centralized way through officials and soldiers. In time the native population grew accustomed to their position as tax-payers to the ruler and adapted themselves to the new regime. Where the rule lasted long enough and was not too harsh, a certain feeling

of union between the ruling house and the subject people may have arisen, but in most of the larger states the conception of a ruling family intimately connected with the people cannot be accepted without limitations. The rulers were mostly strangers, and the feeling of the subjects towards them was awe or fear rather than respect or devotion.¹ In large areas in West Africa there exist besides the conqueror-kings the old tribal or clan heads, whose functions are to-day magical or religious. They 'make rain' and ensure the fruitfulness of the earth by their sacrifices. The people feel themselves more closely akin to them than to the ruling kings or paramount chiefs.

In the families of tribal chiefs succession can pass by direct inheritance from father to son, as with the Tswana, or to the next eldest brother, or, in the case of matrilineal succession, to the sister's son. The successor may also be eligible within certain family groups, from which a suitable candidate is chosen. The holding of an election may take years, as parties are formed, intrigues begin, and old jealousies are stirred up afresh. The power of the chief is limited. In important decisions he is dependent on the will of his people, above all on that of the leading heads

¹ 'Le roi! "Dada!" Nous entendons encore l'accent de vénération mêlée de terreur avec lequel les vieux Dahoméens prononcent ce mot!' (A. Le Hérisse, *L'Ancien Royaume du Dahomey*, p. 5.) Here it was a king sprung from another people ruling despotically.

of families, whose councils dictate the policy of the country. They have the right of censuring the chief or imposing money fines on him, even of deposing him, although use is seldom made of this power. The chief is always to some degree a sacred person and as such is often hampered in his activities through the observance of avoidances. This may go so far as that he must not be seen while eating or must remain invisible to all outsiders. In such cases another person is chosen to represent him, and strangers are given to believe that he is the real chief. But his sham position may eventually make him so influential that he practically assumes the power and the real chief becomes a figure-head. Secret societies may obtain such political weight that they succeed in getting executive power into their own hands. The chief possesses little material means to power. It depends on his personality whether he has authority, and is a real leader or merely a plaything in the hands of his elders; whether order and decency reign in his country; or whether, as is often the case, the young people do what they like. He is further bound by custom and tradition. Deviation from such a path might arouse the disapproval not only of his elders, but also of his ancestors. Chiefs have indeed departed from tribal custom. There are instances of men such as Chaka, who forbade circumcision for military reasons, and Moshesh, who tried to put down the persecution of witches and introduced other innovations. They were not tribal chiefs, however, but rulers of a

larger calibre, who could dare to disregard tradition and public opinion. In smaller communities certain changes have gradually crept in with the assent of the people, as, for example, when human sacrifice was replaced by that of animals, or cruel customs connected with ordeals were modified or abandoned. The predominant feature of political life, however, was conservatism, and innovations were not looked upon with favour. Barbaric institutions, such as the killing of persons at the burial of the chief, cruel executions, ordeals, the smelling out of witches, have been until modern times recognized features of indigenous administration.

The authority of the tribal chief rests mainly on the fact that he is the descendant of the first leader of the group. He is the representative of the ancestors, the custodian of their law and their magic powers, and thus symbolizes the unity and pride of the tribe. In honouring the chief, the tribe honours itself and its own past.

The religious position of the king or chief can result in less weight being attached to his personal character. He is the guardian of the magic powers inherited from the ancestors. What matters is that these powers are maintained unimpaired in him, for they are more important than his personal qualities. This conception may explain a certain custom which prevailed in parts of Africa: when the king's or rain-maker's physical powers decayed, or when his reign had lasted a certain number of years, he was put to

death. He was no longer a fitting vessel for magic power, and this must be handed on in another vessel, that is to say, in his successor.

One of the functions of the chief is to administer the law in conjunction with his councillors and officials. Law rests on tradition and is almost identical with custom. It is a collection of rules evolved in the course of time, with reference to the behaviour to one another of individuals and groups. A law may also be decreed by the chief after consultation with his elders. All members of a community at various ages (in various age groups) are taught to conform to the code of recognized customs. Children are told by their parents and near relations what is right and wrong behaviour. This instruction is continued and intensified at the initiation schools, and later on in life a man learns by experience what he may or should do and what is forbidden.¹ Certain of these rules are, however, real laws in so far as they can be enforced by the power of compulsion vested in the tribal courts. The main purpose of law is to maintain the equilibrium of society so that irregularities which have crept in may be compensated.² Its aim is not so much to punish an evildoer—though punishment is not unknown—as to make good an injury done, or to free the community of a person who by his unnatural behaviour has become a public enemy. When

¹ Cf. I. Schapera, *A Handbook of Tswana Law*, pp. 35 ff.

² Cf. I. H. Driberg, 'Primitive Law in Eastern Africa', *Africa*, vol. i, pp. 63 ff.

among the Kipsigis a man stole, for the first offence there was no punishment, merely surprise and remonstrance. For the second offence: anger, serious remonstrance with the man's clan, perhaps a beating. The third time, the thief's clan would disown him, i.e. consent to his public execution, the penalty otherwise reserved for witchcraft. The man was not put to death for the actual theft, but because he did an unnatural thing, as a cow that eats meat or a goat that sucks a woman's breast are put to death as unnatural beasts.¹

Breaches of civil law are mostly settled by restitution, while criminal offences are punished. The most common punishment is the imposition of a fine, in serious cases banishment from the community, which in former times generally meant death or enslavement, and capital punishment. The latter was imposed for murder, witchcraft, and sorcery, but also for continuous asocial behaviour. In certain cases the culprit, instead of receiving the death sentence, was sold as a slave. If a person was caught *in flagranti*, e.g. in adultery, in stealing cattle, in burglary, or in an assault, the injured person was allowed to take the law into his own hands. Law is not always administered impartially. The social standing of the accused may influence the verdict of the court.

2

Chieftainship is one of those institutions which

¹ I. Q. Orchardson, 'Some Traits of the Kipsigis in Relation to their Contact with Europeans', *Africa*, vol. iv, pp. 466 ff.

have preserved their vitality to the present day. It has its weaknesses and defects. It has sometimes led to abuses of power. Senseless and wanton cruelties have been committed by despotic rulers. Many a chief has brought the community entrusted to him to ruin by arbitrary injustice, incapacity, or indifference. Nevertheless, the institution as such enjoys respect and confidence in most parts of Africa. It has had in recent times to suffer upheavals and far-reaching changes, but nowhere has it vanished save where the power of the European has ousted it. Chiefs have had to learn how to adapt themselves. Although the chief's office is combined with pagan religious functions there are to-day not a few Christian chiefs. In this case a way out is found by entrusting the religious duties to a still unconverted kinsman.

A European Government which has any appreciation of the value of indigenous social bonds cannot afford to ignore a means of integration so important as the institution of chieftainship. No matter whether colonial policy aims at weakening or strengthening the existing indigenous administration, it cannot, at least in its beginning stage, do without it. This is especially true of the village chiefs. It is natural that they should retain their former functions, though their position may have changed as regards details. The problem becomes more complex when it is the question of a bigger chief and a larger administrative area.

There are three possible attitudes to these institutions. They may be (a) destroyed, (b) metamorphosed

into a European shape, or (c) maintained in their integrity and developed organically. The first two methods of procedure may be chosen from purely practical motives, or with the conscious purpose of causing the decay of existing social and political organisms and putting European substitutes in their place, with a view to bringing about a close unity and uniformity between the colony and the motherland. If practical considerations predominate, the argument will be somewhat as follows. The indigenous government is a machine which generally works clumsily, sometimes not at all, and seldom well. So many defects and so much corruption are associated with the system of chiefs that no serious administration can be built up on it. If the people were asked whether they prefer to be ruled by their own chief or by a white administrator, the majority would vote for the white man, for they are disgusted with the chief's selfishness and injustice. Protagonists of such a view may point to Basutoland as a territory with self-government under its own chiefs, who, however, in important issues have not realized the weight of responsibility laid upon them, and do not show themselves equal to their task. As a result of increased cattle-breeding the land is no longer able to maintain its population, and the overstocking of pastures causes erosion of the soil which threatens to become a danger to the country. It would be better to diminish the number of cattle and improve their quality, and to use a larger part of the land for agri-

culture. The chiefs are opposed to this idea and, indeed, to any innovation which might endanger their position. The chiefs are as a rule and by nature conservative, since they fear their authority may be prejudiced by modern changes. This has often been the case in the past. If a man produced more than his fellow tribesmen, or in any way distinguished himself, he might be suspected of rivalry with the chief and have to face the risk of being put out of the way. Similarly, suspicions arise to-day if any one works on modern methods and therefore acquires dignity and a competence. In this way the chiefs and their administrations can become an obstacle in the path of progress wherever their traditional power is great. They may adopt an attitude of opposition to the educated classes, so that the latter find no proper field for their activities in the purely tribal areas, and easily become an element of discontent. Consequently we find in some South African Native territories a state of stagnation involving a decrease of production and a lowering of the standard of life.

For these reasons—so it is argued—it is a sound policy not to govern through the chiefs, but to hand over the administration to the European official. During a transitional stage the chief may remain as an innocuous symbol of the unity of the tribe, but no power ought to be entrusted to him.

It is clear, however, that the European alone cannot carry on the whole administration. He needs the co-operation of the Natives, no matter whether he

governs with or without the chief. All the lower posts in the services of the Administration are filled by Natives, and they are gradually being entrusted with more responsible tasks. If the chiefs are abolished, Native officials will to a considerable extent take their place. They have the advantage of a better general and technical training than the chief himself, and the European can more easily control them. Whether they will have a higher sense of responsibility and justify the confidence of the European more than the hereditary chief may be doubted. Their position is weaker than that of chiefs because they do not enjoy the same consideration from the population and are not bound to it by bonds of reverence or tradition. It may be confidently asserted that in the majority of cases the Natives will give the preference to the chief with all his shortcomings rather than to the Native official.

In the Transkei Reserve a system of government exists which may be regarded as a cross between direct rule and self-government. The country is divided into twenty-seven districts, each of which is administered by a European magistrate. A district consists of locations each with about 1,000 inhabitants and a Native headman, who is chosen by the people but confirmed and paid by the Government. The administration of the law, therefore, even in matters of minor import, lies in the hands of white officials and they have taken over the functions of the former chiefs. At the same time there is a certain

amount of self-government. Each district has a Council consisting of the magistrate and six Native members, two appointed by the Government and four elected by the people. Its juridical power, however, is small, and is confined mainly to economic matters.

The people as a whole is represented in the Bunga or General Council, which meets annually in Umtata and is composed of three representatives from each district, all of them Natives. The Chief Magistrate is the president, and the District Magistrates are members without the right to vote. Although the Bunga is only an advisory body, its scope is not inconsiderable. Intended Proclamations are laid before it. Its decisions are made known to the Native Affairs Department; their reply is published in the report of the transactions of the Bunga, and they draft the wording of the Proclamation, which is finally published in the name of the Governor-General. The administration hardly ever passes a law with which the Bunga has not declared itself to be in agreement. The duty of the Bunga is especially to protect the Native customary law and to state its opinion about any proposed alteration.

The administrative districts do not take into consideration the tribal boundaries. The chieftainships, though not altogether abolished, no longer have a decisive influence in the political life of the people.

The Transkei is thus an example of how a progressive population with private ownership of land has

been intentionally detached from its traditional political structure and guided into a modern form of government. It is true that the burden of the executive falls entirely on the white officials, but at the same time a considerable and increasing measure of responsibility is granted to Natives. The chief is replaced by officials appointed by Government or chosen by the people; in the District Councils and the Bunga the people have representation on a parliamentary basis.

It is remarkable that this system does not appear entirely satisfactory to the Natives. Their main objection is that it does not give the hereditary chiefs the position in the administration which they formerly had and which, by human and divine right, belongs to them. Again and again the Bunga has begged the Government to give back the hereditary chiefs to the people, because they alone possess the necessary authority to guarantee a satisfactory administration. 'A chief is like the sun, a sacred thing to illumine the world; God created a king amongst the people, and He gave him power to govern his people by the laws He made.' The chiefs and headmen, they say, can nowadays only use their mouths in governing the people, and hence the people do not listen.

The second of the possibilities mentioned above on p. 167 is that political institutions may be preserved in their essence and metamorphosed into European form. Practically this will mean that the Government will, wherever opportunity offers, depose the heredi-

tary chief and replace him by a man who seems to be more acceptable. In this way it will break the backbone of the indigenous political order and decree its complete disintegration. The new chief is a creature of the Government, dependent on it and therefore forced to work with it whatever happens. He has no inherent authority over the people, but is a representative of the European ruler whose orders he has to obey.

The third method, namely, the introduction of indirect rule,¹ is less simple than the two already mentioned. Its basis is the assumption that Native political institutions contain values which are capable of development and whose loss would be detrimental to the people. Its object, therefore, is to preserve these values and enlist them in the service of the new administration. As the forms of political life in Africa are, however, extraordinarily varied, a careful study is the first necessity in every single case, not only for each colony but for each political entity in the colony. Such a study should include the whole of the politico-social institutions and values of the group, the position of the person of the ruler, the rules of succession, the organs of administration, the distribution of offices, the legislative and executive powers, land tenure, and the motives which underlie obedience to the existing authorities and foster the sense of social obligation.

¹ Cf. Lord Lugard, *The Dual Mandate*, 4th ed., London, 1929; Sir Donald Cameron, *Principles of Native Administration and their Application*, Lagos, 1934.

The authority which is to be the bearer of indirect rule must be 'a real authority in the eyes and minds of the people affected, which they are willing to obey' (Sir Donald Cameron). It is also indispensable to examine any changes in the political sanctions and other forms of social life due to foreign influences, including the attitude of the population to its chief as well as to innovations introduced by European governments or as a result of economic upheavals and social revolution.

The institution of indirect rule does not mean that the position of the chief and his administrative machinery remain the same as before. He and his political activities become an organic part of the European administration and must be adapted to it. The principle laid down is that indigenous methods and conceptions shall remain effective in so far as they do not conflict with the universal sense of justice. Even this limitation, however, means many important changes. It will not be possible to avoid the abolition of customs offensive to European ideas of justice. The leading white official must see that business is properly carried out and money conscientiously administered; that public works, schools, and public health works are not neglected; and that the administration of justice is free from reproach. Many institutions which formerly were recognized as necessary parts of the law as, for instance, the ordeal and the smelling out of witches must disappear. The white official will have to go still deeper into the

actual system of administration. He will strive to form larger units out of small tribal or village chieftainships, making one of a group of chiefs of equal standing a paramount chief, and subordinating his colleagues to him. Nor will the position of the people to their chief remain unchanged. On the material side the chief's position grows stronger. He now has the white man to back him up, and even has a police power with the aid of which he can enforce obedience. On the moral side, however, this may mean a weakening of the traditional link and a prejudice to the veneration in which he was held. He no longer represents the ancestors but the District Commissioner, to whose instructions he has to enforce obedience from his subjects. He must often make far-reaching claims on them. He has to levy taxes, and in doing so may arouse the suspicion that he is demanding more than the Government has fixed—a suspicion which may not always be unfounded. As in former days, so now chiefs are surrounded by relatives and other hangers-on who hope to make capital out of their position, and the chief is expected to show himself liberal towards them. The great chiefs especially, who have been accustomed to rule more or less autocratically, cannot be expected to adapt themselves without effort to the position of a constitutional ruler with all the limitations that the idea implies. Continuous careful consultation, combined with guidance and control of the organs of government, is necessary lest, strengthened

by the authority given them by the Europeans, the chiefs may be tempted to feel themselves too independent and abuse their position to the detriment of their subjects. Authority should as far as possible be decentralized so that the smaller chiefs and village headmen have their rigidly circumscribed functions and a certain amount of independence, and part of the money that they raise in their administrative districts should be set aside for the benefit of those districts.

For the European official co-operation with the chief means a thorough knowledge of the life of the people and a great measure of wisdom and educational skill. He will have to deal not only with those who are ready to learn, but with the incapable, the careless, the unreliable, and even the obstinate, and it is with them and their help that he will have to administer his district. In spite of all the obstacles, however, this system of government is an admirable method of attaining the main object of all education, namely, the creation of personalities conscious of their responsibilities. Though the final responsibility will rest with the white official, that must not hinder him from entrusting real powers to the chief and his administration, so that he may feel himself to be in the confidence not only of the European government but also of his own people. The people must have the conviction that he is their man, united with them for weal or for woe, and not the creature of Government. Responsibility and healthy self-reliance can be strength-

ened by allowing the financial administration of the country to remain in the hands of the chief and his officials, so that when taxes flow into the treasury of the chief, a certain part is diverted to the central government for the general needs of the colony and the rest remains to be applied at the discretion of the Native administrators for schools, local and public works, the care of public health, and the salaries of the chief and his officials. Even the law must as far as possible be administered by the chief and his council in accordance with tradition and custom. To prevent abuses and irregularities, written records of all transactions should be kept and these should be regularly checked by European officials. Though indirect rule is based on the conservative element in tribal life, it must at the same time be progressive in the best sense of the word. Its aim should be to assimilate such new elements as are required for development into a really modern administration, whose probity and reliability are beyond question. It should also give the educated class full opportunity of using their capabilities in the service of the community. Indirect rule which does not succeed in enlisting the hearty co-operation of the educated Natives will lack efficiency and cannot be deep-rooted.

The advantage of indirect rule over every other system is that it builds up instead of destroying. It is based on something which already exists and aims at developing it organically. That is a sound policy

if what exists has vitality, and this undoubtedly is the case with the institution of chieftainship. It is true that the weaknesses of chieftainship are often sharply criticized by the Natives themselves, but these are generally young people who have either through their education or stay abroad dissociated themselves from the social obligations of their own people and are already really outside it. The majority of the older people speak differently, and even among the younger educated men most are unwilling to give up the institution. There are numberless instances, even in those tribes in which Europeanization has made great progress and the Native administration has been strongly modernized, of peoples resolutely clinging to the institution and of chiefs enjoying a degree of consideration and respect in the life of the people to-day which they perhaps never enjoyed before. The people see in their chief a symbol of their pride of race, and his removal would be a blow to their national self-consciousness. The community feeling is so strongly developed in the African and so inherent in his whole existence that he shows no desire to cast it off with a light heart. It must fill him with satisfaction that he has been able to preserve these bonds intact even to the present day, and to administer his own affairs under European guidance. Many Europeans have had occasion to admire the loyalty of the African. This loyalty grew out of the intense feeling of community in the life of the clan and the tribe. Much of this innate loyalty has been trans-

ferred to the European official, and the latter will best be able to maintain and increase this capital by honouring the African's past in his political creations and thus keeping alive in him that self-respect without which no people can prosper.

IX

THE SUPERNATURAL WORLD

1. Native attitude towards natural objects. Identification of form and character, of material and spiritual, of whole and its parts. Belief in separate beings in each individual.
2. Quality of 'power' in things. Belief and practice in magic. Deification of magical objects.
3. Respect due to age and to ancestors. Worship of Nature gods. Religious associations: Poro League. Festivals of tribal and clan gods.
4. Religion not confined to material concerns. Dreams and personal communion. Feelings of awe and confidence. Lack of connexion between religion and ethics. Belief in a 'high-god'. Worship of 'high-god' in different parts of Africa.
5. Destructive effects of modern contact on Native religion. Initiation schools. Taboo fellowships. Causes of decay in Native religion. Place of religion in African life. Task of Institute in study of religion as a force in Native life and effects of its decay.

I

THE world of the primitive African is characterized by its unity and coherence. No sharply defined aspect exists by itself; wish and reality, the possible and the impossible, knowledge and belief, thought and imagination, the realms of secular and religious life are interwoven and fundamentally one. Things which we distinguish are to him identical in their essence. It is therefore difficult to study one single feature of African life in isolation. Because it is cohesive the student inevitably passes from one region into the other without noticing it; and a correct understanding can only be obtained by surveying life as a whole.

The tendency of primitive man to regard essentially different things as similar is partly explained by his egocentric attitude. He feels himself to be the centre of his world. He names objects in his environment after the parts of his body (branch of a tree = hand, leaf = ear, stem = foot, front = forehead, top = head), and values them according to whether they harm or help him. In the same manner he transfers to them his own human qualities, attributing to them his needs and desires, his love and hate, his capacity for action, with the result that he treats them in the same way as his fellow men, trying to gain their support and use their help in removing imminent dangers. It might therefore be said that he personifies the objects surrounding him, though it is more correct to say that he places things on the same level as himself. Dead men have in certain respects the same quality as the living, for one talks with them and sets before them food and drink. The Kpelle man (Liberia) sees his dead friend wearing his rolled-up burial-cloth on his head, as he climbs the mountain on which the dead dwell. Or he will say: 'We do not see the dead, when they come into our house; they walk amongst us, but we do not notice them, for they are covered with chalk [and thereby invisible]. If they take something belonging to us, we cannot tell; if they eat from our food, or eat with us from the same dish, we do not know it.'

Men change into animals, and animals into men. A crocodile leaves the water, hangs up his skin on

a tree, and takes part in a game as a man with the men of the village (Kpelle). A buffalo trades as a human being in the market as other men do, and changes on his way home once more into a buffalo (Ewe). A man roams at night round the village as a leopard, is shot, and on the next day he is found, again as a person, lying wounded on his mat (Central Togoland).¹ In these beliefs, which are found among most West African tribes, there is a complete identification of form and character. The man, in assuming the form of an animal, whether, as in the above examples, by direct magical metamorphosis or by wearing the mask or the skin of an animal, really becomes the animal in question; form conditions character.

One talks with an animal as with a man and brings him sacrifice as to a deity. Food is placed before the skulls of slain animals and they are prayed to tell their living companions in the bush and forest how well they are being cared for, and advise them likewise to allow themselves to be shot by hunters. The eyes of a shot leopard are bound, so that it cannot see the hunter who killed it and take vengeance on him. The huntsman, before he goes hunting, washes not only his own eyes but also those of his gun so that when shooting they may better see the quarry. A sacrifice is made to the gun and it is accompanied by prayer that it may not miss its mark.

¹ Cf. also A. W. Cardinall, *Tales told in Togoland*, London, 1931, where many examples of a similar kind are given.

By a motion of the arm a storm or an army approaching in the distance can be turned away, just as an animal can be frightened away by the same movement (Kpelle).

These identifications are, however, not followed to their logical conclusions, and they do not mean that the African is incapable of making distinctions. He does so where necessary; the class system of the Bantu languages shows a subtlety in differentiation such as no European languages have. However, things may be different in one aspect, but in another, namely, in their capability of doing harm or good, they are not essentially distinguished. Vestiges of such a complex attitude are extant among ourselves, when in our fairy-tales animals and trees talk. With us, however, this fairy-world is real at the most in childhood and vanishes later. The Negro, even as an adult, can relate in all sincerity how in the dawn of morning a hyena turned into a woman before his very eyes, and it is quite natural for him to beg forgiveness of a tree by making a sacrifice before felling it, and excuse himself by saying that the elders, whom one may not gainsay, have laid this unpleasant task upon him. It is in the magico-religious sphere more than in any other that the logical attitude is constantly set against the emotional, and the former carries less weight.

The unity of his vision prevents the African also from distinguishing between the material and the spiritual. The soul itself is matter sublimated—

breath, a shadow, a flame. It is possible for the magician or priest to capture the soul of a sick man which has escaped and is sitting on the roof of the house or on a neighbouring tree, and having captured it to restore it to the human body (Ewe). Processes are regarded as things or beings: illness is a stone, a piece of wood, which must be removed from the body, or a being that is wandering about in the body. If I dream of a far country, then in my sleep I have really been there, even although I was visibly sleeping on my mat the whole night long, for there are men who can leave their bodies, as a snake its skin.

As form and character are identified, so are the whole and its parts. The whole has the characteristics of the part and the part those of the whole. If I have a part, then I have essentially the whole; and what I do to a part, I have likewise done to the whole. If I carry the tooth of a leopard on my body, then I have command over some of the power of the leopard. Anything I do to the nails and hair cut from an enemy I have done to him. If the Ewe huntsman discovers the spoor of a wild animal, he strikes the air with a stick in the direction in which the animal ran. He then strikes the animal's foot-marks, thus making it impotent to run farther and enabling him easily to overtake it; or he takes sand from the animal's spoor and ties it in a strip of bark, thereby binding the feet of the animal so that it can no longer run.

Similar things have similar qualities, and inner re-

semblance is inferred from external similarity.¹ Hence one can cure, strengthen, or call forth like by like. Rain clouds give rain, and if I produce smoke clouds, which resemble the rain clouds, then by so doing rain will be produced. The same result may be achieved by sacrificing a black bull. An Ewe who carries home a slain animal on his back receives as his share the back of the animal; his back has worked and needs refreshing and the best refreshment for it is the back of the animal. The loins of the animal are given to the wife of the hunter because the loins carry the body when it works; just as a man's body rests on the loins, so the management of the household depends on the woman. H. A. Stayt (*The Bavenda*, p. 262) describes a charm, consisting of a small piece of wood worn by Venda people round

¹ A curious example of this 'law of participation' is given by M. J. Herskovits, in his *Suriname Folklore*, p. 485. [The Negroes of Suriname originated from West Africa and have retained much of their primitive culture.] Says a Negro: 'When my mother conceived she dreamt that she cut off a finger, and put it on a fishing-hook, and caught a tarpon [a kind of fish]. Then she sold the tarpon and bought a pair of doves. Then she gave away the female dove, and kept the male. Two weeks after I was born, on the same week-day, the woman who got the female dove gave birth to a girl. Both of us cannot eat doves or tarpons. Both of us were born on the same day of the week, and it is said that we have one soul like twins. If a spirit wishes to make a familiar of her, as long as I have not come upon it first, it cannot do so. If she marries and my soul does not like the husband, they must separate.'

the neck for protection when travelling. The wood was taken from a bough of a tree overhanging a difficult climb in a well-frequented path. The bough was grasped by every passer-by to assist him over the difficult spot. In this way the power of that bough was constantly increased by helping the wayfarer, and it became the source from which effective charms for travellers could be obtained. Conversely, a charm possessing power to do evil to the traveller consisted of powdered wood, prepared from the root of a tree on a well-trodden path, which caused annoyance to every passer-by, being in a spot where it almost inevitably knocked his toe. This root became a source of evil power, and its wood was used for charms to bring harm to the traveller.

Man himself is not necessarily a unit, but may consist of several independent parts. On the Gold Coast sacrifices are made to one's own soul (the Okra). It is, on the one hand, an integral part of man, but at the same time it leads an independent existence and can be gracious or ungracious to the man to whom it belongs. The Yoruba make sacrifices to their head, so that it may think well; to their stomach, so that it nourishes properly the other parts of the body; to their big toe, so that it runs well.

The view that a person may consist of several independent parts, each of which is able to act of its own accord, can even find a linguistic expression, as when in languages of the Gur (Goor) group (in the northern Gold Coast and Togoland) the sentence

'he worked with his hand' is expressed literally: 'he took hand it (namely the hand) worked'.

2

The interest which the African takes in things is not an academic one. They concern him in so far as they are useful to him or can do him harm, that is, in so far as they are effective in relation to himself. Their essential quality is power. This power is inherent in gods, spirits, men, animals, and things, varying in degree and in kind. It is the most important factor with which one has to reckon in daily life. Man is exposed to it every moment and on all sides, and it decides whether one is to be fortunate or unfortunate. In itself it is impersonal and neutral, neither good nor evil, but it can hurt or help man, preserve or destroy life. It obeys the will of its owner and can become a fearful instrument in his hand. Power can be transmitted. R. Moffat¹ reports how a woman came to him for the medicine which he had prepared for her sick husband. When he had explained to her that half the potion should be taken at once and the rest a few hours later, she asked if it could not be taken at once in one dose? Upon his assent, she immediately swallowed all the medicine herself. When the missionary protested she asked: did he really believe the medicine would not help her husband because she had drunk it? In the same way, magical power can be transferred from one person

¹ *Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa*, p. 591.

to another, so that man is not limited to the resources given him by nature, but can acquire others, and a great deal of thought and consideration is directed to conserving and increasing this power and thereby warding off possible dangers caused by hostile agencies.

We call this force magic, but the conception is really too narrow, for by this term we understand something 'supernatural', whereas with primitive man the distinction between natural and unnatural, rational and irrational, is shadowy. In Kpelle the word *sale* means medicine as well as poison and magic, i.e. anything that is effective in a striking manner. I gain power by eating food, but also by rubbing in an ointment containing power-giving ingredients, and to the Native both are of equal character. It is the same whether I treat a sick man with a steam bath (as is often done in West Africa) or a charm. Magician and doctor are one and the same person, and which of his remedies are to be regarded as magic and which as medicine is a question which interests the European but does not exist for the Negro. A difference does appear, however, in that many objects possess power in large measure, or an outstanding quality, which enables them to control effects to an abnormal degree. This force is claimed when one's own powers are not adequate. One is perfectly conscious that the actions which we call rational are indispensable; that, for example, the cultivation of a field depends on such factors as the

nature of the soil, the quality of the seed, rain, and, above all, on one's own work. This is true of the vast majority of economic activities. Often, however, the rain does not come, and to produce it more than ordinary human powers are needed. In fact experience has taught that where all conditions are fulfilled, yet the expected result has not followed, something essential must have been lacking. In the everyday course of events the rational method of action is regarded as sufficient. Where it is a question of extraordinary issues of vital importance to life itself; of the threatened well-being of one's own existence, of one's kin or of the community; in a word, where the ordinary course of life is no longer possible and great issues are at stake, then extraordinary means are required which, on account of the occasions from which they arise, take on the character of the superhuman in the imagination of the participant.

The magical practices by which power is produced are to a large extent a technique, which in principle and in everyday cases may be performed by any person, but of which certain persons possess a better knowledge and skill whereby they become specialists. Their art consists in knowing for each individual case the suitable ingredients and the proportion in which they are to be mixed, in the same way as the pharmacist mixes his drugs. But it may become more than a mere technique. There is something sacred about it, for the knowledge required for it has been handed down from the ancestors of earliest times, and may

have its origin in a deity who transmitted the skill to a former member of the group. The performance of the magical act is not like any other occupation, but is invested with responsibility, for on it depends the well-being of one's family members or of the whole community; and for its effectiveness it is essential that it should be performed exactly in that way in which it has been transmitted from the forebears. Thus more complex religious elements enter into magical practices and beliefs.

3

Aged people possess a large amount of power, especially those who hold a leading position. During their long life they have been able to accumulate forces, and have also inherited them from earlier generations. Their very existence is a proof of power, for it is only thanks to it that during their long life all attempts of hostile forces have been ineffectual against them. In consequence one prefers to have charms made by them, for they not only understand the technique better than others but can also impart to the charm something of their own strength. But just as man does not cease to exist with death, so his magical power is not ended when he dies. For that reason an old man is buried in his hut, in the cattle kraal, or within the settlement, in order that the group may have control over him and thereby over his strength and goodwill. A man's strength fails when he remains without food. The same happens

to a dead man: he needs strengthening. A well-nourished man is in a better, more kindly mood than a hungry one, and this is true also of the dead. Therefore one should not approach the ancestors without a sacrifice when asking for their gifts.

Besides the ancestors, the forces of nature, as bearers of extraordinary powers, early aroused attention. They are thought to be embodied in striking natural objects or phenomena such as rivers, lakes, rocks, large trees, thunder and lightning, the rainbow. They too are endowed with human qualities, but the scope of their power exceeds human limits. Man must try to conciliate them, to press their powers into his service and to avert the peril that threatens from them. Thus they have become, mainly in West Africa, the objects of a religious cult. Ancestor worship, on the other hand, which in one form or another is universal in Africa, predominates in East and South Africa.

The worship of nature gods often takes place actually on the site of the objects of worship themselves, where that is possible. As it would be inconvenient, however, for the purpose of a regular cult to go every time to a distant river or rock, a symbol of the deity is erected in the village where the god is worshipped. The same necessity naturally occurs when it is a question of phenomena such as the sky or the thunder, or of those gods whose cult was brought from a former home or imported from a foreign country. In this way idols and shrines, representations

of the gods, came into use. The idol is, in the belief of the Natives, not identical with the deity, but is no more than the place where the deity can be approached. This takes place through the mediation of a priest; he receives the supplicant, lays the offerings before the god, calls him, and says the prayers.

The adoration of a divinity was originally confined to a natural social group, such as a family, clan, or tribe. Some gods, however, have obtained such fame that their worship spreads over large areas, and certain shrines are so popular that pilgrimages are undertaken from neighbouring countries to receive the blessings which the presiding priest bestows.

But religion has also created new social bonds of its own, the worshippers of a divinity from different clans or tribes forming a religious fraternity or sect, which can only be entered after a period of probation. The sect has a common settlement, surrounded by a wall, where the leaders dwell, and where the adepts live carefully segregated from their families during the time of their initiation, which often includes the learning of a secret language. Thanks to their feeling of solidarity, and of superiority as a group of the elect, thanks also to their alleged secret knowledge and the brilliant festivities which they institute, these sects exercise a great power of attraction, and they not infrequently have succeeded in getting the political power of a community into their hands. Their classical home is the coast of Upper Guinea.

The religious centre of such a sect is not necessarily

a divinity. There are some, especially in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and neighbouring districts, which group themselves round an animal like a leopard, serpent, baboon, or crocodile, or even a powerful charm. A combination of religious and social elements is found in the societies which emerge from initiations. The boys who leave the initiation school enter the secret league of the men, in whose hands both the administration of the community and the exercise of the important religious and magical functions are concentrated. The best known of these associations is the Poro League in Sierra Leone and Liberia.¹ Corresponding to it there is the Sande or Bundu of girls or women. Apart from gods and ancestors the Africans have to pay attention to a host of spirit-like beings and to witches, i.e. to persons possessed of a dark harmful power, which plays a fatal part in human life.²

The binding strength of religion in society is most evident in the yearly festivals which are in parts of West Africa celebrated in honour of the old tribal or clan gods. They take place about the turn of the year, that is, after the work in the fields is over, and may be called the climax in social life. They are the occasion which brings the whole community together to

¹ Cf. T. J. Alldridge, *A Transformed Colony, Sierra Leone*, London, 1910; K. J. Beatty, *Human Leopards*, London, 1915; J. L. Sibley and D. Westermann, *Liberia Old and New*, London.

² Much information on witches and witchcraft is given in *Africa*, vol. viii, pp. 417-559.

a common festival of rejoicing and thanksgiving. As far as possible the members of the clan who are living abroad take part in it, and everywhere are to be seen scenes of a joyful reunion. It is a thanksgiving day for the god, who has made the harvest thrive and given his children food and health. His idol is ornamented and publicly exhibited; sacrifice is made to him; groups of friends and relations come together in houses, on the village green, or in groves for sacrificial meals. It is also a day of remembrance for those who died in the last year and for the ancestors as a whole. They move among the living, food is set aside for them, and for this one day they take part in the general rejoicing of their own clansmen. The symbols of the tribal ancestors (stools, swords, drums, trumpets) are cleaned, smeared with fresh sacrificial blood, and exhibited in public. They form an object-lesson to the young people, who are, on these days, introduced by the old men and women to the past history and glories of the community. Present and past, living and dead, young and old, the religious and social associations of the group all come together on this occasion to form a most impressive whole.

4

Religion has been defined as a provision for life by supernatural means. This definition is too narrow, but it does contain some of its essence, provided the term 'life' is not restricted to physical existence, but

is meant to include the spiritual needs and longings of man, the fulfilment of which is indispensable for his inner balance and peace of mind. If the African is asked what he considers the greatest good, his answer will be: 'Life.' Life of his own person, of the family, of the tribe. 'Life for the town, life for all people, life for the king, life for women and children' are the constantly recurring formulas in Akan and Ewe prayers. A man's own powers are not sufficient protection against the many enemies of life, and he stretches out hands to that which is more than human.

Yet religion is not limited to the care of material life. Well-being, good fortune, a happy relationship with one's fellow men, all these things also belong to life; they embrace not only oneself but the members of the family. When a man goes with his wife and children to the priest asking him to pray to the god for the health of a sick child, there are motives in this prayer far exceeding the merely material; and the same is true when a chief or clan headman sacrifices to the ancestors for the well-being of the people entrusted to him.

Even the relationship between the god or the ancestor and his worshipper can have the character of personal communion. When the priest rises from his bed in the morning and has washed his face, he offers the morning salutation to his god as to an old, honoured friend. If the head of the household has to go somewhere, he takes leave of the ancestor, whose symbol stands in his hut, and should he be saved from

a misfortune or meet with luck, he will not delay in making a thank-offering to his protector.

The gods and ancestors speak to men through impressive experiences or dreams, and the origin of a cult or the discovery of a divinity may be traced back to such an event. A man roaming through the bush in the midst of the dry season suddenly comes upon a bubbling spring of whose presence no one had known previously; or, while resting under a tree, he has a dream which agitates his mind. When a person feels ill at ease or is haunted by a feeling of inward unrest, he will consult a priest, who may tell him that a divinity is visiting him and wants to take him into his service. In all three cases it was a supernatural being which manifested itself to the man and demanded his worship. It is natural that when a man has been summoned by a deity so directly he should feel personally and for ever bound to it, and that such an experience may be a turning-point in his life.

Throughout Africa is to be found the belief in a high-god or a Supreme Being. The views concerning him vary, though agreeing in essentials. In certain respects his position is somewhat outside the frame of practised religion, but it is not unconnected with it. The high-god is sometimes identified with, or personified in, the sky or the sun, and thus has similarities with a nature god, whereas in certain regions, notably in East and South Africa, where ancestor worship is predominant, he stands in relation to the

first forebear of the group. But his nature is elusive. In West Africa he is sometimes hardly distinguishable from the personal genius of man, so that each person has his own God; on the other hand the boundary-line between the Supreme Being and the impersonal Power pervading the universe is fluctuating.

God is the creator and guardian of heaven and earth and of man. 'God never ceases to create things', say the Twi on the Gold Coast. He is the one who rules the world, maintains order, and gives man his cultural possessions; he is the first cause of everything that exists. His predominant qualities are might, goodness, and justice. He is benevolent because his nature is good and not merely when prayers are offered to him. Unlike nature gods, ancestors, and evil spirits, he is not influenced by man's gifts. 'He has no father, he is not a man, he lives in heaven, he does only good, therefore we do not make offerings to him' (Herero). 'He is good, for he has never withdrawn from us the good things which he gave us' (Ewe). 'He is the one who causes us to walk about and do our work, he causes rain to pour down on our fields and the sun to shine; because we see all these things of his we say he is good' (Kpelle). He dislikes and avenges evil-doing. 'Your best friend will dig a hole into which you are to fall, but God will show you a way out' (Ruanda). When a person is wronged, oppressed, or cruelly dealt with, he comforts himself by his belief that through God's impartial judgement everything will finally come right.

Some sayings of the Yoruba testify to this conviction of an ultimate justice for all: 'Those whom we cannot catch we leave in the hands of God': 'as to this thing which you have done to me, both I and you will have to account for it before him who sees us': 'leave the fight to God and rest your head on your hand'.

Belief in God is a philosophy rather than a living faith. He is a God who is neither loved nor feared. His qualities and demands are willingly admitted, but they exercise little, if any, influence on practical life. It is a religion of the thoughtful, not of the multitude. Not infrequently one meets with older people who have evolved their own system of ideas concerning God.

Religion exercises a far-reaching influence on the inner attitude and actions of man. The dominating feeling with regard to the higher beings is a sacred awe, in which terror of the god's wrath and punishment predominates. It is early impressed on children that they must not go too near to the shrines and holy vessels, 'for the god will kill you'. When a god announces his appearance, the worshipping multitude feels 'as if cold water had been poured over them'.¹ This fear of the gods may seem to be contradicted by the fact that their images and shrines are often in a deplorable state of decay; but this is explained by the idea that the idol or the shrine is not the dwelling-place of the divinity, only the place to

¹ Cf. D. Westermann, *A Study of the Ewe Language*, London, 1930 (Text on p. 228).

which he can be invited, and where converse with him is possible. If a public religious function is to take place, the temple, shrine, or statue, and even the ways that lead to them, are put in order.

The idea of the divinity and of ancestors, however, arouses in man not only awe but also confidence. When he is helpless and near to despair, prayer and sacrifice fill him with new assurance and give him back his self-reliance. A hard task will be attacked with greater courage, if we are convinced that we are dependent not on our own strength alone, but that we have a mighty ally by our side. The many religious and magical duties and prohibitions within which the Negro moves may appear to us mere burdens and useless impediments. He himself, however, does not feel them to be so. Every charm which he acquires; every taboo he has to observe; every omen to which he has to give heed; the gods whom he serves; the ancestors to whom he gives reverence; the oracle whose consent he must gain: all these things are like a protecting cloak which he wraps round himself. Each one gives him more confidence in himself, and attention devoted to them is not an onerous task but a reassurance and a satisfaction, for in this way he learns to overcome his dread.

According to B. Malinowski¹ the essential elements in every religion are a dogma or doctrine, a ritual or form of worship, and an ethical code. Of these three the last seems, at first sight, feebly

¹ *The Foundations of Faith and Morals*, London, 1936.

developed in African religions. The gods and ancestors take but a slight interest in the ethical behaviour of their worshippers and are almost indifferent as to the inner attitude in which they are approached. What they demand is offerings and invocations. If in spite of these they refuse their help, it is through anger because one of their commandments has been, probably unwittingly, disregarded. Ethics, in the sense of civic virtues, are rooted in the traditional rules regulating the behaviour in social groups. A person is moral and acts morally if he keeps to the norm which dominates the mutual relations of group members. These norms are binding, however, only in regard to members of the group; and relate to those outside only in so far as the security and well-being of the group are affected. A stranger may enjoy hospitality; but in places where he is without a friend or protector he runs the risk of being robbed, maltreated, and murdered with impunity.

But it is an exaggeration to say that religion has no influence on ethical behaviour. A common belief and partnership in public worship bind people together; this is clearly apparent in the cult groups described on page 193, where members from different social units unite in a brotherhood which entails mutual help and friendship. Common worship cannot but bind the partakers together and make them feel one. In a crowd of worshippers, there will always be the indifferent and superficial, but there will also be those who realize a divine presence and are touched

in their innermost life. Such experiences will have an effect on their attitude towards their fellow men as well as towards the higher beings whom they serve.

5

Magic and religion are fundamental elements of the African's life; they influence his thought and action in all relationships and can scarcely be separated from his activities. Nevertheless, the opinion that the African cannot be conceived without religion needs to be qualified. He is religious in the same sense as he is social; and just as social life can be upset, and is being upset to-day, so can religious life, the more so because both are so closely related. It is certainly a narrowing of the scope of religion, if it is regarded only as a social function, but nevertheless its social aspect is predominant. Religion is in its most significant expressions dependent on social groupings, and the two are so closely connected that the destruction of the one means the death of the other. Religion is thus drawn into the present whirlpool, and its collapse weakens social cohesion.

Even where conditions are still relatively stable religious institutions are forced to make concessions to new ideals and needs, and, receding step by step, are leaving the field to them. The initiation school of the Poro formerly lasted among the Kpelle for six years. To-day it continues for scarcely three, and even then it is hardly possible for the leaders to bring

the young men together. It is not in the first instance indifference or disobedience to the elders which keeps them away, but the demands of new conditions of life which attract them. Formerly it was the rule for a boy who attended a mission school to disappear one day into the Poro bush and to reappear when after a number of years the boys were dismissed. To-day boys who attend a school realize the serious results it has on their future calling if they leave school prematurely. They do not want to escape initiation; they love it, and any one who is not initiated is even to-day a social outcast. The difficulty is solved by the boy going for a few weeks into the bush during the holidays, undergoing a rapid initiation, and then returning to school. The young men who are working on plantations and in other places find a solution in a similar way, and possible objections on the part of the Poro leader may be allayed by a present of money. Poro pupils were not allowed during the time of their initiation to see other people, but were supposed to live in complete seclusion. To-day they take leave for months on end in order to earn money. All this means that the institution is decaying and with it the most important elements of religious belief and practice. It could thrive only under the old untouched conditions, and the present compromises, so painful to the old people, are but steps to its complete disappearance. It is a loss in religion as well as in social cohesion. The Poro society is the formative element in the community

life; by initiation a youth becomes a member of his tribe, and this is the greatest event in his life. To-day this privilege has lost much of its charm. When the young men, after a prolonged absence on plantations or in other centres, return to their villages, they have learned to look upon the symbolic rites of the Poro Order with disillusioned eyes. A cleft between the two generations is opening, and the socio-religious bond which united the community begins to crumble away.

The same is true of another West African institution, which is of even greater importance, because it creates social bonds between tribes and makes inter-tribal relations possible. Each person has inherited a taboo from his father, generally an animal which he must not kill and whose flesh he must not eat. It is believed that people who have the same taboo are related and must treat one another as brothers.

‘It is a kind of free-masonry which is not limited by ethnic boundaries nor by differences of civilisation, and which constitutes an exceedingly interesting phenomenon. For instance, a Mossi of the Pima clan, animist and savage, who had never left his native country before, finds himself suddenly at St. Louis and meets there a Wolof of the Noliaye clan, who is a Moslem or a Christian and is relatively civilised, who on his part has never been in the Mossi country; the Pima does not understand one word of Wolof, nor the Noliaye one word of Mossi; after some moments, by signs which only they note, this Mossi and this Wolof recognise each other as members of one clan,

and immediately the Wolof takes this Mossi, whose home is 2000 kilometers away from his, under his protection.¹

In so far as these taboo-fellowships are of a religious character, it may be said that here again religion has created ethical values of a social character. Although no doubt the duty to help a taboo-fellow has its origin in the belief that people who have the same taboo are members of one group and are therefore bound to mutual help and thus to protect each other against strangers, the prevalent idea to-day is that identity of taboo creates a mystical relationship, something like a religious brotherhood. Such relations are, even under modern conditions, still partly respected, but they have no longer their former significance. In purely Islamic regions the Moslem brotherhoods have taken their place. Where Christianity gains a foothold, the taboo is no longer recognized, and in the large centres where the population is crowded together, those prohibitions are seldom observed. Moreover, to-day it is possible to travel in a foreign country without finding a clan member to protect one, and people are no longer able or willing to receive strangers. As intercourse has increased, hospitality has decreased. Every one is more occupied with his own concerns than he used to be, and gladly makes use of any excuse to ignore the old laws of keeping open house for real or imaginary relatives.

¹ M. Delafosse, *Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, vol. iii, p. 105.

Decay threatens religion also because it is closely bound up with local conditions. What happens when a young man leaves his Native place for any length of time? The gods or ancestors in whose reverence he grew up have their seat in his Native village and can only be worshipped there within the social group. In strange lands there are strange gods of a strange people, with whom he has no connexion and to whom he cannot pray. The thought that his own god or forefather is near him and will protect him everywhere does not occur to him, quite apart from the fact that this would presuppose a personal relationship to the god or ancestor such as does not actually exist. Cult is not the business of the individual but of the group, hence he who is separated from the group can no longer take part in its religious activities. This is the prevailing rule; there are exceptions to it, but they are rare. In addition, the young man in the towns and work centres as a rule comes into an atmosphere devoid of religion, and it is no wonder that under such circumstances the whole religious attitude of mind, and with it the essential part of his standard of ethical values, are deeply changed if not completely paralysed. If the resulting feeling of emptiness is once overcome, the thought gradually gains strength that a man can manage without religion, that doing so really makes life easier and frees it from the constraints which were imposed by the religious duties practised at home. This is the fate of hundreds of thousands to-day. Their religious root

is dying, and what remains is a crude belief in magic, a fear of spirits and witches, and some undigested European ideas. The reverence for that which is greater than man has been extinguished. When the need for a religious substitute crops up, such people become an easy prey of pseudo-religious or political agitators; and when they return home, they carry the seeds of decomposition with them.

It is not necessary, however, to assume such extreme cases in order to understand the ruin of pagan religion. The attack on it has been opened from all sides. The activity of the mission, the teaching in the schools, the growing understanding of natural processes, the spreading of mechanical science, lack of religious feeling of many Europeans, the universal unrest, and the materialistic tendencies of modern life which the utilitarian instincts of the Negro meet half-way: all these things create an atmosphere which is fatal to indigenous religion, and its end is a question of time. There may, indeed, be reactions here and there, such as the revival of an ancient, almost forgotten deity, or the birth of a new cult with borrowed European, perhaps even Christian trappings. They may for a time exercise a certain attraction, and it does happen that educated Natives, even those who have been baptized, take part in them secretly or openly. But these reactions cannot stop the decay. No African believes in the future of indigenous religions; they have never had reformers or martyrs and will have none, and they lack entirely a missionary

spirit. All this might be looked on as a natural and even desirable development, but there is in it a danger that the religious instinct will be lost altogether. The African has to-day so many interests, and such varied distractions claim his time, that his life is filled by them, and he scarcely feels the withering of the religious roots of his life as a loss. He takes a critical attitude even to the Christian religion, for the observation is forced on him that many Europeans make only moderate use of it, and that their sermons on brotherhood stop short at the boundaries of race. The joining of a Church is for the younger generation of educated Natives often no more than a by-product of general education and rarely rests on personal experience. In any case there is one essential difference from earlier conditions: the fact that in paganism culture and religion are identical. Pagan religion is indissolubly bound up with the whole of life, whereas Christianity has a realm of its own, which is not necessarily in such close union with the whole of life as once was the case. There is a gulf between the spheres of religious and secular life which formerly did not exist.

For the African religion is not only a social bond of union of the greatest significance but also the giver of warmth and colour to his life. Most of the communal celebrations, such as sacrificial feasts, initiations, funeral rites, and harvest festivals, have a religious character, and life is the poorer for their disappearance. Above all, religion gave inner strength

and peace of mind. If the vanishing faith is not replaced by a new one, a dangerous barrenness looms ahead for the African, and it cannot be for the good of man or of a community that a large sphere of inner life should lie fallow or overgrown with evil weeds.

EDUCATION AND MISSIONS

1. The character of indigenous education. Initiation rites. Their educational value and place in Native social life.
2. Tradition in the Native system of education. Dangers of the individual being merged in the group.
3. Modern influences on African youth. Education in relation to government. Missions as pioneers in education. Rival mission policies of westernizing the African and of preserving the best elements in his culture. Relation of schools to the needs of the community. The language problem in African education. The task of the Christian Church not sectarianism but an African form of Christianity. Christianity as a force in social reintegration.
4. Criticism against missions.

I

EDUCATION is not something which the African has received for the first time from the white man. The 'primitive' African is not uneducated. Many Africans, men and women, who have never been to school or in contact with Europeans, show such dignified and tactful behaviour, and reveal so much refinement in what they say and do, that they well deserve to be called 'educated'. On the other hand, 'uneducated' behaviour is at times met with among people who have for years been under intensive European influence and in schools conducted by Europeans. The African may sometimes appear lacking in consideration or respectfulness, but as often as not this is due to awkwardness or an involuntary

impulse to assert his independence, especially when he is dealing with a stranger, towards whom he naturally adopts a defensive attitude. Shyness may well hide an estimable character.¹

If to-day the white man has set himself the task of giving the African a new education, his attempt is justified by the fact that under present circumstances the Native system of education is breaking down, and even where it continues unimpaired it is no longer adequate to modern needs.

The education of young children is in Africa characterized by its leniency. The child is mainly left alone with his playmates and he is expected to find his place gradually among the adults without too much interference from others. In the simple circumstances of tribal life in which all children grow up under similar conditions, hedged around by the solicitude of relatives, not hampered by social disabilities and all having practically the same aim in life, this easy method usually leads to the desired goal. Spoilt children are an exception. Punishments are at this stage seldom inflicted; they are considered unfair. Children are treasures which should be handled with care. A child is not yet a real person and therefore not responsible; or, a father cannot punish a child because it belongs to its mother. Moreover, parents are sure that their children will soon learn to obey when, later on, they will have to run their course

¹ Cf. E. W. Smith, *The Golden Stool*, London, 1926, pp. 283 ff.

within the strict rule of clan life. Behaviour towards a child may also be influenced by the belief that in the child an ancestor has returned to life who has to be treated with consideration.

Children's games are largely imitations of adult activities, and in this way they grow up accustomed imperceptibly to genuine work and only occasionally guided by their elders. Girls begin serious work earlier than boys, as the mother soon needs their help. The important thing for children to learn is the proper behaviour towards elder people and towards their equals.

A systematic and intense course of education is imparted in the initiation rites, at the period of transition from childhood to adult life and of admission to full membership in the group.¹ Both boys and girls have to pass through an initiation, but for the boy the act is of greater significance than for girls. It is the most important event in the life of a young man, for in it he is brought into close contact with the past of the group and with the magical powers emanating from the ancestors. He becomes a new person. By a series of ceremonies the boys are separated from their childhood-life and from the companionship of women and children, in order to be initiated into the spiritual inheritance of the forebears and into the rights and duties of full-grown men. Beliefs and customs which in the past have sustained the life of the group are through these rites handed down to a

¹ Cf. A. W. Hoernlé, 'An Outline of the Native Conception of Education in Africa', *Africa*, vol. iv, pp. 145-63.

new generation. Since the existence of the group depends in the future on the unaltered continuance of this inheritance, the individual has to be adapted to the social norm as handed down by tradition. He must be formed into a willing member of the community which includes the ancestors.

The details of the ritual are manifold. In parts of Africa only rudiments of the ceremonies exist or they are altogether absent, as, for example, in most Islamic countries, and also among a number of peoples on the west coast.

In its more elaborate form the procedure of initiation is as follows. The boys are housed in a settlement prepared for the purpose outside the village and are thus separated from the rest of their people. Where circumcision or other forms of mutilation are customary, these are performed at the beginning of the ceremonies, if they have not already taken place in early childhood. The head is shaved; clothes are taken away and burned; and frequently grass clothes are worn during this time. The initiates bathe in the early morning in icy cold water; they have to jump over some object, such as a fire, a ditch, or a bull; or have to run the gauntlet between the young men already initiated: these actions symbolize the separation from the past life. The boys have also to observe certain food taboos and have to undergo tests, flogging, pinching, enduring cold.¹ They have at times to sleep

¹ Cf. G. Gutmann, *Die Stammeslehren der Dschagga*, 1. Band, München, 1932.

on the bare ground; they are wakened at night and sent away with messages, or given impossible or difficult tasks; and in all this may not manifest any sign of pain or unwillingness, but are expected to show unquestioning obedience. By the elders of the group they are instructed¹ in the knowledge and scope of the community, in folk-lore, traditions, magical beliefs and practices, in the moral code, and occasionally also in agriculture and craftsmanship. Sexual instructions occupy an important place, and most of the songs and dances taught refer to sexual life.

After the period of seclusion, rites expressing their rebirth and their acceptance into the group of the adults are performed. They receive a new name, take baths to purify themselves, are sprinkled with medicines, and put on new clothes. In the presence of the old people they give proofs of their achievements and their manly courage, and are then admitted as full members of the community. In tribes with a higher military organization the initiated young men are united in age regiments; they have to work for the chief and to fight his wars. Sometimes girls also are formed into regiments and are liable to be called upon for communal work.

Certain elements in the initiation rites are decidedly unpleasing and even harmful; some of the physical operations performed on girls are dangerous to health. The sex teaching, the dances, and the songs, as well as a certain sexual licence, are designed by

¹ D. Westermann, *Die Kpelle*, Göttingen, 1921, pp. 234-53.

Native opinion to exercise a moderating influence on the sexual instinct, but this result is certainly not achieved in all cases. Nevertheless, such considerations should not lead to a condemnation of the custom as a whole. It is an institution which has throughout a long and eventful past been the backbone of community life. There are so many educational and moral values in it that its disappearance means a severe loss, and the Natives themselves regard its decline as a mark of the disintegration of tribal existence. Whether, however, European educators will succeed in retaining the valuable components of the institution and in giving them a place in modern education is doubtful. Not only are the customs already in a state of rapid dissolution, but educational and missionary opinion is divided in judgement on them. The institution is closely associated with religious ideas and may even be called the very core of the religion of a tribe. It is therefore not easy to understand how it can continue to exist in a Christianized community unless it be profoundly changed.

Though its forms and its specifically pagan aspects may disappear, however, this should not necessarily mean that the educational values contained in it and the social attitude resulting from this tribal education should also be doomed to extinction. These values were seen in reverence for the old, readiness for mutual help, a feeling of solidarity, and self-discipline. In order to appreciate these better it seems necessary that the inner side of the initiation rites should be

more closely studied than has been done hitherto. Thanks to anthropological investigation we are acquainted with the externals, and also with the symbolic significance of most of the rites. We know little yet about the changes in the inner life of the initiates. In all races the period of puberty is of decisive importance for the life of the human being, and in a certain sense it is actually what many African call it, a rebirth. A study of the physiological and mental processes in individual life, as influenced by the outlook and attitude crystallized in the initiation rites, might help the educator to a better understanding of his problems.¹

2

The African educates his child for life in the community. This is the real meaning and the strength

¹ K. Th. Preuss (*Der religiöse Gehalt der Mythen*, Tübingen, 1933, pp. 23 ff.) sees in the initiation rites the idea of a connexion between sexual intercourse and death. As many plants wither when they have borne fruit, so a man goes to meet his death after the maturing of his powers of generation. To escape this danger the ritual of a magically conceived death and resurrection was invented, which aims at preventing actual death. As a matter of fact the transition from childhood to manhood is often designated as a death and resurrection, and on the other hand many myths point to the fact that primitive man regarded death as an unnatural disturbance of the original eternal life. A conception widely spread in Africa is that men were in the earlier stages not subject to death and produced no children; only after they began to produce offspring did they become mortal.

of his educational methods and aims. Here also lies their weakness, since attention is focused on the group and is apt to neglect the individual. The child is not regarded as a developing personality but as a member of the group. The individual must conform to the type recognized as normal, and deviations from it are looked at askance, for they threaten to break through the framework of tradition and so become a danger to the community. Such an education does not entirely rule out the development of personality, but the state of African society shows that it is obviously a hindrance to such development. The adherence to tradition, the fear of departing from what has always been, mistrust of innovation: these are some of the reasons for the stagnation of African life.

Such an attitude explains why a young man does not plan his life, set himself an aim and exercise his strength in attaining it. The individual as such has no aim in life if his task is to become exactly like the rest. There is no choice of profession for 'birth fixes for life the social status of each individual' (Willoughby). The path is already indicated: the son of the farmer becomes a farmer, the son of a fisherman a fisherman. It is true that there are exceptions, that conditions differ as to peoples and tribes, and that the older attitude is changing to-day. Nevertheless, speaking generally, it is true that the group has built for itself a well-protected but small and never enlarged house, and the air in it has become close and

is apt to smother any fresh initiative. Passivity is dominant, and the result is lack of energy and of inclination to break the resistance of one's environment and to build a house of one's own. Life is not faced, but allowed to drift. The fate of man is decided more by external chance and incalculable forces than by personal will and guidance, and resignation to the unalterable is the natural attitude.

European education has in abundance the personal and individualistic note lacking in the Native educational ideal. African tribal life and European school education are in their present forms incompatible, and this should be clearly borne in mind. The older people in Africa feel it strongly. When, nevertheless, they send their children to school it is because they realize that it is impossible for them to stem the rising tide, and that a new world is coming.

3

To-day the African youth is no longer moulded exclusively by tribal environment. A wider world is opening for him, a world shaped mainly by European activity. Sooner or later, directly or indirectly, he comes under its influence, in towns, mines, plantations, and other work centres; by every innovation in economic life and in technique; through contact with fellow workers; through direct intercourse with Europeans; and through measures passed by the administration. These are the factors that educate him and shape his life, by giving him a new outlook,

new standards of value and undreamed-of possibilities of developing his faculties. One of these educational factors is the school. Its influence on the individual may be negligible. Perhaps he acquires through it no more than a few new accomplishments and habits which are far outweighed by the impact of his other daily environment. This environment, moreover, touches the whole population, whereas only a small minority go to school. Yet the influence exercised by the school may be wide in scope, for it is systematic, it continues for a number of years, and it goes deeper than most of the other contacts with European civilization. Willoughby¹ says of the Bantu: 'Whenever they come much into contact with Europeans, they part with what is most real in their own life and take on what is material and therefore superficial in the life of Europeans.' Now the school attempts to help the African to avoid this mistake by introducing him to the inner side of European civilization, by enabling him to understand the forces behind it and thus to assimilate it. It is even attempting to show the Africans 'what is most real in their own life'. The significance of the school as a factor in education is enhanced by the fact that it is looked upon by the younger generation as the surest way into the world of the white man. As every one desires to become a citizen of that world, there is a spontaneous flow of pupils to the school, such as has seldom been experienced before. It would be an exaggeration to

¹ *Race Problems in the New Africa*, p. 255.

ascribe it in every case to a desire for education. It is often no more than a wish to acquire knowledge which will be useful for obtaining a position and earning money. It is none the less encouraging to witness this active acceptance of the possibilities of learning, and it gives the school a brilliant chance of developing into a means of real education.

Education is the task of Governments. They have only in recent times begun to concern themselves seriously with it, chiefly with the object of training clerical employees. That was natural in the earlier stage, but the problem of to-day is how to succeed in giving a school training to the whole population, and how to shape this training. The time is past when the school could content itself with the development of a small *élite*, and with directing this development on European lines, without reference to the pupil and his environment. The favouring of an education which was adapted to the needs of the European has led to the fostering of the higher and professional schools to the detriment of elementary schools. That should not continue. The urgent need is for village schools in abundance, adapted to the needs of the villages and destined to serve them. These schools should aim at being self-contained, not merely preliminary stages to a higher school. In other words, they should not be professional schools, but educational schools in the highest and best sense of the term, not alien to the community, but organically one with it.

Christian missions have in most parts of Africa been the pioneers of education, and the great majority of schools is in their hands. But in recent times Colonial Governments have taken an increasing interest in education and show a tendency to bring it under their control. The French administration has set up its own system of State schools, and the mission schools play only a modest part. In other colonies, for instance, the British, Portuguese, and Belgian, and also in the Union of South Africa, a form of co-operation has been evolved in which schools are owned and administered by missions, but the Government subsidizes them and exercises control over them.

The missions have the advantage of a long experience, a staff of European and African teachers, and institutions for the training of teachers. It is to the interest of Government that as large a number of children as possible should be given an opportunity of acquiring an elementary education. In view of the present collapse of Native religion and moral standards it seems desirable that education should be of a religious character and should implant ethical sanctions. Since mission schools fulfil these requirements it is natural for Governments to use them for their own educational purpose.

The connexion between mission and Government may not be without its disadvantages. The mission becomes dependent on Government, and would without its financial help be unable to continue its

scholastic activities. The missionary may be tempted to devote his main efforts to training for the sake of a maximum grant, and by cultivating those sides to which Government attaches importance neglect his religious functions. Difficulties of the opposite kind also arise. The missionaries have arranged their schools for their own purposes. They have to care for the religious education of Christian children, but at the same time they regard the schools as a means of missionary propaganda, since they are attended also by pagans. For the missionary the interests of his religion or his Church are naturally paramount. This is clearly shown by the character of many of the village mission schools, which are so exclusively devoted to religious teaching that they often fail to satisfy even modest claims of a general education. They may incur the suspicion that they make use of secular knowledge merely as a bait to fill their classrooms, and then show their scholars the way into their Church.

A modern development is the establishing of schools by a chief or some other Native authority.

Like every other activity of the white man, the school, and especially the school in the hands of the mission, has a destructive effect on social cohesion. The missionary aims at replacing the indigenous religion by a foreign one, and in doing so he strikes at the root of Native life. Religion is so closely associated with other departments of life that this destructive effect is inevitable, even when the

missionary proceeds with the greatest caution, which is not always the case.

There are two main schools of thought among missionaries about these problems. One school sees Christianity and Western civilization on the same plane. Even if they do not regard them as identical, yet for them they are so closely bound together that the one is not thought of without the other, and the union of the two is expressed in the term 'Christian civilization'. The institutions and outlook of the West are the ideal, and to transplant this Christian ideal to Africa is the aim of their work. Where Native institutions are different from our own, they are unchristian. To succeed in replacing African customs by European or American is a victory of the Christian spirit. According to the personal outlook of the missionary he may emphasize the Christian or the civilizing side, but in essence both are one.

Many circumstances commend such a policy. The missionary, like every white man, spreads around him, even without intention, a European atmosphere through his mode of life and his activity. All Africa is tending towards European methods, and the Natives themselves wish it to be so. To most of them Christianity is part of European civilization. It seems therefore natural that the two should go hand in hand.

Missionaries sharing these convictions have nothing to learn from anthropology. Their attitude to African cultures is negative; in their eyes they are barbaric, worthless, and the sooner they disappear and

European institutions and customs take their place the better. At best they treat them as negligible, things which one passes over with a smile, as long as there is no danger of their being a hindrance on the road to the complete civilizing of the people.

The other group of missionaries believes that there is a variety of cultures, each with its own features and its own values. They believe that Christianity comes to a strange civilization not to work its dissolution, but to fulfil it, that is to say, to bring to their full flowering the seeds of humanity which lie unseen in primitive cultures. They look on it as their first task to make themselves familiar with the civilization of the people among whom they are working. They deem it unreasonable to wish to influence the inner life of strange men and women and guide it into new paths, without knowing that life. Pagan religion for them is an object of deep interest, and worthy of that respect which a cultured man brings to every form of spiritual life. Where ideas and customs are in a state of dissolution, they are regarded as not less worthy of study, for in them the religious genius of the people is revealed, which the missionary as no other must understand.

Missionaries of this type do not feel called to bring the civilization of a European nation to the African, but to bring the Gospel. This they believe to be supernatural, appealing to all men equally, suitable for any type of mankind, and creating in each society its own form adapted to the peculiarity of each people.

On the whole it may be said that this second attitude, i.e. the sympathetic one towards African life and institutions, is gaining ground.

Any educator who approaches the civilization of a country with respect will take care that no injustice is done to this civilization in the education of the children, and that they are trained to respect and love it. This will be taken into consideration through life in the school, the subjects taught, the method of teaching, and the books used. It presupposes, at least in the village elementary school, that the vehicle of instruction is an indigenous language.

Since by far the larger number of pupils never get beyond the elementary school, it is essential that this course of training should be of real service to the scholar. It should last not less than five full school years. The pupils must have progressed far enough to be able without trouble to read and understand their own vernacular literature, and possibly also to perfect their knowledge of a foreign language. They must be able to keep simple accounts. For the rest their education should be as little as possible a matter of book-learning, but a training such as will suit the needs of a future peasant or craftsman. Training of hand and eye, lessons on technical and agricultural subjects, must not be looked on as pleasant interruptions of teaching from books. Work in the field and workshop should take the first place and claim the greatest part of the pupil's time. The chief advantage of such a method is that the pupil is not merely

receptive, but himself produces something useful. He learns to put his own powers to the test of reality and is thereby saved from over-estimating the value of intellectual knowledge.¹ If hand in hand with this there is teaching of physical and political geography based on the study of the immediate neighbourhood; and if the instruction further aims at enlightening the pupil on the indigenous social and economic life of the village, the district and the whole colony, and at making clear to the children what new forces are to-day remaking their country, such studies can well serve to keep the scholars in touch with their own people and at the same time make them ready to receive what is new. The second is as important as the first. The pupils must not have the impression that something is being kept from them; on the contrary their eyes must be opened to all that is good in the new order of life, with a view to their absorbing it as far as it can be assimilated.

The teacher will only fulfil his task when he realizes that his function is not only to instruct the children, but to live with them and show them how that which has been learnt at school can be translated into terms of real life.¹ He must be friend and counsellor. From this it is obvious that his activities are not to be confined to the school, but must embrace the village to which the school belongs. The village school has one advantage over the boarding-school, namely, that the

¹ Cf. J. H. Oldham, B. D. Gibson, *The Remaking of Man in Africa*, London, 1931, pp. 74 ff.

children live with their parents and remain in the surroundings which are natural to them. There is, on the other hand, a risk that the influence of the school is nullified by that of village life. If this is to be avoided, the teacher will strive to serve the whole community, to lift it to a higher level and to gain the co-operation of his pupils in this effort. Necessary as is the acquisition of definite knowledge and certain aptitudes, the school should not consider this its only task. It must embrace the whole human being if it would contribute effectively to the creation of a new life for the people. The personal contact of the teacher with his pupils is more important for the formation of character and therefore for the real education of his pupils than the knowledge they acquire.

If, however, this contact comes to an end when the child leaves school, its effects may soon be effaced. When the pupils return to their home surroundings, they will forget much of what they have learnt. To prevent this, the pupils of one or more classes after leaving school should be united in a group or groups and keep in touch with each other and the school, just as is done in the age groups and regiments (p. 213). The teacher could call them together at periods when their principal work is slack for holiday courses. He would also visit them in their homes and advise them in their work. Valuable help in such an object and in the keeping alive of spiritual interest among the pupils may be rendered by a vernacular periodical.

To what extent elementary schools with the character described can be created will largely depend on the quality of the teacher. If he is to be the cultural centre of his village, from which will radiate new forces to fertilize the old life, he must be at home in both worlds, the Old and the New. His technical and scientific attainments should be as wide as possible. In addition he wants practical common sense, an understanding of the life of a peasant community, a right sense of the value of the powers it has developed, and of the best way of turning them to account in education. He will, moreover, be ready to take part in that life. True education does not come from books, but passes from person to person. The efficacy of a teacher depends on what he is rather than on what he knows.

Although every African teacher does not reach the ideal of his profession, yet their role in the formation of a new life in Africa can hardly be over-estimated. There are among them many with only a modest degree of general education and of pedagogical training; others who at far too young an age were entrusted with a task for which they could not have been fitted; and not a few who are complete failures. Yet with all their shortcomings they render a service which has far-reaching effects. In thousands of communities they are the only persons who have had a European education and have thus acquired a wider outlook. They remain in constant touch with the European in later life and are among the very few

Africans who read books after they have left school. On the other hand, they live in close contact with the Natives and in Native style, though perhaps modified somewhat. They are thus the best interpreters of the New to the Old. By the very nature of their work they are obliged to live in harmony with the chiefs and representatives of the older generation, and in this way they acquire an understanding of the value of the sanctions of tradition, the more so if their eyes have been opened to them by their European teacher. Almost all the Natives who have published books about the culture, language, or the history of African tribes, and have thus rendered a service to science as well as to their own people, are teachers or ministers. Many of them exercise their calling in difficult circumstances, amongst very backward communities, in miserable hovels with quite insufficient equipment, and often for very scanty remuneration. When the incomes of Missionary Societies have fallen, missionary teachers have often suffered deductions of salary without a murmur. Many of them are true servants and real idealists and are among the brightest hopes of the race.

One of the reasons which for a long time prevented the school from having its real effect on the life of the people was that, especially in the case of missionary work, schools were founded on charity and financed with the help of foreigners, so that the people have become accustomed to the idea that the mission or the government will take responsibility for their

upkeep. As a result of systematic education this attitude is to-day to a large extent overcome, although it has not entirely vanished. Its early complete abandonment is the goal in view. Communities who want a teacher and school will be able to maintain both just as Mohammedan or Christian sectarian groups are able to maintain theirs. The school is the affair of the community, and the community or the Native Administration, or the indigenous Church, has to provide for its needs. Where this is not done, the school remains a foreign element in the village or town. It is equally necessary that the Native community should have a share in the administration of its school or schools and should feel responsible for its guidance, even though it cannot for the time being dispense with the co-operation of strangers. As long as the school is not under a Native Council, it has not taken root in the community. Indirect rule should be extended to education. What the Annual Report (1930) of Achimota College says with reference to this institution is true of every school in Africa: 'In the education of African children parents should have an effective voice. An education where foreign experts think out problems, foreign experts work out projects, and foreign experts carry them out is doomed, however perfectly benevolent it may be, to be perfectly unimaginative.' In the Council of Achimota, according to Statute, six of the fifteen members must be Africans, and the Report says: 'that proportion (of Africans) must inevitably increase.'

The position of elementary schools has in the foregoing discussion been given the central place, because they are the basis and starting-point of all sound education, and consequently their development is of vital significance in the education of the race.¹ In the village social cohesion is stronger than in larger towns. Social relations are more stable, and if interest in them can be successfully aroused through the school much that is valuable may be saved from destruction, and the transition from the Old to the New can proceed slowly like a natural growth without causing too much harm. If the school succeeds in raising the cultural level of the village and making it more attractive, this will make it easier for the educated young people to find their future in the village and to co-operate in its improvement. Missions and educational authorities alike should feel it their duty to enlighten the population about the real significance of elementary schools. It is a deplorable fact that many educated Africans do not realize the importance of them. Their ideal seems to be the higher school with a pure academic education. While these may be admissible in a very limited number and

¹ In an article 'L'enfant noir', by R. Delavignette, published in *L'Afrique Française*, Nov. 1932, the same emphasis is laid on the creation of rural elementary schools (*écoles rurales populaires*). In South Africa 57.2 per cent. of Native children receiving primary and secondary education were in the sub-standards, 69.2 per cent. in the sub-standards and standard I, 77.5 per cent. in these and standard II. Very few go beyond this, and only 5 per cent. were beyond standard VI.

at a later state of general development, the present need is for schools which educate, not for literary studies but for life.

The pedagogic problem is simpler in high schools than it is in village schools. Their object is to introduce the Africans to European civilization. Many Africans cannot rid themselves of the suspicion that the European wishes to keep from them the best of his knowledge and skill, and prevent the cultural level of the Natives from rising above a certain stage. The suspicion is unjustified. Every educational authority wishes that the way to the best of European civilization should be opened to the African; that it should be made possible for him to develop his capacities without let or hindrance, and use them in life. Such a training includes an intimate acquaintance with a European language.

But higher schools also should reserve part of the time of their pupils for the study of indigenous life, its manners and customs, its history and folk-lore, and also its language. The scanty understanding which the majority of modern Africans have of their spiritual heritage of the past is deplorable, but can easily be understood in view of present circumstances. On the other hand, it has been noticed that pupils who have had a really thorough education and have learnt to understand European civilization have had their eyes opened also to the value of their national life. Among the cultured men of the older generation, and especially such as are in responsible positions,

there are many who insist on the necessity of building education on the foundation of the heritage of the past. Even when a scholar has assimilated a foreign language, he does not feel himself at home in it, and cannot express himself as completely in it as in his own Native tongue. It would therefore be desirable that those branches of study which are concerned with spiritual life and character-building, such as religion and ethics, also history and Native life, should be taught in the vernacular.¹

The language problem in African education is one that has given rise to much discussion; although opinions vary and the actual practices in using or not using the vernacular as a medium of instruction differ widely, there appears to be a growing recognition of its usefulness. In the journal *Oversea Education*, vol. i, no. 2, the question of bilingual school education with special reference to conditions in Wales was discussed. In order to come to a definite understanding, similar investigations should be undertaken in Africa. A comparison, for example, should be made of the general results of an education based on serious vernacular instruction and familiarity with vernacular literature, and one carried on without or with poor vernacular teaching (examples of both cases can easily be found in one country, where general conditions are equal). The investigation should comprise elementary and higher education; it should not be limited to intellectual achievements, but to the wider scope of

¹ See Chapter XI.

character-building, of forming personalities, of the relation of the educated to the Native communities and their influence on them, and it should take into account the results stretching over a number of years. Research of this nature will form a section of a comprehensive study of African child and youth psychology.

Many missionaries have from the outset recognized the problem of adapting the school to African environment. This is proved by the fact that missionaries were the first to attack the study of African languages, and that they have used them in their religious and educational work. If a considerable number of African languages now possess the beginnings of a literature, the missionaries have to be thanked for it.

But even under the most favourable circumstances it is inevitable that the religious and educative work of missions will have a disintegrating effect on Native institutions. It introduces a new order of life, and in many ways means a break with the old. Hardly once in Africa has it happened that a social unit, a tribe or a village, has been converted as a whole to Christianity, thus making it possible to preserve the structure of society in a Christianized form. Wherever Natives adopt Christianity, the Christian congregation comes into being within or by the side of the pagan community, and, at any rate in the matter of religion, finds itself in conscious opposition to the latter. The Christians have their own laws, carry out

their own rites, and in districts where the European influence is still small, they are distinguished from their surroundings by their standard of life. Participation in pagan ritual, ancestor-worship, and other religious ceremonial is out of the question for them; even harmless pleasures are often forbidden by missionaries. It may also happen that Christians oppose an ordinance of the tribal chief when this is in conflict with their convictions or the bidding of the missionary. Conflicts have rarely arisen from this source, thanks to the inherent tolerance of the Negro, for he finds it easy to discover a compromise. The pagans are ready to allow the Christians the rights which are their due, and in cases where a considerable part of the population has become Christian, they submit without objection to the rule of a Christian chief.

It is unfortunate that Christianity comes to Africa split into sects. There are to be found, often in the same place and practically always in the same tribe, communities of several denominations, making another rift in the communal life and providing the African with an object lesson in intolerance, which is quite alien to his nature. It may happen all too easily that the missionary warns his flock against intercourse with those of another creed because they might be weakened in their own belief, and thus he sows the seed of mistrust and estrangement. The Native has by nature broad and liberal sympathies, and we can imagine the irritation he may feel when the missionary teaches him in the name of Christianity

to segregate himself from his own Christian compatriots because they belong to another Church. A West African, who is a faithful Christian, expressed himself on this point as follows: 'Our gods live peacefully with one another. No priest competes with another, but they consider it as a matter of course that one should serve one divinity, another man another. Christianity pretends to be a religion of peace, and yet its teachers bring discord to us. They separate the inhabitants of a place, even a whole people, into two or more camps. That we cannot understand.'

The Africans thus have to share the burdens of the European Christian Churches; this is the more deplorable since these burdens are in the sphere of doctrine and ritual, whereas the Christian ideal of life is in essentials the same for all Churches. When doctrine and ritual are so strongly emphasized the impression is easily created that they are essentials, and the fact that Christianity means a new life recedes into the background. The missionary should not cease to show that the important thing for the Christian is something quite different from following certain usages which have come from Europe. Where Christianity has been transmuted into life, it creates its own forms, and African Christians should be given the possibility of doing this for themselves. Old African life was rich in forms which brought colour and variety even into the tiniest village. The greater part of this is vanishing to-day, and the new Christian

forms often have such a distinctly European character that they appear strange and meaningless to the Natives. The Christians should be encouraged to develop their own customs in daily life, in the great events in family and community, and in the Christian Church. There are innumerable fine African customs on the occasions of birth, marriage, illness, and death; in connexion with the education of children and their entry into the community of the adults; in seed-time and harvest, and the building of the house. Most of these could be preserved in a Christianized form and would contribute to the deeper penetration of Christianity into the soil of Africa, thus saving the Christian from being cast adrift from the past of his own people. Both school and Church should make it their task to encourage and foster the old folk-songs, folk-dances, drum festivals, dramatic functions and other games, and thus to preserve for the everyday life something of its former colour and movement. Recreation is no less necessary than work, and to forbid the former pleasures or let them die out without replacing them by something better is an inadequate method of education.

Christianity is destined to be one of the important factors which will contribute towards social reintegration. Already it has succeeded, as no other institution coming from Europe has done, in producing new social groups. The existing Christian communities are proof of this. Many of them show even in their outward appearance signs of a new

progressive attitude. The manner of life of the Christians is frequently on a higher plane than that of the pagans. Their houses are roomier and cleaner; they spend more on the needs of daily life and on the education of their children. They raise considerable funds for the maintenance of their Church. Where the leader succeeds in awakening the enthusiasm of his Christian followers their readiness to make sacrifices is sometimes astonishing, and not infrequently exceeds the limit of what is usual in Europe. The readiness to achieve so much can only arise out of the consciousness that the new community has endowed life with new value.

A new Christian communal life is born in the village by the side of the old paganism, the one ruled by tradition, the other by a 'new Law'. The old enjoys the advantage of having definitely fixed forms which have for many generations been considered holy and inviolable. Its followers are in the majority, and it exercises undisputed authority over them. The new communal life is still in the early stages of its development. It is bound by numerous ties to the old, preserves many old ideas and institutions, and draws its nourishment from the roots of the common past. Yet in many ways it is revolutionary and is creating its own forms which are based on new ideals. In spite of all the weaknesses which can be explained by the qualities of the race and its history, new progressive forces are at work in the Christian groups. Tradition is no longer the all-dominant factor; the

new faith, when it is part of the inner life, gives a different attitude to all tasks and aims, and creates new values. There can be no doubt that these new standards have significance for the readjustment of social life. The Christian community is a reality. It has its offices, in which men and women are trained to personal responsibility; its self-administration; its groupings and associations; equality of rights for women; its regular assemblies and its common task. It therefore affords the individual ample opportunity for activity as a member of the whole and at the same time gives him the feeling of security, so that the old traits of clan life, brotherliness and readiness to help, find a new home in this environment.

Yet the Church reaches out beyond the individual community. The congregations of a whole area form a unity, a body with common aims, common administration and regular assemblies of the leaders. The members of the congregations get to know each other at the great church and missionary festivals, and exercise or receive the same hospitality as has hitherto only been enjoyed by fellow tribesmen. Teachers and ministers are moved from place to place, thus showing that they serve the whole, and that the interests of the individual congregation must be subordinated to those of the Church. The same forms and rules obtain in all churches and schools; all members read the same books; the dialect in which these books are written sets the standard, and thus forms a new bond of union. A special part can be played in this respect

by the vernacular periodical which ought to exist in every church. By becoming a forum for the free utterance of opinion, in which every one can take part, and by printing contributions and news which interest all, it can render an important service and be an essential help in maintaining a link between the members of one church.

The Christian Church is almost the only sphere of life in which the African can give free and unfettered expression to his own personality. In all other matters of public life he is the subject of the dominant race, but the Church gives him full independence and responsibility. All posts in it are open to the Native, and the missions are always working for greater independence for the Native Church. The European is made more and more a collaborator instead of a superior. This is of more importance in places where the African lives under oppressive conditions and where he has lost his tribal life and has thereby become homeless. Here the Church is called upon to give him a new home, in accepting him as a member of its community and in showing him the way to full development and an outlet for his spiritual faculties. The other aspect of this freedom of the churches is the number of sects which have been formed, especially in South Africa, partly as the result of social pressure, opposition to white leadership, or too rigid Church discipline. They often lead a poverty-stricken existence, but they show that the African is able to stand on his own feet and give the

Churches under European leadership proof that an African Church can be financially self-supporting, which is a necessary pre-supposition for self-government.

4

In order to arrive at a just estimate of missionary work and its results, one should not forget that it is undertaken among peoples who live in a state of transition and disintegration, and that the missionary himself cannot avoid taking part in this process. It is inevitable that unpleasing phenomena should grow out of such conditions, and it is unjustifiable to lay the blame for them exclusively on the mission. The missionary cannot always prevent men approaching him and being accepted into the Church who wish to use Christianity and the membership of the mission as a cloak for mean and selfish purposes. Many come to him without understanding what Christian life means, and it is no wonder if after a time they turn away disappointed or must be excluded. Also the following factor should not be overlooked. In going over to Christianity a man is breaking away from his own social group and the inherited religion, and thereby leaving behind all sanctions which these institutions embrace and which were regarded as absolutely binding. An individual does not dare disregard a tenet of the pagan religion or fling to the wind a command of the priest, of the witch-doctor, or of an elder, for it may mean death to him. With conversion

to the new religion the old bonds lose their menace. It is true he enters upon new obligations, but these are to him not nearly of such a fearful and binding character as the old ones. Here it is not a question of community of blood, of revengeful deities or of relentless magical powers, but of a relation based on trust and faith. It needs a deep religious experience or great spiritual maturity to comprehend the reality of such a community and to recognize its obligations. Even if Christianity does impose commands and restrictions on its members, it is nevertheless fundamentally based on freedom and self-responsibility, and this can only be acquired through long and intensive education. Hence it must be realized that many of those who join the Church never reach the goal and are only in part of their life Christian, while some only succeed in producing pathetic caricatures.

In the same way all fruits of missionary schools do not attain maturity, and it is these unripe and spoiled fruits which are injurious to the repute of missionary work. Youths educated in a mission are accused of being presumptuous, deceitful, and unreliable. One hears Europeans say that they prefer a 'bush-Negro' or a 'raw Kafir' to one trained in the mission. This is an unjustified generalization and it would be easy to quote numerous examples in contradiction. The unsatisfactory products of education are frequently those who have been dismissed from the schools because of their lack of qualifications and who now seek a job on the grounds of their supposed

knowledge. The preference for the uncivilized Native may also be due to the fact that in his inexperience he is a more convenient tool in the hand of the European than the sophisticated Negro who has been in closer contact with European ways.

Nevertheless, the missionary and the educator should not turn a deaf ear to the warnings of their critics. If there were not an element of truth in them, they would not find such frequent and vehement expression as they do. They are not so much a reproach to missions as to education in general; but they are raised against missions owing to the chance circumstance that education is to a large extent in the hands of missions. One of the most important causes of the failure of many pupils to fulfil the hopes reposed in them is the fact that even in their early youth they turned away from their own group life. They are condemned to live between two worlds, the old one of their parents and their community and the new one of the school, and they are not fully at home in either. Too often in the school the pupil is taught to look down on the old life as on something left behind. What was sacred and unassailable there is here branded as absurd superstition, and what is a religious reality to his parents is regarded in the school as non-existent or the work of the devil. A violent conflict thus possesses him, from which he may perhaps never be freed. In the new world of European civilization and religion he does not find a firm footing. The school cannot give him a substitute for what he loses, namely,

membership in a group with its own moral standards and obligations. He is in danger of becoming an isolated individual, responsible to no one. He may behave well as long as the missionary has him under his wing, but though he may have adopted Christianity that does not necessarily imply that he has a strong enough grasp of Christian principles to live out in practice what he learned in school when he is thrown upon his own resources. This is especially true of pupils who after leaving school go to the towns where they are exposed to all the lures and temptations of a new world.

XI

LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION

1. Emotional use of language. Mother tongue as integrating factor in tribal and national cohesion. Large number of African languages. Extensive use of Swahili, Mandingo, Hausa. European penetration and need for lingua franca. Uses and limitations of lingua franca.
2. Attachment of the African to his mother tongue.
3. The preservation and transmission of cultural heritage through language. Modern education and use of vernacular in teaching. Problems in creating vernacular literature.
4. Tribal languages in relation to units of population. Largest language groups.
5. Vernacular language essential to building up of African Church.
6. Language and culture contact. Need for the African to know a European language. European language as disintegrating factor in social life. Value of the vernacular language in the development of the African.

I

It is natural for us to look upon language as a medium for communicating thoughts, that is, for effecting an understanding between men. However essential this function of language is, it is not its only one. When an Ewe man has a hard piece of work to do, he stimulates himself by repeating the series of his own drinking or praise names in rapid succession, or by asking a friend to call them out to him. Likewise young men while hoeing a field or cutting rice are followed by their girl friends who inspire the workers by encouraging exclamations. A mother talking to her baby, a woman humming as she grinds corn, an

excited or a lonely person talking to himself, lengthy greetings exchanged between strangers on the road—none of these have anything, or very little, to do with the communication of thoughts. They are emotional acts, the indication of a need for expression, or are intended to evoke an emotion in the person addressed.

Language also forms a psychic link of the highest order. Nothing binds people more closely together than a common language. This is realized by every one who, after a long stay abroad, is suddenly greeted in the sounds of his mother tongue. In Africa all the bigger towns have quarters where foreigners speaking the same language foregather so as to feel more at home. It is well known how much Natives living away from home appreciate periodicals in their vernacular, because they form a link with their home, and very often also with their home Church. In Europe we see peoples and national minorities engaged in desperate struggles to preserve and cultivate their language. To communicate their ideas and to make themselves understood in their surroundings it would be as well or even better for them to use the language of the country in which they live. The reason for clinging to their own language can only be that it has an emotional and a spiritual value for them, and by giving it up they would be sacrificing part of their birthright. Allegiance to a people is closely allied with language: a person who, in a foreign environment, gives up his

own language indicates thereby that he separates himself from his people and becomes merged in his new environment.

Europe of the Middle Ages had a universal language, Latin, which for many people was a means of acquiring an education and exchanging knowledge, and which was also used, to a great extent, for purposes of general communication. But as the peoples using it became self-conscious and developed a national feeling, they rejected Latin and began to love and to cultivate their own languages. In spite of the fact that these languages had, up to that time, been despised as clumsy peasant dialects unfit for literary use, they seemed to the people a more adequate means of expressing what they had to say and what they felt, than the foreign language. They felt it to be a violation of their inner life and their national self to be forced to talk and think, to write, pray, and sing in a language which had never become their own. But even among those nations with whom Latin had become the 'vernacular', each came to develop 'their' Latin in their own way, thus again asserting their own individuality. The languages derived from Latin—Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romance, Catalan, Provençal, and Rumanian—have become distinct languages, because each is the expression of a distinct nationality. An international language is useful in many ways and for many purposes, but it should never presume to be a substitute for national languages. Standardization

and unification in matters of the mind are, when carried too far, the end of all life.

All one's love for home, all that calls up memories of early childhood, of parents and friends, of people who have meant something to one in life, all this is embodied in the sound of the mother tongue. This is true for the people as a whole as well as for the individual, and for the African as well as for us. When we speak or hear our mother tongue, every phrase evokes feelings and visions which are not aroused by similar expressions uttered in another language. It has been said, and rightly, that each person is an individual of its own type that is never repeated, and that it is the aim of education to develop this individuality to the full, and give it fair play. The same is true of nations; each has its own genius which is manifest in its feeling, thought, and will, but is nowhere so clearly brought out as in the language. No language can be fully translated into another, only an approximation of the meaning is possible, because concepts and shades of expression hardly ever coincide exactly.

Conditions in Europe cannot, however, be compared without qualification to those prevailing in Africa to-day. The European languages were allowed to develop without too much interference. While the influence of Latin gradually receded, a national culture grew up, of which the national language became an integral part, and out of its dialects one written form evolved and a literature grew up. In Africa, on the other hand, languages are numerous and cover

small areas. The progress of amalgamation of cognate dialects has not gone far enough, the cultural background of the languages is narrow, and they are today drawn into the turmoil of Europeanization. It is therefore much more difficult for them to hold their own than it was for languages in Europe.

The large number of African languages is a natural result of the general conditions of life on the continent. For long periods the tribes or even smaller units lived in complete or nearly complete isolation. Strictly speaking, no individual (in any language) speaks exactly like any other. Within a group of related families, and more so between one village and another, or between two districts, differences in pronunciation, speech-melodies, idiom, and vocabulary can easily be observed. In normal circumstances these differences are levelled down through intercourse and the influence of the written language, so that on the whole the linguistic unity is preserved. But in most parts of pre-European Africa this intercourse did not exist or only to a very small extent. Each group, when separating from the main body, led its own life, and the stranger, though he might be a neighbour, was looked on with suspicion. The result was that the speech form of each group developed in its own way, until they were no longer mutually intelligible. The original unity was thus split up into a number of independent languages, and this fact in its turn contributed to isolation and distrust which became an ever-increasing barrier.

Other contrary developments, however, also made themselves felt. Where several groups of people lived in a neighbourhood, one among them was more enterprising than others and thus gained supremacy. They established contacts with their neighbours through trade and commerce or through political conquest. The language of this group grew preponderant and showed a tendency to spread. It became useful and therefore desirable to know it. The members of the superior group do not as a rule take the trouble to know the language of a smaller group. If these want to converse with their superiors, it has to be done in the ruling language, and it thus becomes a mark of distinction to know it. The process of linguistic expansion is facilitated if it is a question of related languages. Thus Swahili has spread and is spreading in the Bantu language field, that is to say, among languages closely akin to itself. In the vast Mandingo area, one dialect, Malinke, has gradually become the lingua franca among all rival dialects. In both cases it was a process of natural amalgamation. On the other hand Hausa, although it is, like Swahili and Mandingo, the language of very active trading peoples, has not shown the same power of absorption as Swahili, one reason for this being that its structure and vocabulary are different from those of the surrounding Negro languages. Where it is adopted, this is done in a very much simplified and often in a distorted way. The importance of Hausa as a means of intercourse lies in the fact that numerous

Hausa settlements exist outside the Hausa boundary in the Central and Western Sudan and in West African coastal lands; but only in rare cases has Hausa become the second language of a Negro tribe.

The need for a common language with a wider range was more keenly felt when the white man came to Africa and established peaceful relations. Nothing has contributed more to the spread of Swahili, Hausa, Mandingo, Efik, Duala, Mbundu, Ngala, and Zulu than European penetration. Where a lingua franca had not evolved, the existing need created new languages which could easily be understood and acquired by all the parties concerned. Best known among these is pidgin-English as spoken on the West African coast, which is used as a means for intercourse between Europeans and Natives, and also between Africans of different languages who live in European centres. The language consists of English words which in their pronunciation are adapted to the African's mode of speech. Grammatical distinctions are reduced to a minimum. This does not mean that the language lacks form. New grammatical forms have evolved, and these are not English but African, corresponding to the syntactical formations of West African Negro languages. Pidgin-English is a West African language which takes its word-material from the English vocabulary. Similar pidgin forms of African languages have evolved in the so-called Kitchen-Kafir, a simplified form of Zulu, in Sudan Arabic, Ngala, and in the outskirts of the Swahili expansion.

A pidgin language has as a rule no emotional background; it is solely a means of communication, differing from Esperanto only in having a smaller vocabulary and in being of natural growth. It may, however, associate emotions where it becomes the mother tongue of a group, as is the case with the Creoles in Sierra Leone, and also with people using Ngala in the Belgian Congo and Sudan Arabic in the Upper Nile region. There is no reason why such simplified forms of speech should not occasionally be used for literary purposes.

2

What is the African's attitude towards his own language? The prevailing impression might be that the majority of the younger generation take a very slight interest in it and would be willing to abandon it altogether in favour of a European language. But this is only one side of the question, and it would be wrong to generalize from such a statement. Under normal circumstances Africans cling to their mother tongue just as other people do. Where a lingua franca has spread or where a smaller language is surrounded by a larger one, the local form of speech has in many cases continued to live on for centuries, although for all communications with the outer world the lingua franca may be used. Though in North Africa the Punic, Greek, Latin, Arabic, and modern European languages have through long periods exercised a commanding influence, yet the old indigenous Berber

dialects have not disappeared. When to-day in Africa, in one language area, an attempt is made to use in school and literature a neighbouring language or dialect, immediately there is opposition. This is partly due to tribal jealousy, but also to the feeling that language is a valuable possession the loss of which would impair the individuality and integrity of the group.

Among the older generation of educated Africans there is no doubt a growing appreciation of their national language. While fully realizing the necessity of knowing a European language, they do not want to lose or neglect their own, and many of them are seriously concerned in developing it and making it literary. The annual competition established by the Institute, for vernacular manuscripts written by Africans, is meeting with a vivid interest among Natives.

3

The spiritual heritage of the African is to a large extent preserved in and transmitted through the language, and is intimately bound up with it. African religion, the indigenous systems of education, the rules of behaviour regulating life within the group, folk-lore and law, cannot exist independently of the indigenous language. In West Africa religious cult groups are found which speak a language of their own, the underlying idea being that the religious teaching and the intercourse with the deity can be done only in the language in which the doctrines

and rituals professed by the group were first conceived or revealed.

Knowledge in primitive society is not so much a matter of rational learning as a personal experience, and it is more of an emotional than of a merely intellectual character. This is clearly seen in the teaching given in initiation schools. During an initiation course the pupils are kept in a continuous state of excitement, and this inner commotion is thought necessary for receiving and assimilating the lore of the tribe as transmitted from the ancestors. What impresses them most is not the matter taught but the circumstances under which it is taught. It may even be done in a language which the present generation no longer understand so that the contents have to be explained by a 'speaker'. It is clear that these emotions and exaltations can be evoked only through the traditional language, and that the teaching would lose all its meaning when imparted in a foreign tongue. Not only its charm and attractiveness, but also its sanctity and binding nature would vanish if it were to be derobed of its original form of expression.

Though the African's mental heritage may appear to us poor and defective, it is not devoid of value. He had evolved an educational system which was well adapted to his life and which produced good results. He has also amassed a store of experience, observations, and achievements, and he has produced an art which commands admiration. No conscientious educator can ignore this, and at least elementary

education might very well draw from this material. If this is to be done, it can only be through the vernacular.

How far it is to be done will depend on the attitude of the white educator. It is quite right to say that ultimately the question will have to be decided by the Africans themselves, but it is no less true that the position the Native takes is very much dependent on that of his white teacher and that it must be guided by him. Where a mission has from the beginning of its activity laid stress on vernacular teaching and has provided vernacular books which meet the existing demand, the Natives have learned to respect their own language. They find it natural to read and write it and to have their tribal lore as well as the elements of European knowledge represented in vernacular books. The task of creating a conscious interest in the heritage of the past and of producing a vernacular literature cannot be left to the Natives alone. The white man must take the lead, and wherever a school or a teaching system will seriously take up the cause of vernacular education the European educators will have to master the language.

Here it is that many missionaries and other educators fail and make a wrong start, perhaps to-day more so than used to be the case half a century ago. In the Africa of to-day the white man will in many cases come into a milieu which is perfectly conversant with his own European language, and so nothing seems more natural than that he should follow the line of

least resistance and limit himself to the use of his own tongue. The pressing demands made upon his time and a shirking of the trouble necessarily involved in the mastering (not in acquiring a working knowledge) of an African language may explain this passive attitude of his. Such an educator will never inaugurate vernacular education, and if it does exist already, he is not likely to pay much attention to it. If, on the other hand, he has learned the language and through it learns to understand the Natives and their forms of life, he will insist on having it used in school and on giving the mental heritage of the people its place in education, for he has come to realize the absolute foolishness of instructing children in a language of which they do not understand a word.

Still greater is the responsibility of the European who undertakes to produce a vernacular literature. He not only needs a thorough knowledge of the language, but in using and even moulding it for quite new purposes he is confronted with a number of problems, the difficulties of which should not be underrated. Questions arise of the right dialect, of standardization, of orthography, of word-division, of word-formation, of finding the right expressions or of coining new ones by composition without violating the language, and of the introduction of foreign words. The language will be extremely rich and nice in some respects, but it may be poor in others, and often seems to be lacking in just those things which the European wants to express. Only if he is

indefatigable in efforts, patience, and devotion will he reach his aim. He may realize that the more he studies the language the less he seems to get to the bottom of it, but he will also come to admit that it is a much more flexible and adequate instrument than he at first thought it to be, and that it is capable of development and also of expressing European thought. In fact there is no African language in which it is not possible to express everything that is required for primary education. With honest goodwill, it should be possible within a few years to produce the necessary text-books in all the African languages suitable for educational purposes, and in this way to provide a basis for a really popular, comprehensive elementary education. Only if this vernacular educational literature as well as at least a few books for general reading come into being and are actually used in schools will Natives learn to consider their own language as a valuable means of education and instruction; and only when the problems connected with the building up of a literary language have been thoroughly worked out and the language reduced to a simple and consistent way of writing will Africans be able to enjoy reading and writing their language.

4

An objection frequently levelled against the use of the vernacular is that these languages are spoken by so few people that it is not worth while building up

a literature in them. This is true in certain cases, but not in all. A number of African languages are spoken by as many people as, if not more than, the numbers speaking some of the European languages with literatures of their own. Swahili may justly be numbered among the important languages of the world. Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, Mossi-Dagbani, Mandingo, Luba, Ganda, Galla, Amharic are spoken by millions of people. There are many other purely tribal languages, such as Tigre, Tigrinya, Luo, Kamba, Kikuyu, Nkole, Sukuma-Nyamwezi, Ruanda, Nyanja, Bemba, Tonga-Ronga, Tswana, Karanga, Sotho, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu, Kongo, Mongo-Nkundo, Zande, Banda, Bulu, Duala, Efik, Tiv, Nupe-Gbari, Ewe, Akan, Mende, Wolof, each comprising hundreds of thousands of speakers and some of them with a definite expansive tendency. There is no inherent reason why such languages should not evolve a literature. Great as their number is, the diversity and multiplicity of African languages should not be exaggerated. Often what we speak of as a language is really a dialect of another language. The difference between two forms of speech may seem considerable and a mutual understanding impossible. This occurs in Europe as well as in Africa, and yet a closer examination will often reveal significant and essential similarities, not only in the sound system and vocabulary, but even more in structure and idiom. This is to be expected, since all of them have developed in the same surroundings with a common mentality and a similar cultural background

behind them. It is this which facilitates the development and spread of *linguae francae* which are African and therefore not felt to be foreign.

It is obvious that not every language can have a school literature. How far it will be possible in a given case to select and use one written form for a group of dialects or cognate languages will depend on the interest, the tact, and the wisdom of those responsible for education.

5

In one branch of African education the principle that a person should be taught in his own language has been followed almost without reserve, namely, in religious education. The missions have realized from the beginning that if they wanted to reach the heart of the Africans and to influence their inner life, they could do so only through the medium of their own language, and they have kept to this principle; even where a considerable section of the people know a European language, Church work is with rare exceptions done in the vernacular, and it is characteristic that most African books and periodicals deal with religious subjects. Only in this way was it possible and will it be possible in the future to build up an indigenous African Church.

6

With modern secular education, however, the situation is different. It is possible and desirable to transfer certain elements of the old indigenous educational

principles, of the lore and knowledge of the tribe, into modern education and instruction. But this is not sufficient to give the pupil an adequate outfit for the life of to-day. Even in elementary education he needs an understanding of the new forces that are transforming his country, and he must assimilate at least the elements of these forces in order to be able to use them. Therefore, modern education is bound to take its material mainly from European culture. In principle this might be done through the medium of an African language, and it can be done in the elementary stage. Here again, however, language and culture are connected, and moreover it is natural that under present conditions there should be a very general and very keen desire on the part of Africans to know the white man's language. This attitude has to be taken into consideration, quite apart from the fact that for every class of higher and also of technical education the knowledge of a European language is indispensable.

Nothing tends to broaden the mental outlook of a man more than learning a foreign language and through it understanding the culture it represents. There is truth in the saying that with every new language one acquires a new soul. How much more so is this the case with the African who, when he acquires a European language, leaves the humble huts of his tribal life and enters the realm of the civilization which rules the world and is more and more becoming the culture of mankind.

In a real sense, this is true only for a very small minority of those who learn a European language, namely, those whose education enables them to read and to enjoy reading European books and thus reach the sources of Western thought. Not to them only, however, is the knowledge of a European language useful. Wherever the African in his daily work comes into close contact with the white man, some knowledge of his master's language is almost indispensable to him. The work he has to do here is practically always carried on in the European language, whether in business firms, in offices, or in workshops. A Native who knows this language will always be preferred to one who does not, the more so because only in exceptional cases will his white employer understand the vernacular sufficiently, and even if he did, as a rule the technical terms required do not exist in the language. The only exception is perhaps East Africa, where Swahili is largely understood and used by the white population, and the language is, thanks to the influence of Arabic, more highly developed as far as technical terms are concerned. For many Africans living in towns proficiency in a European language is a vital requirement, because only on this condition can they hope to be able to compete and to find a place in life.

When within an area a rivalry arises between two Native languages, the one having become literary, the other not, or the one expanding and the other receding, a feeling of inferiority develops in those

who do not master the language considered as superior. The same is true in the case of the European language, and this is another powerful motive for so many people, not only children, but adults, wishing to acquire at least some elements of the white man's speech. As conditions are in Africa, the idea of going to school is intimately connected with that of learning a European language and thus becoming in some way or other a member of the socially higher class. Therefore, even in elementary education, it will as a rule not be advisable to exclude the teaching of a European language. However slight the knowledge of English acquired in a village school may be, there will always be occasions where the Native can use it and be proud of it.

The really relevant case, however, is that of higher education. The African is a gifted linguist, and even after a few years' instruction may be able to speak English quite fluently. But this does not imply that he reads English books or is even able to understand and assimilate the treatment of a serious subject in a book. The Africans who do read books are mostly teachers and ministers. It is true they do it because their calling requires it, and their reading is restricted to certain definite spheres, but nevertheless the fact that they exercise their mind and keep in touch with higher culture accounts for the fact that among them are to be found some of the best-educated Africans. They represent, however, only a minority of the educated group, and it seems important for the

advancement of the race that a class of Africans should be formed who are not only able to speak English and to read an illustrated newspaper or political propaganda material, but whose education enables them to enjoy studying, digesting, and assimilating a serious book. It is true that the African learns much from personal contact with the white man, and that the personal influence of the teacher on his students is of greater import for the formation of character than book knowledge. But this influence comes to an end when the student leaves the school and is left to himself. Those who are to be the leaders of their people and the channels of the new forces should remain in close touch with the best of what the European mind has produced, and one means of establishing this contact is certainly the reading of European books.

The other side, however, is no less important. The introduction of students into the full realm of European culture loses all its meaning if it implies a neglect of the African's own life and language and thus isolates him from his own people. This is where modern education is easily inclined to make a fatal mistake. A Grammar of the Fante language published about a century ago has on its title-page the following rhyme: 'Let every foreign tongue alone, till you can read and write your own.' If this sound principle had been followed throughout in Africa, African education would stand on a sounder basis than it does to-day. Just as a knowledge of a European

language links the pupil to European culture, so it separates him from his own people. The teaching of a European language is one of the powerful disintegrating factors in African social life. The danger was less great as long as only a small minority of children received a school education, mainly for the purpose of becoming the white man's assistants. Circumstances are altered, however, when education spreads and school attendance becomes general. This is the position to-day, and the time is not far distant when at least in parts of Africa there will be compulsory education. It might be worth while therefore to examine once more the question whether elementary education should be in the vernacular or in a European language, or what should be the relation between the two. Vernacular education does exist, it is true, at least in parts of Africa, but even there it is often no more than rudimentary, one reason for this being that many leading educators do not believe in it. One sometimes has the feeling that teaching in the vernacular is considered as a necessary evil that has to be overcome as quickly as possible in order to hasten to the more important teaching of the European language. It is natural that under such circumstances the pupils do not attach any importance to the vernacular and are glad to get rid of it as soon as possible.

If boys and girls in an African village are taught in English, or at any rate are given to understand that their main task is to learn English, what will be the

result? Are they not systematically drawn away from their own home and their own people? How can we be surprised when such children, after leaving school, find life in their village no longer attractive and try every means to get away from it? Yet after all for the great majority of them the village is the world in which they will have to live and work, and make a success of their life. If our education dissociates the pupil from his own social bonds, what are we giving him as a substitute? He is then naturally drawn towards the white man, but only to realize that this door remains closed for him. If we teach the African that introduction into the white man's world is only one side of his education, that it is equally important for a man to understand and respect his own people and its life forms, and that for every self-respecting person it is a matter of course to stand on the side of his own people and to dedicate the best of his life to it, then we shall do him a better service than if we try to persuade him that his aim should be to become a counterfeit of the white man.

The same is true where higher education is concerned. A person whose training in knowledge, outlook, and character has enabled him to grasp fully the living forces of European civilization, should regard it as his personal responsibility to hand on to his people what he has acquired and thus become a fountain head for new life; but he can do this only when he has not dissolved the ties that unite him with Native society.

The teaching of the vernacular is by many considered as a waste of time; this may be true for the pure rationalist and for those who regard knowledge of a European language and education as two almost identical things. But if education in Africa means the full development of personality and the organic growth of a new society, it cannot lose sight of the soil out of which the existing society has grown and the human values it has produced. The medium for studying and appreciating these things and for assigning them their due place in the new order of things is the Native language, and from this point of view it is one of the important means of education.

XII

DISINTEGRATION AND REINTEGRATION

1. Migration within Africa—Zulu—Fulani. Early external contacts in N. and E. Africa. Absorption of these foreign elements.
2. Changes due to Islam in W. and E. Africa. Social and religious aspects of conversion to Islam. Linguistic vehicles of Islam: Swahili, Hausa, Mandingo. Present-day stagnation of Islam.
3. Modern European contacts. Their disturbing effect on the African. Dangers of slavish imitation of European.
4. Main disintegrating forces in Africa: Government, missions, economic activity. Wealth and status in old order compared with new. Towns and mining areas as diffusion centres of new ideas. Dangers of rapid industrialization.
5. Emergence of new forms of social organization. Relation between individual and group. Importance of maintaining African institutions in social life, and relation to training in civics.
6. Effects of travel on group life. Mobility of population leading to larger group consciousness and beginnings of national feeling.
7. Segregation of white and black. Arguments on both sides. Value of joint councils of Europeans and Natives.
8. Native associations in towns. Appeal of communism to urban workers. Need for studies of groups living under new conditions.

I

IN considering the relations of Africa with other parts of the globe the fact cannot be overlooked that though from prehistoric times onwards foreign peoples have migrated into Africa, yet the Africans have never of their own accord advanced beyond the boundaries of their continent. The desire for adventure never lured them to strange shores. They

remained passive and receptive, and waited until others came to them. African life before the arrival of the European was static, tradition was the dominating power. Africa 'has no chapter in the history of the planet'.

This does not mean that complete stagnation ruled either within the continent or in its external relations. From time immemorial there have been influxes of peoples as well as of cultural elements from Asia and to a smaller degree from Europe. From the Near East there came 'Hamitic' groups, whose immigrations probably were spread over thousands of years. Two streams are easily distinguishable: through the region between the Sahara and the West African forests, and through the East African steppes to South Africa. They stirred up the Negro world, driving out, annihilating, or subjugating many tribes, and made themselves their rulers. Early in the nineteenth century the Ngoni, a group of the Zulu (who have Hamitic traits), left their home in South Africa and entered the region round Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika. Here they settled as conquering, and frequently cruel, warriors among a people who had a totally different language and social structure. They intermarried with the subjugated tribes, partly adopted their language, yet maintained their ethnical identity and considered themselves an aristocratic clan.¹

¹ Margaret Read, 'Tradition and Prestige among the Ngoni', *Africa*, vol. ix, pp. 453 ff.

Of a different character were the migrations of the Fulani. Starting from somewhere near the shore of the Red Sea, they wandered along the southern edge of the Sahara as far as the Senegal. From here they turned back eastwards again and at the same time farther into the lands of the Negroes. They travelled in small groups seeking pasture for their herds, which was freely given them by the Negro rulers. They did not even disdain to become cattle-herds in the service of the Native chief, thus gaining unnoticed a footing in the land as unobtrusive guests. If conditions were favourable, they brought other groups of their people in their train, until they became a factor with whom the Negro government had to reckon. The Fulani soon adopted Islam and became its rigid adherents. This added to their feeling of superiority and their aversion to being the subjects of pagan Negro rulers. In a number of cases they finally succeeded in seizing hold of the political power, as, for example, when they conquered the land of the Hausa in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Naturally such immigrations set indigenious tribes in motion, and migrations took place at all periods within Africa itself. New settlements were formed in suitable, preferably unoccupied, places until some other disturbance occurred or for other reasons the place was no longer pleasing. Occasionally the migrations were due to definite motives, as, for instance, when a people tried to gain access to the sea and to direct trade with the whites. More frequently they

did not have a conscious object. Hunters followed their game; herds changed their pastures; villages were moved because the soil became exhausted or the place was haunted by evil spirits, or frequent diseases drove the inhabitants away; sections of armies settled in the conquered country or went farther into the unknown, driven by a vague lust of adventure.

Nor were peaceful connexions with the external world lacking. Already in very early times merchants from the north and east came to Africa, and trade routes existed to the interior. Gold, ivory, slaves, and spices have for thousands of years been bartered for the wares of the foreigner. Strangers settled on the coasts; in the north, Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans; in the east, Arabs, Persians, and Indians. It is probable that for many centuries prehistoric cultural influences came from the Pacific, from India and the Near East.

It is therefore inaccurate to say that Africa had lived in complete isolation before its modern contact with Europe. Certainly it was cut off from the outer world on the Atlantic coast, but on the north and the east it had in a restricted degree opportunities of participating in the life of civilized mankind and of profiting thereby. Traces of it are evident in many parts of the continent. The strangers not only brought their wares, but settled in Africa, taught the Africans their arts, introduced new cultivated plants and domestic animals, and familiarized them with new social and

political institutions. With the exception of the ass, Africa received all its domestic animals from Asia, and many of its cultivated plants from Asia and later from America. Such accomplishments as the founding and working of iron and other metals, the art of weaving, the introduction of new food plants such as dura, rice, and the banana, and the raising of cattle must have led to a complete upheaval in life and in social and political institutions. The high cultural development in the empires of Monomotapa on the Zambesi, of Loango, Congo, Lunda, Luba, Benin, the ruins of Zimbabwe, and the civilizations of the Mandingo, Hausa, Kanuri, and Swahili, are clear proof to what an extent external influences have been accepted and have taken root in Africa. All these stimuli from abroad, however, reached the interior of the continent in thin streams and with many interruptions, so that in the interim sufficient time was left for the Natives to assimilate what they had received as far as was congenial to them, and to reject the rest or merely let it die out. Thus the New meant an enriching and fresh stimulation of organic growth but no break with the Old, and even where this did locally occur it had time to close up. African cultures have always manifested an extraordinary stability and power of assimilation. Neither the migrations of the Hamites and the political upheavals caused by them, nor the settlements of the Arabs and their devastating slave-raids: neither the Indian and Persian immigrants on the east coast, nor even the slave and alcohol trade

of Europe have been able fundamentally to change the face of Africa. The Negro has remained and his civilizations have remained; the foreign elements which they adopted have been so completely absorbed and adapted that to-day they appear indigenous.

Indeed, the foreign immigrants adapted themselves in their mode of life and even in their appearance to the indigenous population to such an extent that they themselves became Africans. Certain Arab tribes living in the Eastern Sudan, as well as those round Lake Chad, are through continued intermarriage to-day black in colour, and sometimes it is hardly more than language, religion, and some cultural features that distinguish them from the people around them. Many Hamites are as dark-skinned as Negroes, and a number among them such as the Hima have adopted Negro languages. The authenticity of many Fulani, judging by their appearance, is difficult to credit. It is true that Hamites can usually be recognized by their sharper features and often by more slender bodies, but climate, interbreeding, and mode of life have produced so many transitional stages that in many parts of Africa the boundaries of the two races are no longer fixed. The approximation was made easier by the fact that the cultural contrast between the new-comers and the indigenous population was not too great; also the climatic differences, and, in consequence, differences in habits were less marked than those between the Negro and the modern European. The strangers came in small groups and at

great intervals, and they left broken bridges behind them. In most cases intercourse with their home countries and the possibility of returning there were excluded; they sought and found a new home in Africa. As the new-comers consisted chiefly or entirely of men, they were obliged to marry indigenous women, which made assimilation easier. As a result they, and more so their children, ceased to be strangers; they became Africans, or rather formed an aristocratic class of African society, which the masses were ambitious to resemble.

Portuguese settlements, which early arose on both the east and west coast, show a transition from older to modern times. These Portuguese colonists have assimilated much of the indigenous mode of life and reveal a remarkable capacity for adapting themselves to African conditions. In some coastal centres their descendants live as half-castes and belong to the better-class Natives.

2

Among the pre-European foreign invasions of Africa that of Islam is the one which in recent times has brought about the most visible changes in the social and political as well as in the religious life of a large part of the continent. After North Africa had been conquered by the Arabs in the seventh century, Mohammedan influence soon began to be felt in the countries farther south. It may be assumed that from the tenth or eleventh centuries onwards Mohammedan

groups or single traders penetrated into the Sudan by the trade routes from the Mediterranean. As early as the eleventh century a Mohammedan dynasty ruled in Kanem. In the fourteenth century, following the fall of the Christian Nubian kingdom, Kordofan, Darfur, Wadai, and Bornu were invaded by mixed Arab tribes who came from Upper Egypt, and many of whom gained ruling positions in the new lands. Even earlier, between the eighth and eleventh centuries, Arab merchants from Morocco and Algiers had reached the Western Sudan, which had for a long time previously been in commercial relation with North Africa. Finally, in the eleventh century, tribes of nomad Arabs left Egypt and wandered westwards along North Africa, part of them reaching the Sudan and forcing the already Islamized Berbers farther south. By about 1400 the new religion had spread so far that the countries east of Lake Chad, and to some extent those west of it, were covered by a thin but influential layer of Mohammedan culture. These conditions remained almost stationary, until in the beginning of the nineteenth century religious propaganda, influenced by political ambition, was started by the Fulani in northern Nigeria and the neighbouring lands, and Hausa, Kanuri, and Mandingo, thanks to the opening up of Africa by the Europeans, were able to carry Islam into unknown regions. This resulted in the rise of an important Islamic diaspora in most of the larger places of West and Central Africa as the southern Cameroons.

To East Africa Islam came partly through trading intercourse over the Red Sea, and partly through the contact of South Arabia, India, and Persia with the East African coast. From the ninth century onwards the Shirazi civilization, mixed with Mohammedan influences, reached East Africa from the Persian Gulf. The so-called Shihiri Arabs over a long period migrated into East Africa and settled there as small traders and artisans. Stronger political forces came from Hadramaut. At the end of the seventeenth century a new element came in when the Sultans of Muscat extended their rule over Zanzibar and the continental coast. By their continuous slave raids in the interior they devastated the country, but at the same time spread Islam by trade routes and settlements. As in West Africa, their religious propaganda received a new impetus through European colonization. The present situation is that the whole eastern Horn, except Christian Abyssinia, and a small strip of the coast as far as Mozambique, is Mohammedan, and Islamic communities are also found in many of the important places in the interior.

As has been mentioned, Islam owes its progress in modern times mainly to European colonization. The Mohammedans, as traders and craftsmen, as members of a higher and more civilized race, reaped the first benefit of the *pax Europaea* and the economic progress following in its train. In consequence they came into the foreground, so much so that in colonial and missionary circles a 'Moslem peril' was apprehended.

The bearers of Islam were mostly either political conquerors or merchants. It was to the advantage of the new religion that its first contacts were with Hamitic peoples. Most people of the Hamitic and Mediterranean races—Berber, Moor, and Tuareg, Fulani, Hausa, and Somali—are to-day Islamized, and it may well have been that this definitely masculine religion, which moreover had originated in a nomadic people, had a special attraction for them. Islam was bound to impress the Negroes also. It came to them as the religion and civilization of aristocratic peoples who as political masters or as travelled, wealthy merchants and scholars, richly dressed, and with the claim of owning the one true religion, must have appeared superior to the Negroes in many ways. At the same time they were sufficiently akin to them in their habits to live a common social life with them and to become connected with them by blood. The representatives of Islam were people of a higher standard of life, but this was not so different from that of the Negroes as to prevent a new unit arising out of a combination of the two. The new religion and its civilization were assimilated and became African. The process was facilitated by the fact that Islam recognized no race discrimination. The converted Negro was willingly admitted into Islamic society, and to him the Moslem was a brother not only in name but throughout the sphere of social life. It soon became the ambition of the Negroes, primarily of the chiefs and the higher classes, to attain the

socially higher status of the Moslem. This meant the adoption of the new religion and it was made easier by the fact that Islam adapted itself in large measure to indigenous customs and views, and that its moral demands were not exacting. This rising into the higher social class has been an essential factor in the advance of Islam. There was also in some cases a desire to escape in this way the oppression and slave raids of Mohammedan rulers, to which they were exposed as long as they remained Unbelievers.

In comparison with these social factors the religious motives of the conversion to Islam recede into the background. They are not absent, however, and they are in evidence especially where Islam has taken a firm root. Faith in the one Allah, who leads no shadowy existence but rules the world of the individual and leads his faithful into Paradise, and the consciousness of belonging to a world-religion, enhance the feeling of personality. The belief in many gods, demons, and other spirits does not entirely die out but becomes a superstition and thus sinks to a lower sphere. The numberless charms are replaced by amulets which are an emanation of the infinite power of Allah. The outlook on life becomes freer and broader. The Moslem feels himself to be the possessor of a valuable religious treasure, and it is well known how difficult it is to shake his convictions. His attitude to Christianity is quite different from that of the pagan.

The spread of Islam took place not through what

we call 'Missions'. It advanced in the form of a gradual, almost imperceptible transference of culture which included religion. It was distributed in the same way as Christianity in its early beginnings, in a way which may be regarded as the ideal one. Its adherents who travelled to foreign lands were by word and deed confessors of their religion and so won for it new followers. This natural way of spreading was possible for Mohammedanism, because practically all its followers acknowledged their faith daily in their prayers and in other religious observances, and these could not fail to make a deep impression on the African. Missionary activity on a larger scale was never practised; when missionaries were sent from Egypt or other centres, they devoted themselves to lax Mohammedans, not to pagans. The conversion of Africa to Islam thus took place without the employment of a costly apparatus. It was an internal affair of Africa alone, not a proselytizing enterprise of strangers. After the new religion had once taken hold of Africa, its propagators were people who lived in Africa and were or had become Africans. Wherever a congregation, however small, was founded, a Mosque was built and a school which had its teacher. No one ever thought that the money for the erection or the maintenance of such buildings or the payment of the teacher should come from a central institution for the propagation of the Faith. It was from the first moment an understood thing for each congregation that this was its own affair. Islam forged the

closest links between itself and the African people. It became a part of this people, and for that reason took such a firm hold that many African tribes can be counted among its most faithful adherents.

Recently the Ahmadia movement has made efforts to gain a footing in Africa. Its representatives, obviously in conscious imitation of Christian mission activity, turn their attention mainly to pagans.

Islam has had a far-reaching civilizing influence. It has given the African a greater self-possession and sense of security in his outlook. The membership of a world-wide religious community, the connexion with North Africa, Egypt, and Arabia, the participation in the Moslem brotherhoods, widened the horizon, created new trade connexions, and enriched the indigenous culture in many ways. Trade and industry were not unknown in the Sudan before the arrival of Islam, but under the bond of animistic beliefs and the narrowness of clan life they would have needed, without the many stimuli caused by Mohammedan life, much longer time to attain the high status which distinguish these countries to-day.

The Mohammedan does not fall into such slavish imitation of the white man as the pagan Negro often does. While many a Negro is proud if he can wrap himself in any old rag thrown away by the European and sometimes makes himself into a ludicrous caricature by so doing, the Mohammedan would not dream of exchanging his flowing *tobe* and his straw hat or cap for articles of European clothing.

Where the influence of Islam is profound, it has done away with many horrors such as human sacrifice, persecution of witches, and cruel ordeals. The misuse of alcohol has at least diminished, and in some areas it has disappeared. In the larger towns of the Sudan Islam has created important centres of Mohammedan learning. The schools of Timbuctoo, Segou, Massina, were famous throughout the Mohammedan world. Teachers travelled from town to town gathering around them flocks of pupils or opening disputations on learned questions at the courts. It was the pride of rulers like Osman dan Fodio and his son Bello to shine as poets and writers and to draw famous students to their court, so that the whole life of such a centre acquired an intellectual atmosphere quite unthinkable in pagan surroundings. The fact that Islam is a religion of the book makes itself felt in the remotest village with Mohammedan inhabitants. A school is established in which reading and writing are taught, or at least chapters of the Koran are learned by heart under the pretence of being read. However mechanical most of this kind of instruction is, it shows that a certain amount of scholastic education and a respect for learning go hand in hand with the distribution of Islam. The conservative and even rigid character of Mohammedan training has, however, not adapted these schools to modern demands and made them an instrument of real education. They have remained exclusively religious, and one might say exclusively mechanical, so that their educational

value is almost nil. Where a change has come about it is by the efforts of European Governments, who, while retaining for Islam its place in the curriculum, have managed to modernize such schools and thus breathe new life into them.

It was to the advantage of Islam that, apart from Arabic, three of the main African languages, Swahili, Hausa, and Mandingo, became vehicles of its ideas. Islamic traders speaking one of these languages spread the language, Islamic civilization, and Islam itself at the same time as their goods. This led to a certain levelling, the elimination of tribal differences, and in not a few cases to the disappearance of tribal units. A number of groups who speak Hausa to-day and have adopted the Hausa ways of life were formerly independent tribes with their own languages. The same process has been going on in the countries of the Mandingo- and the Swahili-speaking peoples. Though this means a loss in tribal individuality, yet on the whole it is a gain; it enabled the Negro to experience for the first time a feeling of solidarity beyond the clan or tribe.

The fact that Islam represents in Africa a higher type of civilization makes it easy to understand why it enjoys the consideration and sympathy of many Europeans and is sometimes recommended as the religion most suitable to the African. Those who take this view should, however, not overlook the fact that Islam fails on certain counts. It may be doubted whether with its higher civilization it has also intro-

duced a higher morality. In the public life of Moslem countries the moral integrity of the rulers and their officials, and the guarantees for well-ordered administration and justice, were scarcely greater than among pagans. Slavery and the slave-trade were recognized institutions. Most wars were undertaken with the object of capturing slaves and frequently led to great cruelties. The abolition of these abuses was not the result of a reform on the part of Islam but of the intervention of European Governments. The position of women is in no way better in Islam than with pagans. If among the Tuareg and Fulani, the Hausa and Mandingo, the woman is looked upon as the equal of the man, this is not the merit of Islam. It would be more accurate to say that in contrast to the usages of Islam their ancient customs and views have survived among these peoples. For the advancement of moral and physical cleanliness, hygiene, and the combating of disease Islam has done nothing. More serious than these shortcomings, however, is the fact that Islam does not as a whole seem to be able to lead its adherents beyond a certain stage of culture. To-day in Africa it is sterile. No fresh impulses radiate from it, no powers which foster life and make it a dynamic force in progress. Its atmosphere is rather that of stagnation. There is therefore a danger that the spread of Islam in Africa will lead the development of the Africans into a blind alley. It cannot give to the African the same new power as Christianity, because its own roots are not deep

enough in truth, and it does not possess the same capacity for growth.

3

It is difficult to compare the changes brought about by the present European penetration with any earlier ones, so different are they in degree and intensity. Formerly foreign influences came slowly; they either affected only small parts of the continent, or it took them hundreds of years before they spread over a larger area. To-day not a single village remains untouched and the process of transformation is going on not only with unheard-of rapidity, but at the same time with a thoroughness which may be called revolutionary. Lower cultures are by nature unfitted to cope with such attacks and must succumb to them. One day the Negro is a primitive farmer, the next a proletarian in a European enterprise. To-day he lives the communal life of collectivism; after a few years at school he is expected to conduct cash transactions in a European business. We in Europe have gone through similar changes, but over a period of centuries. We grew up with the changing conditions and have struggled with them. They arose from the growth of our own culture and thus became a natural necessity for us. For the African they are something strange that has come to him from without, and therefore can be looked on only as a disturbing element. European civilization with its technical triumphs is much too complicated and presupposes too much

knowledge and ability to be assimilated by the African, i.e. to become one with his earlier culture. When, as here, two different worlds clash, the weaker must go to the wall. European civilization not only claims the right to preserve intact its own integrity in Africa, but also it desires to assimilate the African to itself and has already done so to some extent. According to the intentions of its masters Africa should become a province of Europe. Individual parts of Africa should become closely affiliated to certain European powers, and this object is rapidly being attained. For the African this means that he must abandon his own culture and be satisfied for an indefinite time with the position of pupil and subordinate. He does not mould his own fate or handle his own problems as we in Europe did and do, but strangers mould and handle them for him, according to their plans, not his own. The approximation of the black to the white, aimed at by the latter, is meant only to extend to technical and intellectual matters and does not entail political and social equality. Although opinions may differ on this point, and some colonial powers have more liberal views than others, equality in social and political life, except a few single cases, is hardly anywhere considered. The fact remains that the African is a subject race, and we should be quite clear as to what that means for people that are struggling to rise and become conscious of themselves. With however much goodwill and tact relations are conducted, there will always be the possibility of conflict.

Relations are made easier by the fact that the Negro sees in the white man his ideal. He may heartily disagree with much of what the European does and plans, yet the great majority of the leading Natives in Africa have no greater ambition than to resemble the white man. This idea is bound to be decisive in his future development. Even those Negroes who, as educated men and conscious representatives of their race, regard European domination critically or with hostility, claim for themselves the right to possess fully the white man's culture, for they are convinced that they are able to compete with him and hold their own only when they possess his weapons. African leaders disapprove strongly of any attempt to give the Natives an education other than that given to the whites in the country. All proposals to adapt the curriculum of Native schools to their own culture and individuality are treated as attempts to enslave the African spiritually and to keep him artificially at a low level.

This attitude must be understood from the particular conditions prevailing in parts of Africa. For the whole of Africa, however, a better policy is expressed in the following remarks by Dr. Willoughby.¹

'The truth is that nothing is easier than to anglicise the Bantu as far as externalities are concerned, and nothing more impossible than to make them English. If these people can purge their own life of its stains and make it the best that it is capable of becoming, they will not then

¹ *Race Problems in the New Africa*, p. 172.

be British, but they will command the respect of all thoughtful people, and the best service that we can render them individually is to help them to find their better selves and realise the possibilities of their own nature.'

The craving of the African for European education and for the acquisition of European achievements is fully justified and must be encouraged and welcomed without reserve. With all that the African should realize that his task is greater than that of becoming a second edition of an already existing type. Not imitation but perfection of his own nature leads to the goal: and his goal must be that his own race should be not identical with, but, within its own sphere, of equal value with the white race.

4

Governments, missions, and economic activity are the three powers which more than others are responsible for the disintegration of Africa. Of these, economic activity is the most conspicuous and perhaps the most far-reaching. It has brought to the Negro modern exchange by means of money. This one fact, by offering him the possibility of earning money and with it buying European commodities, has through its powerful attraction shaken the very foundation of the whole social system. It has awakened desires and at the same time opened the way for satisfying them. Formerly the economic life of the individual was enclosed in the framework of the group, it depended

on the assent and co-operation of the chief and of the community. Now it has broken its bonds and can function without their help. Formerly a person was born into a status and had to remain in it. To-day he can escape from it at will and by his own efforts, and he can exist outside the group, independent of it. This involves a principle which shakes the old order at its very roots, for the old order knew no rise in rank. Status in the group was determined not by achievement but by descent and the position one was born into, and he was a bold man who separated himself from his group. This is no longer so. For many of the younger generation the centre of gravity of their life lies outside the community, and a person of the lowest standing may by skill and perseverance attain a rank superior to that of his chief. Boys when still at school already plan to build up their own life away from the Native village, preferably in a large town, where the pulse of life beats faster and they are not bound by burdensome conventions.

In the old days distinctions between rich and poor hardly existed, and even if chiefs and other important men possessed more than others, they could not do much with their wealth. Nowadays pleasures and social distinctions may be bought with money, and difference in wealth is of greater social meaning than it used to be, not on the positive side alone but also on the negative. If in earlier times there were no rich, there were also no poor, whereas to-day an individual

separated from his group can easily become a victim to destitution, especially in the towns.

When a young man wanted to marry, his father or family provided the bride-money for him, and this was divided among the bride's family, so that the marriage was a contract between the two groups. To-day he may obtain a bride with his own money and so become independent of father and family. He can in consequence make his own choice and is not tied to marry the girl whom his relations had decided for him years ago. He may even give the bride-gift to the girl herself, so that it is a question of an agreement between two persons instead of two social groups, and hence can be dissolved by either without the interference of other people. Temporary marriages thus develop, the man becoming tired of his wife or leaving her behind when moving to another place, or the woman running away in order to marry another man and so get another bride-gift.

The centres of diffusion of these powerful changes are towns and industrial areas. The Witwatersrand mines have employed in recent years an average of between 200,000 and 300,000 Native labourers. As the people work only for a definite period and then return home, this means that there is a constant coming and going between these centres and the home villages. The labourers are mostly young men who are soon to marry or have recently married; in the latter case they leave their wives behind and these have to fend for themselves. As many of the men

on their return soon go back to the mines again, the wife may be alone for ten years or more, except for intervals, and this at the time when a man and woman are at their prime. Cases are not infrequent in which a man leaves his wife in the lurch, and troubles himself about her only when, after waiting a long time, she has entered a new relationship and he hopes to force compensation for his injured rights from her new husband. The deserted wife bears the burden of her household alone. Although the African woman is used to strenuous work and is accustomed to act independently in all matters of economic life, and although she may up to a certain point count on the help of her family, yet she is in many ways dependent on her husband's co-operation. The fields are no longer properly cultivated, the cattle are uncared for, the huts fall to ruin, and the children are left to their own devices. There are also cases in which the woman, when she has perhaps for years kept house independently, will not again submit to the authority of a husband. The number of children born out of wedlock is increasing, and their fathers are frequently young men who have returned from the labour centres and are used to freedom. If an attempt is made to make them responsible for the consequences of their actions, they can easily escape by accepting a new contract. In the industrial centres and the regions which are subject to their influence, there is universally an obvious tendency to greater sexual freedom. Whereas formerly it was the greatest shame

for a girl to have a child before marriage, such events are to-day tolerated with equanimity. The old family laws and bonds are being loosened and often give place to very lax ideas.¹

In some of the South African Reserves and Locations up to 50 per cent. of the men are continually absent. In Basutoland in the last thirty years 60 per cent. of the able-bodied men have annually worked on the mines. It is obvious that such conditions must affect unfavourably the social and particularly the family life, and are bound to lead to a decrease in the birth-rate.

These dangers have long been recognized by Governments and industrialists, and attempts are being made to avoid them by regulation of the methods of recruiting labour, by care for the hygienic and social welfare of the workers in industrial centres, and also by striving to retain unimpaired the connexion of the workers with their families at home. Opportunities of writing letters or having letters written are given to them, and they are helped to send money to their relations through reliable channels. There are also many men who finally settle down again in their own home, willingly submit to the old order, and cast off like an old garment the habits learned in mines and on plantations. They may even prove a valuable element in their community with their widened outlook and acquired abilities.

¹ Cf. I. Schapera, 'Premarital Pregnancy and Native Opinion', *Africa*, vol. vi, pp. 59 ff.

In places, however, where migratory labour has become a fixed habit and affects the majority of the male population, dangerous results are inevitable. In the labour centres the men have learnt an individual freedom of movement which is impossible in traditional village life and threatens to burst the bonds of communal unity. They have grown accustomed to pleasures which can be had only in exchange for cash, and these there are no opportunities of acquiring in the village. Hard work was necessary under the European, but in the leisure hours one was one's own master and pleasant society and distractions were never lacking. Such men also find it unreasonable to have to bow to the orders of a chief who has far less experience of the world and of life than they themselves possess, and who is far from always being a benevolent and unselfish patriarch. They have learnt to like individual property and have been obliged to work hard for its acquisition. They are little inclined to share it in the old way with fellow tribesmen and to feel themselves economically one with them. Every one wants to live for himself and arrange his life according to his choice. Their religious faith has been shaken, and it is only with a bad grace that they take part in ceremonies which have become practically meaningless for them. The common life in the old style has lost much of its charm. It appears narrow and antiquated, and it is little wonder that the energetic and enterprising young men, when they have once tasted a freer existence

in the outer world, long to return to it. This is in most cases even inevitable, if only because the money which is brought back is soon exhausted. It is mostly invested in goods, of which a part must be given to relations, so that there is not much left for the man himself. The previous method of investing capital in wives and cattle bore interest through offspring and the work of the women. The sum invested in goods to-day is consumed in a few weeks or months, so that it is not rare for a workman on the day of his return to take an advance from the labour agent on his future new contract.

One great danger of migratory labour lies in the fact that the man may bring back infectious diseases from the labour centres and spread them in the home village. This not only impairs the health of the people, but is a most serious menace to the reproductive power of the race.

5

The changes in the social structure which we have described strike us at first glance as decay. They signify at the same time, however, a transition to new forms, for man as a social being cannot live in isolation and must build for himself forms of social organization. What these new forms will be, we cannot yet see. We are still in the midst of the transition phase and can observe only the first beginnings of the new order. In the old communities the dominant principle was that of protection and security of

the individual. The group took from the individual the largest part of his responsibility, but he knew that he was always in case of emergency covered by the elders of the group. In the new order of things a higher personal responsibility of the individual will be required.

The outstanding phenomenon in social development to-day is the emergence of the individual from the group. As we have seen, the characteristic feature of earlier African society was the predominance of the group, which left only a restricted sphere for the development of personality. It is different to-day, and from this point of view the present processes appear to be rather a step forward as they educate the individual to personal responsibility and break the unrestricted power of the group. True as this is, one would not do justice to the character of group life by saying that it robbed individual life of all significance. The group is never a mere agglomeration of individuals but a well-ordered and articulated whole, in which every individual has a special place and special duties. These may have a social rather than a personal foundation, yet every member of the group knows that the prosperity of the whole is dependent on what he does or leaves undone. The responsibility of a mother for her children, of a father for his family, of elder brothers for younger brothers, of the young man to his age-grade companions, and of the old men to the community, has never been strange to Africans. In many respects

the responsibility towards persons in one's own circle was greater in the old order than it is to-day. The cultivation of modern individualism often enough has led to the individual feeling himself responsible for himself alone and not taking even this responsibility too seriously.

It is certainly to be welcomed that to-day more scope is given to personality, for in the history of mankind it has always been the vehicle of spiritual progress. Personality is, however, not created in empty space, but only by close fellowship with others. It is not only need and custom which drive man into the company of his fellows, but the longing for communion born of his innermost nature. He always feels himself to be a member of a human group, and only as such, as a brother among brothers, can he develop his ethical personality and do his life work. For this reason the preservation or new setting up of social groupings is as important for the future of African life as that of individual responsibility: the one is indissolubly connected with the other.

All form is subject to change, and many social institutions in Africa have to-day outlived their purpose. It is only necessary to point out the secret societies and similar associations; there are others of such doubtful value that they could vanish without any serious loss. It is not a question of indiscriminate conservation. We have to discover which of the present forms of life have retained vitality in the conditions of to-day; which of them are capable of

transformation; and how they can be so shaped as to give the African a home fit to live in. We do not presume to answer these questions, but only pose them for discussion, directing attention to certain points. Two of the most important factors of reintegration, namely administration and missions, are treated in special chapters.

Every man is born into a social organization, into a family, tribe, people, and state. He will always have relations, neighbours, and fellow workers. The feeling of solidarity with the village and the clan, with men of the same age-grade and with friends in the same association, will remain alive in the future in large parts of Africa. Efforts are being made to-day in European countries to revive social bonds which had fallen into decay, because the values inherent in them have been recognized. In acknowledging these values there is a conviction that in contrast to an atomizing individualism, nothing is more likely to let altruistic feelings gather new strength than the cultivation of natural bonds. Such institutions are still alive in Africa, and it would be short-sighted to let them die of neglect. Here is a task offering great scope both to the school and to education as a whole. Older pupils and also adults will treat such questions with the liveliest interest and the keenest understanding, for they are concerned with the essence of their own life. Training in civics should consist not only of teaching but of actual practice. Unions of pupils can be formed on the model of age-grades, and thus

the natural gradation and leadership, which have from time immemorial been familiar to the Native, can be made efficacious. If a school reckons among its pupils children from various tribes, they will learn to feel themselves to be one with strangers as members of one community. Just as the leading elders of the community play their part in the education of the initiation groups, so the school should become an organic part of the village or tribal community, and the latter must have the same part in it and feel itself no less responsible than the missionary or the European educational official. The school can help to familiarize the younger men with the social structure of the people, show them its value, and teach them to regard it with respect.

6

The primitive state, in which one or more clans lived in a village isolated from the outside world, has vanished to-day. The African has developed a desire to travel, and there are few places of considerable size which do not harbour people of different tribes or nations. Usually those speaking the same language, or of the same extraction, live together in a certain section of the town so that, to some extent, the town consists of several distinct communities. But forces are at work making for union. To live closely side by side means intercourse and opportunities for mutual help, though for a long time there may be mutual aversion and mistrust as the outcome

of traditional ideas and fears of the foreigner being possessed of witchcraft or evil powers. Food avoidance and other taboos may also prove serious barriers. It may be a long time before intermarriage takes place, for the African does not easily abandon his old observances in family matters, and wants to know intimately the family or clan with which he is going to enter into close relationship. Yet all these considerations tend to become of less weight, and gradually out of the centrifugal forces in the sections will evolve a community. It will be very different from the old one. It will not be based on common blood and any kind of ancestral allegiance, but on the simple fact that people have to live together in one place and have to adjust themselves to existing conditions, however repulsive they may seem to be at first. Such communities are coming into being to-day in thousands all over Africa, in larger towns, in urban locations, on reserves, in industrial areas. The feeling of solidarity in them will grow when they are given local self-administration, which is bound to develop a sense of mutual responsibility and of a conviction that, in spite of all differences, they are destined to be one and that they can do no better than to cooperate towards this oneness. Church and school and the associations radiating from them may make an important contribution to such modern reintegrations of African life.

The evolution outlined here is going on in numberless forms and gradations and will play a decisive

part in the social life of the future. It deserves careful observation and study by the practical administrator as well as by the worker in social welfare and, above all, by the sociologist.

The greater mobility of the population also leads to the inhabitants of a colony acquiring a better knowledge of one another. They are subject to the same administration; they have a common school system; common interests arise; Native administration and Native councils include groups which formerly hardly knew each other, but now learn to work for the good of a larger whole. They feel themselves responsible not only for the members of their own group but for a wider unit, which includes groups to which formerly they were indifferent or hostile. Among the educated classes a lingua franca arises, either the vernacular or European. All this results in tribal differences being felt as less important than formerly and to the whole population learning to look upon themselves as a unity. In other words, something like a national feeling is born.

7

Where members of the white race have settled permanently in Africa questions arise as to the way in which the two races are to live together. Attempts have been made to bring about a geographical separation where the Natives have been assigned areas to live in like the Transkei, Basutoland, and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, in South Africa, and, in East

Africa, parts of Kenya Colony. If the Reserves are sufficiently large and fertile, it will be difficult to raise objections to such a separation, but the plan, often ventilated, of carrying out segregation in the whole of South Africa would encounter so many obstacles that it seems all but impossible. The Negro has become such an indispensable factor in all the relations of economic life that we can hardly imagine how life would go on smoothly without his co-operation. The Natives would certainly not welcome such a plan. They see in the policy of segregation an attempt of the whites to force the blacks away from European civilization and so to cut them off from the possibility of improvement. Their mistrust is not unjustified. Nobody will maintain that the South African Natives have been treated liberally in the distribution of land, in payment for work done, and in being given opportunities for advancement. They and their leaders have, however, not been discouraged, but have fought bravely for their modest place in the sun. The sole means by which they can conduct this struggle is through education. If this is taken away, they are deprived of hope. They would have schools in the Reserves, but these would offer an education other than that which they desire. There they would also have to go without the stimulus which is to be found in the close association with white men and the necessity of competing with them.

Though a radical separation between black and white is impracticable, both races will agree that social

intercourse between the two will not be the rule, and that consequently they must aim at living peacefully side by side. This necessity is actually expressed in the fact that in almost all places inhabited by members of both races, they choose separate sites for their dwelling-places. In Tropical Africa this is to be recommended for hygienic reasons, but it is desirable on other grounds. 'The medicine for quarrelling is separation', says a Hausa proverb. Each of the two races, the black as well as the white, is sufficiently self-conscious to wish to maintain and develop its own racial quality. By living apart many possibilities of friction and conflict are diminished, and each community can develop its own institutions undisturbed and live its own life. The same conditions have been evolved in North America after long experience and are regarded there as the most satisfactory arrangement by both races.

Of course this living side by side in one place cannot be such that the one section ignores the other. Numerous contacts are bound to exist, through the black men working in the town quarter of the white and with white workmen; by their buying in the shops of the white men and using their means of transport. In certain ways people living in the same place must form a unit, and both sections will realize this. The argument cannot be ignored that if the black men contribute to the maintenance of the community, they have the right to share in its administration and to enjoy through their contribution to taxes the full

advantages and services which Western civilization brings to Africa.

It is to be welcomed that among South African whites the conviction is gaining ground that in spite of social separation the two races must get together and learn to understand each other. These endeavours find expression in the Joint Councils of Europeans and Natives, which are trying by discussions and consultations to alleviate racial antagonism and to induce co-operation where possible. In addition to the meetings of the councils and the measures resulting from them, the movement has had a remarkable success in repeatedly initiating European-Bantu conferences. Whatever the immediate consequences of these efforts may be, they prove the possibility of that which was formerly held by most South Africans to be impossible, namely, that members of the two races, with approximately the same level of education and with serious goodwill, can discuss together on an equal footing their common weal and so open the way to co-operation.

The political status of Natives within the Union of South Africa has been settled by the Representation of Natives Act, 1936. The Natives will be represented in the Senate by eight white senators; in addition to the four normally appointed by Government four will be elected by the Natives. There will also be a Council for the representation of Natives. It will consist of twenty-two members, of whom six are official members, four are appointed, and twelve

elected. The official members will be the Secretary for Native Affairs and five Chief Native Commissioners. The four appointed members will be Natives, one from each electoral district, who will be appointed by the Governor-General. The twelve elected members will likewise be Natives.

8

In districts under strong European influence groupings have arisen which closely follow modern European models and are mostly in opposition to the political and economic domination of the Europeans. The leaders of these movements are intellectuals. Their adherents spring principally from groups of labourers. Their weakness is that their leaders often lack the necessary qualities of leadership, and their appeal is mostly to the detribalized. Hence they hardly find a footing among the real indigenous population. The number of members is subject to strong fluctuations, as the majority are soon disillusioned and leave the association when they see that the hopes held out have not materialized. Neither the African National Congress nor the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa has hitherto been able to effect any substantial improvement in the condition of the Natives. The same is true of the Congress of British West Africa, which is a union of the educated classes and at its meetings discusses the problems of English West African policy. There is no doubt, however, that all these movements contribute to

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creating a feeling of solidarity among the Natives, and it is regrettable if its driving power is opposition to the white man.

Latterly communism too has been striving to find adherents in Africa. Its success up to now has been small, but it is not impossible that sooner or later the doctrines it preaches will find attentive hearers; it has one strong side which must not be ignored. Communism proclaims seriously the brotherhood of all men. It promises the Negro complete social and political equality. Here are the men who look upon the black man as really an equal and make no distinctions as do all the rest, not excepting the Christians. It would be strange if this gospel did not make the Negro listen.

XIII

THE CLASH OF RACES

1. Population statistics. Density and variations. Relative lack of overcrowding in Africa. The white man in Africa. Asiatics in Africa. Analogies from Negroes in N. America.
2. Population statistics in South Africa. In Sierra Leone. In the Belgian Congo. Factors which affect adversely growth of population: towns, detribalization, migratory labour, infant mortality. The Native as a worker under the white man.
3. European employers and attitude of Natives towards work under them. Causes of misunderstanding. Intellectual, social, and political aspects of clash of races. Pride of race among the Africans. The future of Native enterprise.

I

WHEN primitive peoples have come into contact with Western civilization, the consequence for them has frequently been either retrogression or destruction. Examples of this can be seen in North America, Australia, many Pacific Islands, and parts of South Africa. Analogous conditions have resulted in earlier times from the clash of stronger with weaker peoples. In Africa men apparently of Negro race appear to have advanced in prehistoric times northwards into what is at present the Sahara, until they were forced back by light-coloured people.¹ The question whether similar effects will take place as a result of modern European penetration of Africa

¹ P. Laforgue, 'Le Préhistoire de l'Ouest-Africain', *Africa*, vol. iv, pp. 456-65.

cannot yet be answered. The general view is that the vitality of the Negro and his adaptability to new conditions of life are too great for him to be in danger of racial extinction.

Close contact between two races at widely different stages of civilization gives rise to a series of social problems which affect not only the subordinate but also the superior partner. A white colony living as a dominant caste among Negroes is bound to be influenced by this fact. An undue sense of superiority, of exaggerated racial pride, and of physical aversion towards the Natives may develop; possibly also of hate and fear when the Natives begin to compete with the white man in certain spheres of work. Views on the dignity of labour and on social behaviour may suffer. Dependence on the manual labour of the other race, in combination with an unfavourable climate, can even lead to deterioration in efficiency and moral standards. In South Africa the poor whites, some of whom have sunk below the economic and social level of Natives, and who are said to comprise about a third of the white population, are warning examples of these dangers.

Another serious factor is that, wherever blacks and whites have lived together for some length of time, race mixture has taken place. In South Africa there are nearly 800,000 'coloured people', the offspring of white fathers and Native mothers. In other parts of Africa their numbers are smaller, but half-castes are to be found in most places with a European

population. Their fate is seldom enviable, because they are often neglected by their parents, are not admitted to white society, and are inclined to hold themselves aloof from Natives. Some, however, do manage to merge, unnoticed by whites, in white communities. Where this happens in considerable numbers, as in parts of South America, in the United States, and, to a lesser degree, in South Africa, the white community is bound to undergo a biological change.

The present population of Africa¹ according to recent census figures is about 145 millions, making a density of four persons per square kilometre or 7 per cent. of the world population. In the steppe lands, most of which do not allow of agriculture but are fit only for cattle nomads, as, for example, in the region south of the Sahara, there is scarcely one person (in French Equatorial Africa 1.5) per square kilometre. Even in the forest district of the Congo where there is an abundant supply of rain the population reaches only 1-1.5 per square kilometre. The savannah lands show a relatively dense population. In northern Nigeria the density rises to almost 46. The greatest congestion is found in the oases of the Sahara and in a few favoured places, as on the southern slopes of Kilimanjaro, where 125 persons live on one square kilometre. Kavirondo is also a densely populated country. The greatest density is reached in

¹ R. Uhden, *Die wirtschaftlichen und bevölkerungspolitischen Möglichkeiten Afrikas*, Koloniale Rundschau, 1931.

Egypt. The valley of the Nile has 400 persons per square kilometre, and the purely agricultural Egyptian province Menufie 684.

Even when desert lands are not considered, the population of Africa compared with other parts of the globe with an equally good climate is sparse. The actual space available for habitation is not occupied as it might be. Let us take as an example the region of the savannah north and south of the primeval forests, that is, from the source of the Niger to the Nile-Congo water-divide and down as far as the Zambesi. This area embraces 5.6 million square kilometres. If one assumes, in analogy with the savannah districts of India, the possible population density to be 90, these areas might support 504 million people, that is more than the present population of Europe. The tropical rain forest and the areas of the warm-moderate climate of Abyssinia, Angola, and South Tanganyika can naturally support a higher rate of population. The estimates of the possible total population of Africa fluctuate between 1,000 and 2,000 millions. The lowest estimate is that by Shantz and Marbut who, basing it on an investigation of the soil, give 1,085 millions. If we accept this figure as approximately correct, it means that seven times as many people could live in Africa as there are actually to-day, assuming that orderly conditions prevail, and that the land is being cultivated intensively with all the aids of machinery and artificial fertilization.

As there are other parts of the earth which are over-populated, and as the population of the earth is increasing, the time is within sight when the land to be disposed of in Africa will be occupied, and the question then arises, who will be the occupants.

South Africa is to-day, not numerically but culturally, predominantly a white man's country. The black man has had to retreat before him in all spheres of life, in the same way as one or two centuries ago the Hottentot and Bushman had to give way to the black new-comer. In other parts of the continent in which it is or seems to be possible for the white man to reside permanently and establish his family, settlements of whites have been formed. Although the question whether a settled white population in the East African highlands can find all the conditions of life fulfilled has not yet been fully investigated, it is likely that these white settlements will increase, in population as well as in area. The highlands in Kenya, Tanganyika, and Angola which are considered as suitable for European colonization embrace a round million square kilometres, to which are to be added approximately 1·20 million square kilometres in South Africa. About 2·20 million square kilometres, therefore, or three-tenths of the continent can be considered as possible for white settlement. General Smuts has put forward the idea of 'a strong forward movement in the policy of settling the high lands of Eastern Africa which stretch in an unbroken belt,

hundreds of miles broad, from Kenya to South Africa', aiming in this way 'to establish in the heart of the African continent and as a bulwark of its future civilization another white dominion'. It will hardly be possible to execute this ambitious plan, for the broad, uninterrupted girdle of highlands does not exist, and there are Native inhabitants in a considerable part of the land. Nevertheless, such an appeal will not fail to fascinate people and governments, and the fact remains that in the last few years the white population of East Africa has shown a steady increase, a tendency which is certain to go on. Whilst fully recognizing the fact that the black man will profit from the presence of the white, nevertheless the advance of the white man simultaneously means a forcing of the Negro into the background.

Four million whites are to-day living in Africa. Among these the Greeks, who came through Egypt and are penetrating farther and farther into Africa, represent a special feature. In Egypt they are numerically the strongest white colony, but they have spread also in the Eastern Sudan, in Uganda, Kenya, and Tanganyika, and even to South and parts of West Africa. In almost all coastal regions and also farther inland Syrian traders have settled. Both they and the Greeks have an advantage over northern Europeans in that they are accustomed to a warmer climate and can live permanently in countries where it may be impossible for northern Europeans. The same is true of the Portuguese and in North Africa of the

large groups of French and Italian settlers, who find here a climate perfectly congenial to them.

Another remarkable fact is the immigration of Indians to East Africa. Since the War their number has been doubled and to-day amounts to 100,000. Like the Greeks they are chiefly traders, craftsmen, technicians, and employees of European firms. They are generally thrifty, lead a good family life, and have many children. East Africa is thus in an increasing degree becoming a natural outlet for the surplus population of India. The Indians seldom mix with Natives and they retain an active connexion with their homeland, whereas the Arabs have always shown a tendency to merge into the Africans and thus lose their significance as an independent racial element.

All the immigrants, Asiatics as well as Europeans, are in certain respects superior to the Natives. They can become the Africans' teachers and thus be a factor in raising the cultural level. At the same time, they will inevitably limit the space available for the African. Although strangers, most of them enjoy greater political rights than the Natives. They are also stronger economically. The Native is always with them the employee, never the employer. In the regions where the stranger settles permanently he acquires a portion of the land, and generally of the best land. The Native must withdraw and be satisfied with land which is less suited to the foreign settler. In other vocations too the Native is at a disadvantage. The stranger will soon learn how to reserve the best-paid positions for

himself. In East Africa the Indians hold positions for which the Africans could equally well be used. This situation is, however, changing. The education of the Native is making such progress that he will soon be able to fill in increasing degree posts which used to be held by Indians, though as a trader the African may for a long time to come not be able to compete successfully with the Indian, the Syrian, and the Greek.

North America offers a stock example of how the population movement of Negroes formed itself in a white man's country under the intensive influence of European civilization. The comparison between Africa and America is not permissible without qualification, yet it may be instructive for our problem. In parts of South Africa conditions exist to-day which are not unlike those in North America, although it must be borne in mind that in South Africa the Negroes are in a majority and at least part of them still live within their old tribal bonds. The American Negroes after their liberation had lost all social ties and lived under wretched conditions. A rise into higher social classes was made extremely difficult for them, and this is still partly so to-day. On the other hand, life in a country with an advanced civilization offered them strong stimuli, and, in an increasing degree, possibilities of attaining better standards of life. Those who attempted to climb up the ladder had to fight hard. While some succeeded, many remained behind in the competition or did not even try.

The great majority have not risen above the status of the unskilled labourer. In spite of all disabilities, however, they have succeeded in evolving new forms of life for themselves and have become at home in America. They are not welded into a social unit with the white Americans, but have built up a Negro society of their own, which in every place where they are numerous forms separate social, religious, and to some extent also economic units. It is wrong to think of the North American Negroes as scattered fragments. They form communities which are adequate for them, and in which in spite of all difficulties they know how to assert themselves and develop their own racial character. Although the American Negroes desire in the first instance to be American, their self-consciousness and their pride of race are, at least in the higher classes, on the increase. Nothing has contributed to produce this attitude more than the opposition on the part of the whites against which they had constantly to fight. 'White Americans are welding Negroes, first, into a Race despite their mixed blood; and secondly, into a fighting economic unit. It is impossible to starve twelve million people in a world of plenty unless they are incurably stupid.'¹

The North American Negro population rose between 1830 and 1930 from 2,382,000 to 11,891,000. This fivefold increase was a unique example of how a relatively primitive race of men in a completely strange environment and under entirely changed

¹ Dubois in *The Crisis*, 1932.

conditions of life not only maintained itself but grew in an amazing measure, while the American Indians within the same period sank into insignificance.

In spite of their marked increase, however, the proportion of Negroes in the total population is diminishing. In 1830 it was 18 per cent., in 1930 only 9·7 per cent., and in the same time the proportion of the whites rose from 81·9 per cent. to 88·7 per cent. On the other hand, the contribution of both races to the increase in population has remained fairly equal, among the whites in 1830: 33·9 per cent., and in 1930: 14·8 per cent.; among the Negroes in 1830: 31·4 per cent., and in 1930: 14·8 per cent. The increase of Negroes in urban areas between 1890 and 1900 was 35·4 per cent.; between 1910 and 1920: 32·2 per cent.; in rural districts from 1890 to 1900: 13·6 per cent.; from 1910 to 1920: 3·3 per cent., that is to say, a decrease of 3·3 per cent. in the rural population.

The mortality among Negroes is throughout higher and the birth-rate lower than among the white population. The death-rate per 1,000 for Negroes is about what it was for whites thirty years ago. The rate for whites in 1900 was 17·1 per cent., that for Negroes in 1926 17·3 per cent.¹ From statistics covering most states it is seen that the birth-rate for the white population exceeded by 9·4 and that for Negroes 7·5 the death-rate. Circumstances are least favourable in urban districts; whereas in the country districts there was a surplus of 10 for both races, in towns it is for

¹ M. Work, *The Negro Yearbook*, 1932.

the whites 8.8 and for the Negroes 3.3. Generally speaking, in North America between 1910 and 1927 the death-rate among whites decreased by about 23.9 and among Negroes by 15.8.

In view of the unfavourable conditions in towns it is of significance that the Negroes, who used to live predominantly on the land, are thronging into the towns. The latest census reports that in 1930 43 per cent. of the Negroes lived in cities, compared with 34 per cent. ten years ago. New York has a Negro population of 327,000, Chicago 233,000, and Philadelphia 190,000. Between 1920 and 1930 37,590 Negro farmers lost their farms. Land operated by white farmers increased 34 million acres and that operated by Negro farmers decreased 3,835,000 acres.¹ The influx to the towns is welcomed by many Negro leaders, for, as they say, quite different possibilities of rising are offered there than on the land, where the Negro is too often a victim of exploitation. This may be correct or not, but it is certain that with the increase in the urban Negro population the proportion of the blacks in the total population of the country is continually decreasing.

In South America circumstances are different, in that climatic conditions are more favourable for the Negro race, and one can hardly speak of a social discrimination between black and white. South America is inhabited by 64 millions, of whom only 30 millions are pure breeds, the rest being mixed.

¹ *The Crisis*, Dec. 1932, p. 380.

Here again Negroes are falling behind in the increase of the population. In 1819 the proportion of whites was estimated at 24 per cent., that of the Negroes at 52 per cent., and of all mixed breeds at 17 per cent.; in 1912 the corresponding figures were for the whites 36 per cent., for Negroes 19 per cent., and for mixed breeds 36 per cent. The natural increase of the whites is given as 1·2 per cent., that of mulattos as 0·93 per cent., and of the Negroes as 0·62 per cent.

2

The population problem in Africa is most acute in the south, because the white race has made its home there beside the Natives. In recent years statements have repeatedly been issued which give, and are meant to give, the impression that the Natives are rapidly increasing and are becoming a danger to the whites. These statements are partly misleading. In the census of 1921, to 1,000 whites there were 27 children under one year of age, to 1,000 Asiatics and cross-breeds 30, to 1,000 Negroes 50 children. But this does not take into account that among the Negroes the infant mortality is extraordinarily high, reaching very often 50 per cent. and more of the children born, and if children of ten years old were counted, the proportion of the races would be different. From the census of 1921 the Census Director, Mr. Cousins, draws the conclusion that in fifty years South Africa will have a white population of 6·5 millions against a black population of 16·5 millions.

This assertion has been justly questioned, and Mr. Roberts¹ is probably nearer the truth when he assumes that the Native population of the Union of 1947 onwards will remain stationary with about 6·3 millions.

The total non-European population of the Union increased between 1911 and 1921 by 15 per cent.; the European in the same period by 19 per cent. From 1891 to 1911 the increase of Natives is said to have amounted to 69 per cent.; if this is correct, the following decade saw considerably less increase. In reality the apparently immense growth of the earlier census periods is explained by the fact that the figures are partly rough estimates. Doubtless those of the census of 1921 are more reliable, and from them it may be concluded that the Native population was growing more slowly than the white. But the latest census of 1936 again shows a different picture. According to it between 1921 and 1936 the Native population increased by 40 per cent., and the European by 32 per cent. Whether the surprising growth of the Native population is due mainly to an increase in the birth-rate or to immigration, cannot be made out from the statistics. The coloured people in South Africa increased between 1911 and 1921 by 3·23 per cent. only, while according to the latest census between 1921 and 1936 the increase amounted to 41 per cent.

¹ 'A Statistical Inquiry into the Population Problem of South Africa', *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa*, vol. xiii, pt. iii, pp. 201-44.

In Basutoland, according to the official census reports, the Native population had grown between 1904 and 1911 by 15.55 per cent.; and between 1911 and 1921 by 23.43 per cent., that is, by 8 per cent. more than in the Union. The increase is very unevenly distributed over the districts; whereas in one district it ran to 85 per cent., in another it amounted hardly to 5 per cent. This shows that it is not exclusively an increase by birth but is to be accounted for rather by immigration. According to Buell¹ it is the opinion of Government physicians that the birth-rate of Basutoland is now declining.

From other parts of Africa only isolated reliable figures are available. In Uganda in spite of favourable economic and social conditions the population has for years remained stationary and only recently shows a slight tendency to increase.

In the colony of Sierra Leone the total African population has grown from 1881 to 1921 from 60,000 to 84,000, that of the Creoles (descendants of repatriated slaves) has, on the other hand, declined from 35,000 to 28,000. The increase in the African population amounting to 40 per cent. in 40 years includes a considerable immigration from the Protectorate and from other parts of West Africa. The town of Bathurst had, according to the last census, in a population of 10,859, 350 births (32 per 1,000) and 383 deaths (35 per 1,000). On the other hand, favourable conditions obtain in the Municipal Area of Lagos. Accord-

¹ *The Native Problem in Africa*, vol. i, p. 170.

ing to the latest census the birth-rate has increased from 3.002 in 1921 to 3.494 in 1930, while the death-rate during the same period declined from 2.472 to 2.016. The decrease in infant mortality has also been satisfactory, the figures being 284.8 for 1921 and 129.1 for 1930. This remarkable result is no doubt due to untiring activity in the sphere of hygiene.

In Nairobi and Mombasa in 1931 the death-rates were for Europeans 4.78 and 5.03 respectively, and for Africans 15.23 and 16.17 respectively.

Careful investigations have been carried out by Dr. O. Fischer in the village of Ipole in Unyamwezi.¹ This village had 234 inhabitants. Of the 158 adults 120 were Christians and 38 pagans, 66 men and 92 women. Of 91 women 269 children were born, 137 boys and 132 girls. Of these 142 died, which gives a mortality of 52 per cent., among boys of 58 per cent. and among girls of 48 per cent., so that the preponderance of males at birth was not only levelled but reversed. On an average there are 2.9 births to a woman; of these 1.5 die as infants and 1.4 survive. According to Dr. Fischer the proportion in other parts of Tanganyika is better, the average birth-rate being 4, of which 2.3 children survive.

In his monograph on the Lobi² H. Labouret records the results of his observations, which he made as to the descendants of 25 women at the age of 45 from each of 4 different villages. The 100 women had

¹ Published in *Die evangelischen Missionen*, 22, i, pp. 3 ff.

² *Les Tribus du Rameau Lobi*, Paris, 1931, p. 52.

given birth to 370 living children, of whom 318 reached the age of puberty.

M. P. Ryckmans has made minute investigations into the movements of the population in the Belgian Congo. As far as we know, they are by far the best work that has been done in this sphere in Africa, because they go into the problems of method with the scientific thoroughness which alone can lead to reliable results. In his study¹ he gives some typical examples of his previous investigations. According to these, conditions vary considerably in various parts of the Congo. In the Territory of Katakokombe on the Sankuru, the number of those counted amounted in 1925 to 52,987, of whom 15,879 were children. In the year 1930 the whole population, both counted and estimated, had decreased to 50,114, of whom 13,116 were children. Thus there had doubtless been a decrease of population here. In striking contrast were the conditions in the territory of Madimbe, in which the population was 95 per cent. Christian, and where all the births and deaths were registered. Here the excess of births over deaths was in 1929 33·8 per cent., and in the year 1930 41·3 per cent. Of the total male population 17·5 per cent. were the fathers of four or more children, and every 100 women had 245 children; in the Chefferie Kekemba there were 380 children to every 100 women. The sexes were of equal number within a few dozen. Sankuru seemed to be the

¹ *Notes sur la Démographie Congolaise*, Brussels, 1931 (Institut Colonial Royal Belge).

only district in which the population was decreasing, and this was the more remarkable as the recruiting of labour had for a long time been on a smaller scale than elsewhere. M. Ryckmans' opinion is that the chief reason for this too low birth-rate is the relaxation of morality, and that the recruiting acts only indirectly, because it entails a loss of morality.

It may be hoped that more exact observations from other parts of Africa will soon be available, and we shall then be able to gain a clearer idea of the movements of the population and the reasons which govern them. It may, however, be asserted that while the population is decreasing in parts of Africa, it is growing slowly in others, but there is nowhere any sign of a rapid increase. Among the factors which have an unfavourable effect on the growth of population are the following:

(a) Life in towns. Housing conditions in many African towns are miserable for the poorer population and in the highest degree prejudicial to health. Life in towns offers temptations which loosen the bonds of family life and lead to the decay of morals. People easily accustom themselves to irregular work and thus to insufficient nourishment, or they become victims to unemployment and to utter destitution. The younger people are apt to spend a disproportionately large part of their money on pleasures, and many contract contagious diseases.

(b) Detribalization. It has been asserted that detribalized Natives show an insufficient increase or none

at all. The latter statement is an exaggeration. On the other hand, the constant decrease of Creoles in Sierra Leone is disquieting and similar conditions prevail in Liberia. It is estimated that since the foundation of the Republic 25,000 Negroes have come from America and that the number of 'Americo-Liberians' to-day stands at 12,000-15,000. By detribalization in the wider sense we must understand every loosening of the social bonds going on to-day in many parts of Africa, which almost always leads to decay of morality and therefore to a decrease in the birth of healthy children.

(c) Migratory labour. Its effects are particularly dangerous where the men have accustomed themselves to live for the greater part of their time in the work centres, and can pay only short visits to their homes in between contracts. Many of them become demoralized in industrial centres or carry contagious diseases to the rural districts.

(d) Infant mortality, epidemics, insufficient nourishment. It is possible to combat these, and the fight against them should be carried on with greater energy than hitherto. It ought to be possible to reduce infant mortality, which is now very high almost everywhere. Medical measures taken by the Government and by missions should be intensified in order to save the African children for their mothers. The woman educator and social welfare workers will find ample scope for their activity among Native women and girls. Appreciation must be awakened of cleanliness, of

proper feeding and the rational care of children, and, above all, of healthy family life. Native nurses, midwives, medical helpers, and doctors should be trained and set to work. This is where Native administration should come in. A fine example of this is given by Nigeria, where in 1932 134 dispensaries, financed by the Native administration, were established. They are staffed by attendants who have had their training in Government Medical Stations. In raising the standard of life and educating the people to a cleanly life, and in the suppressing of prejudices and superstitions, the school too can render yeoman service.

The increase of population was certainly small before the arrival of the European. The inability to combat disease, high infant mortality, wrong and partly inadequate feeding, internal wars, and the slave-trade were all obstacles to a healthy growth of population. A new menace to the vitality of the race to-day lies in European penetration. Many diseases were first introduced by Europeans; others developed and became more widely spread than before along the trade-routes which the European has created.

On the other hand, the interference of the white man has had favourable results. The example quoted by Ryckmans, according to whom the best conditions as to population are found in a district almost Christianized, is probably no accidental coincidence, for similar reports are available from other parts of Africa, though not yet in sufficient quantities to enable us to make conclusive comparisons.

The African who is directly or indirectly affected by European influence lives in many respects under better conditions than his predecessors. The labourer in the mines is more amply fed than many a peasant was in the old days. His needs have grown, but so too have the means for satisfying them. In many regions prosperity and therefore the whole standard of life have risen. Every one has the certainty that he will enjoy in peace what he has acquired. In illness he can have assistance for himself and his family. The whole outlook on life has become freer and wider. There are many who to-day are in possession of richer values of life than previously. Where before stagnation reigned, to-day there is movement. The African no longer leads a secluded existence, but shares in the life of humanity, and has to win his place in competition with other races. If the presence of the European brings danger to him and to his race, at the same time it offers him undreamed-of possibilities.

It has been said that the African derives the greatest benefit from the European in places where the white man has settled permanently, and where the Native enjoys as a labourer an intensive training for work. It is true that in this way the Native will improve his knowledge and methods of work and receive new impulses, but the assertion that such conditions are the best guarantee for his progress appears to be exaggerated. It is hardly right to say that in South Africa the situation of the Negro is more satisfactory, his possibilities of life greater, and his general pro-

gress in economic and social conditions more conspicuous, than in other parts of the continent. More than 80 per cent. of the Native population there is illiterate, and only 30 per cent. of the children of school age actually attend school. Improvements and progress have recently been made, and in many quarters there is a growing feeling of responsibility for the welfare of the Natives. Conditions, however, are far from being more satisfactory than in many parts of West and East Africa where the European population is less dense.

Of the more than 1,600,000 Natives who live as squatters, tenants, and servants on European farms, that is, in the most immediate proximity for training for work under the white man's guidance, a South African says:¹ 'The native squatter is the most backward of all his kind, divorced from his tribal life, untouched by civilizing influences.' Professor Macmillan² states that 'the Natives of the Union, as a whole, are a community dragging along at the very lowest level of bare existence'. Experts seem to agree that the situation of the Native population in the Union has permanently deteriorated in the last few years. These facts must be carefully considered in trying to find out how far the Negro will be able to hold his own when he lives among a higher race. We should always try to understand his position in the whole setting of life and should not be misled by

¹ S. G. Millin, *The South Africans*, p. 260.

² *The Cape Times*, 20 April 1926.

improvements in certain spheres. Thus the Negroes of North America have in many respects made educational progress, nevertheless 'the proportion of school attendance has increased but slightly during the last ten years and has hardly kept up with the increase of the population'.¹ The same state of things is reported from Cape Colony: 'the enrolment has not even kept pace with the normal increase of population, and the percentage of the number of Native children of school-going age in the Province actually attending Government-aided schools has definitely fallen.'²

3

The European's position as a dominant power in Africa has been made easy by the fact that he was since his first arrival an object of admiration to the African. He was looked upon as a superior being, possessing every desirable object and being capable of doing almost anything, a man by nature a ruler to whom one willingly submitted. This in spite of the fact that the African has had some bitter experiences of this same European. In the whole of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries the slave-trade flourished. It would be unjust to lay the blame for this shame of humanity entirely on the white man. Africans owned and traded slaves long before European vessels came to their shores, and Africa had been a slave-exporting country probably for

¹ *Twenty Year Report of the Phelps Stokes Fund*, p. 34.

² *The South African Outlook*, 1 August 1932, p. 142.

thousands of years. The European traders would never have been able to purchase so many slaves if the Africans themselves had not offered them for sale, and if the European conscience had not brought the slave-trade to an end, it would still exist in many parts of Africa. With all this the guilt of the European in this trade still remains great enough, and it is not the only African burden he carries.

In the early days of European penetration the white people who went to Africa were not all of the finest type. Traders and adventurers were unscrupulous in their dealings with Africans. Administrators made mistakes from inexperience. Native institutions were disregarded, political independence was taken away from them, their chiefs were deposed for reasons which the Natives could not understand. Most of this belongs to the past, but what remains is enough to be a source of bitterness: the annexation of land; unfair taxation; disabilities in education and in finding a place in life; exclusion from higher occupations; and a social discrimination which is carried out in part of the continent with unnecessary severity.

The African forgets quickly. The present generation would know hardly anything of the slave-trade to America if their European teachers had not told them of it. Bad treatment and exploitation by the whites did not appear to them so execrable as we judge them to-day. The white man was the great and sometimes hard chief; did they not have to submit to

similar treatment from their own rulers, and should not he who has the power also use it?

The two races have gradually learnt to understand each other better. The African knows that the presence of the white man has become useful, even indispensable to him. He is conscious that the larger part of what he has gained under the guidance of the white man would be lost if the white man were to leave Africa. Similarly, the attitude of the white man to the black has become more reasonable. The European trader who seeks a market for his goods in Africa has the greatest interest in allowing the Natives to achieve a competence which will enable them to become his customers. The Government is working in the same direction. It must be to its interest that there should be a just compromise between groups and races, and that they should work side by side in harmony.

The situation in which friction most easily arises is that between white employer and black labourer. Naturally enough the attitude of the European employer, who is dependent on African labour, is different from that of the official and the trader. His argument runs as follows: 'If the Native owns enough land to be able to live on it comfortably, he will not come to the European as a worker, or at most only for short periods. It is therefore better to limit his conditions of life, or to tax him so highly that he has to seek part of his subsistence elsewhere than in his own concerns. School education should not be over-

stressed, for the educated Native will have little inclination to hire himself out as a labourer and will try to find other occupations, in which he will perhaps compete with the white man. It is the Government's duty to see that the European employers have sufficient workmen, and its Native policy must be arranged accordingly. It must also leave the employer sufficient liberty to train his labourers as he thinks necessary.'

It doubtless demands patience from the European employer to turn the African into a useful labourer. To many Natives the journey to the mines or the plantation is nothing but an interesting adventure. They think less of the work they will be doing than of the new experiences they hope to enjoy. They are unaccustomed to the work, and, as soon as the charm of novelty has worn off, it becomes wearisome. If they can kill time in any other way, in idleness or gossip, they see no harm in it.¹ The worker's thoughts are more in his home, where his people lead a pleasant life, than in his work. He perhaps does not realize that he has entered on a fixed contract for a certain time. When he sees that his employer insists on the observation of the contract, and all possibilities of escape are closed to him, he may bow to his fate but will do his work grudgingly and carelessly. On receipt of bad news from home, he feels it to be a bitter wrong if he is not allowed to

¹ Cf. W. C. Willoughby, *Race Problems in the New Africa*, Oxford, 1932, pp. 188 ff.

travel back to his people. He will probably forfeit his contract and his wages rather than neglect a duty to his people or disobey a call from the leader of his clan. He left his home with the chief's consent, and when the latter calls him back, it is natural for him to follow the call. It will only in rare cases be possible for him to take his wife with him to his place of work because accommodation is lacking. Moreover, the wife herself may be disinclined to go with her husband. In her home she is under the protection of her clan, and loyalty to it is much too strong to allow her to go among strangers with a light heart, and to entrust her destiny to her husband alone.

Employee and employer do not understand each other, not only because they speak different languages, but because they live in different worlds. The relation of employer and employee is something strange to the Native. When he worked at home, perhaps under the guidance of an elder, he was allowed a free hand to do his work when and how he liked. With the European he is obliged to work on instructions and without interruption. If his work does not please the foreman, the latter will talk to him in no gentle terms and threaten to deduct something from his wages. The Native looks on this as nothing but malice, and takes refuge in obstinacy. If the employer is not able to put himself into the position of the worker, his patience is soon exhausted, the relations between him and his employees become strained, and discontent and insubordination result. From this

purely negative attitude there may arise, where large numbers of Natives are concerned, and where they live long enough in the same place, an entirely new feeling of solidarity, which is based on opposition to the white man and his power over the black. The Natives come to the work centre as members of distinct tribes, differing in speech and manners, often prejudiced against each other and full of dislike. But even in a crowd so casually gathered together a certain feeling of unity cannot fail to arise. Groups enter into relations with each other because they are all fellows in the same bad luck. It is here that the naïve, innocent, and loyal attitude of the African to the European is lost. The worker will easily find a ground for complaint, justified or not, against his employer. If any one appears who can express these grievances intelligibly and in violent terms, the opposition to the white oppressor soon makes itself heard. Political leaders and agitators play a sinister part in South Africa. Doubtless some among them have deserved well of their people. They have strengthened the consciousness of race and shown the Natives that, in spite of their subjection, they still are a power and able to fight with success for their aims, if only they unite. Some of them are, however, betrayed into such exaggerated language, their demands are so limitless, and they ignore actual facts so completely, that they run the risk of doing more harm than good to their compatriots. It is made easier for them to influence their hearers because they speak to people

who are separated from their homes and perhaps suffering from home-sickness, or to such as have severed their connexion with tribal life but are not yet separated from it widely enough to have lost the living memory of it in their hearts. In both cases they are people who look upon the old tribal life in a golden light as compared with the miserable present, and the agitators are very clever at exploiting this mood. One agitator says in his address: 'Brothers, let me remind you of what you all know. Before the white man came to Africa, the whole of this great and beautiful country belonged to the Blacks. We were what the white man calls "barbarous". But we had a social system which worked well. In our tribal order material possessions were owned communally. Man, woman, and child shared alike in the good things of life. If I had a bag of maize and my neighbour had none, it was a matter of course that I should share with him. When the missionary came to us he said: that is right; if you help one another, God in heaven will rejoice. But when we came to the great towns, we saw that it is the way of the white man to grab as much as he can. The most esteemed thing among them is he who has grabbed most, stamped on his rivals and himself come to the top. Either the missionary did not know all these things or else he betrayed us. So it comes that we have no success in business. If you wish to climb high, you must give up such unpractical Christianity. The white people who live here in splendid houses and have many

motors do not go to church, they have no time for the God of the Christians, they scorn him. . . . Christianity is the religion of the white man. They say the devil is black. If we blacks take a god, then we will have him a black god; and when we want to paint the devil, we will paint him white, for the white people are devils.'

A great deal must be deducted from such perorations as rhetorical exaggeration, but the impression still remains that this is the voice of the disinherited, who expresses his disillusionment with the white man—a mood, though not in any way general, to be met with in certain Native circles in South Africa and elsewhere. It is sharpened by the feeling that it is a difference of race on which the discrimination depends. The Negro may have the same qualification as his white fellow worker, but he must not aim at attaining the same position. The white workers in South Africa refuse to admit the blacks into their organizations. The Industrial Conciliation Act of the Union of South Africa denied to all Natives subject to the pass laws the right of forming labour combinations, which means that the Natives of South Africa have only in Cape Colony, where there are no pass laws, the possibility of organizing themselves for the protection of their interests.

It is inevitable that difficulties in the relations of the two races in a country like South Africa should exist. White South Africans rightly point out that it is their duty to preserve Western civilization un-

impaired in their country and to maintain a standard of life corresponding to this claim. However justified this attitude is, every white South African will admit that it includes the responsibility for the lower race. The Natives and the coloured people are entrusted to them, and the administration of this trusteeship will always be an unfailing criterion for true human culture. Maintaining cultural superiority cannot mean suppressing the justified aspirations of those who are willing and capable of contributing their share in the development of the common homeland.

A seeming contradiction in the attitude of some South African Natives consists in the fact that they feel the European to be their ruthless antagonist, while they look on European civilization as something desirable. This paradox is easy to understand. The Negro's civilization is shattered. Return to it is impossible, and even where it remains comparatively intact, it is not in a position to hold its own against that of Europe. If, therefore, the Native desires to venture on the struggle of existence against the European, he must meet him with his own weapons. To do so, he requires European knowledge and skill, which have given the white man his superiority. He does not want to assimilate them in the measure and in the same manner which the European will allow him, but in unrestrained liberty. It is easy to understand that men like Jabavu reject the catchword of a development of the Native 'along his own lines' and see in it a means of keeping the African in his place.

Where detribalization has so far progressed that social cohesion among Natives has disappeared, and they have become individuals in the same sense as Europeans are individuals, it is natural for Africans to aim at an education equal to that provided for the white race, and it is noteworthy that in America a similar tendency is developing. 'The general movement of Negro education (in the United States) as regards standards, methods, and objectives is now decidedly in the direction of that prevailing in white education. This is necessary and inevitable.'¹

No wonder if in this unequal struggle the Negro is apt to lose his balance, notably as far as the leading classes are concerned. He has assimilated European culture in the school, perhaps even in his parents' home. He nourishes his intelligence from the books and newspapers read by the white man. Intellectually he may feel himself the white man's equal, sharing the same ideas and values. Socially and politically the gulf between the two races remains. It is bridged in many individual cases by personal tact and kindness, by acts of social welfare, by friendly relations between masters and servants which are by no means rare. Yet with all this it is clearly brought home to the consciousness of the educated man that he is a member of an inferior race.

It is true that up to now cases in which the black man is the white man's equal in achievement are excep-

¹ *Twenty Year Report of the Phelps Stokes Fund, 1911-31*, New York, 1932, p. 33.

tions. The white man possesses qualities and powers which are not found in the black man, and which therefore mark out the former as called upon to lead and rule. This develops a feeling of inferiority in the black man from which the educated classes in particular suffer, and which they try to counteract. The way of doing this is often ingenuous. The wearing of European clothes, whether rags or the most up-to-date style; using European furniture and European forms of social intercourse; adorning the Native language with European expressions; using bombastic phrases in speaking or writing a European language: all these contribute to a feeling of equality with the European and his achievements, since in the old primitive view external similarity implies internal equality. The criticism of European Governments and of Europeans in the Press and at public meetings, and the making of impossible claims, are intended to prove that the Africans are in no way inferior, and will not submit to any slights.

The same desire to vindicate the African against the European is shown in a more sympathetic way in the attention which is being devoted to ancient African culture. It has latterly become the fashion among educated Africans, in America as well as in Africa, to speak of Africa as the cradle of civilization, so that one might be led to believe the great-grandfathers of the present Negroes built the Pyramids, the Tombs of the Kings, and the Sphinxes. Much trouble is being devoted to discovering close connexions

between the religions, the political institutions, and even the languages of the Negroes and those of the ancient civilized races of Asia and Europe. All such efforts are fruitless, for they have nothing in common with scientific research and therefore lead nowhere. They are noteworthy, however, as showing that educated Negroes are beginning to think of their past and their own culture. There is nothing in either of which they need be ashamed, for all mankind has passed through certain phases of development, some faster, and others, less favoured by fortune, more slowly. Honour is due to those people who respect their past and study their own civilization in order to understand it and learn from it.

If pride of race is such a mighty weapon in the hands of the white man, why should it not be the same for the Negro? Should it not be quite as possible for him, as for the other peoples and races of the earth, fully to develop his own racial type with the resources which modern civilization offers to us all? With the powers and gifts which come to him from his own past, can he not contribute to the common heritage of mankind through art and science, and through forms of political and social life, something which no one but he himself can give?

If that is to happen the European will have to give the African a fair chance. In most parts of Africa this can be done without any difficulty, and it is in fact taking place. It is less easy where, as in South Africa, the European has made his home. Here a

wise policy will not shut its eyes to the necessity of seeking for a solution which will give equal justice to both sides. No one can ignore the fact that, as in the whole of Africa so also in the south, the Natives are on the path of progress. It would be unreasonable to deflect them from this path or to forbid them to go beyond a certain limit. Prosperity and well-being can only hold sway permanently where all sections of the population see an open road before them, but not if one section finds itself enclosed within artificial barriers. Real prosperity is that in which the whole population shares according to the measure of its economic capacity. The more the Natives cease to be poor and are able to acquire wealth, the more will the economic life of the country flourish, and the more will the white population profit by it. A poor and dejected population is always a burden and a danger for a country.

The white man in Africa claims to lead his own life, and he should therefore be courageous enough to give the black man at his side the opportunity of doing likewise. In his communal life, in which he will live segregated from the white man, he should, within the legal ordinances which are valid for all, be free to carry on his activities unhindered, and to create his own forms of life. There will be opportunities enough for him to be active in his own community among men of his own race, as an official, policeman, craftsman, storekeeper, engineer, house-builder, journalist, doctor, teacher, and preacher. What

seems more natural than to give the inhabitants of Native townships a local self-administration, and in this way educate them for responsible activities? As matters stand at present, the Native doctor will hardly have occasion to deal with white patients. What should prevent him, though, from putting his knowledge and skill at the service of his countrymen? Why should a Native doctor or house-builder be more undesirable than a Native witch doctor, journalist, or political agitator? Should it not be possible to look at these problems in a generous way as expressed in a statement of the *South African Medical Journal*, when it speaks of 'the vital necessity of not separating, in deference to local prejudices or political considerations, the health interests of the Native from those of the European'? The same article goes on to say:

'We need not go into social and economic distinctions nor need we discuss whether or not adequate and reasonable provision can be made to prevent the mixing socially of nurses or students where such mixing is regarded as an offence or a misfortune. But we see no necessity whatever for putting ill health and the training of Native nurses in a separate water-tight compartment, and it is our sincere conviction that the attempt to do so simply creates an unhealthy atmosphere of suspicion that in the long run will do an infinity of harm.'

Ultimately, however, the future of the Negro throughout the whole of Africa lies with the Negro himself. No education, however wise, no provision,

however benevolent, can lead a race to full manhood. The race itself must blaze the trail and must decide to follow it. For the African the present hour is an hour of decision, and he should be ready to meet it with all his senses awake. European and other races will gain a further footing in Africa and extend their influence, and the problem for the African Native is to find out how far he will be able to maintain himself side by side with the foreigner and compete with him successfully. The African must realize that through all the present changes and those yet to come his future is at stake. *Tua res agitur*: 'you are being weighed in the balance.' 'However much the European may do for you, the decisive thing is what you do for yourself, and still more what you yourself are.' In the last resort the fate of the African depends not on the will of the white man but upon what the African himself makes of himself. Should leaders arise who are conscious of their responsibility, who succeed in making this responsibility a vital force in those who follow their leadership, then the African will emerge from the upheavals of to-day as a new human being, and the co-operation of white and black will be a blessing to both.

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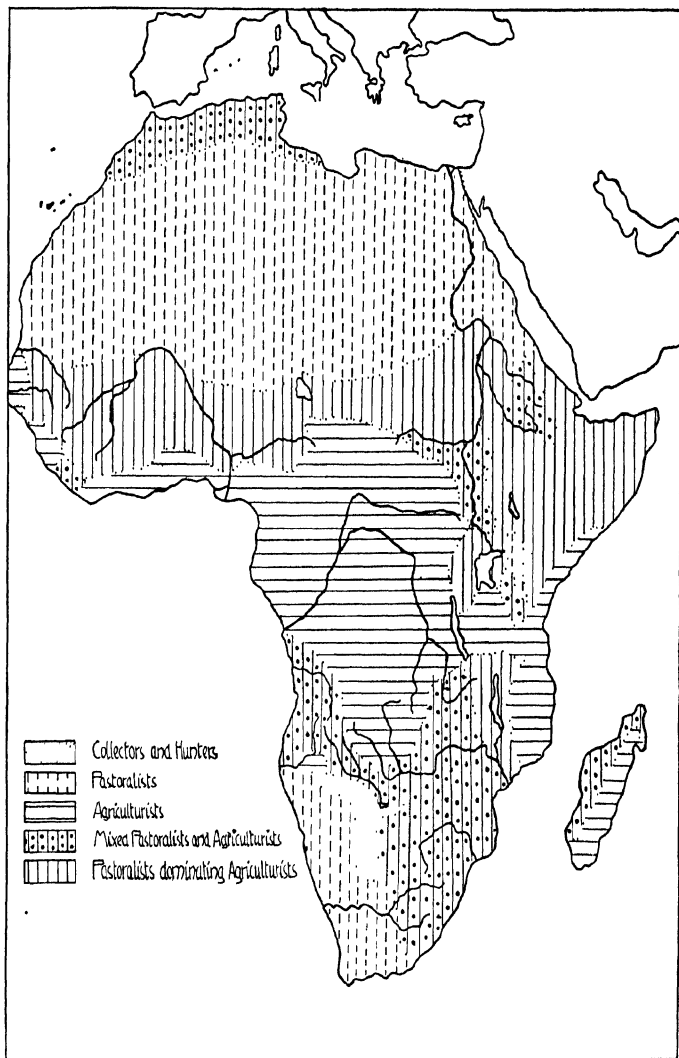
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TYPES OF ECONOMIC LIFE IN AFRICA

THE DISTRIBUTION OF RACES IN AFRICA

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PALAEONEGRIDS: 1. Kele. 2. Teke. 3. Duala.
4. Soko. 5. Mangbetu. 6. Kongo. 7. Rega.
8. Luba. 9. Bariba. 10. Musgu. 11. Vai.
12. Kpelle. 13. Kru. 49. Bergdama.

SUDANIDS: 14. Wolof. 15. Mandingo. 16. Mosi.
17. Ashanti. 18. Ewe. 19. Yoruba. 20. Songhai.
21. Hausa. 22. Tibu.

BANTUIDS: 23. Ganda. 24. Hutu. 25. Nyamwezi.
26. Hehe. 27. Gogo. 28. Jagga. 29. Makonde.
30. Makua. 31. Suahcli. 32. Zulu. 33. Matabele.
34. Mpondo. 35. Ngoni. 36. Rotse. 37. Chuana.
38. Herero. 39. Ambo. 40. Sakalava.

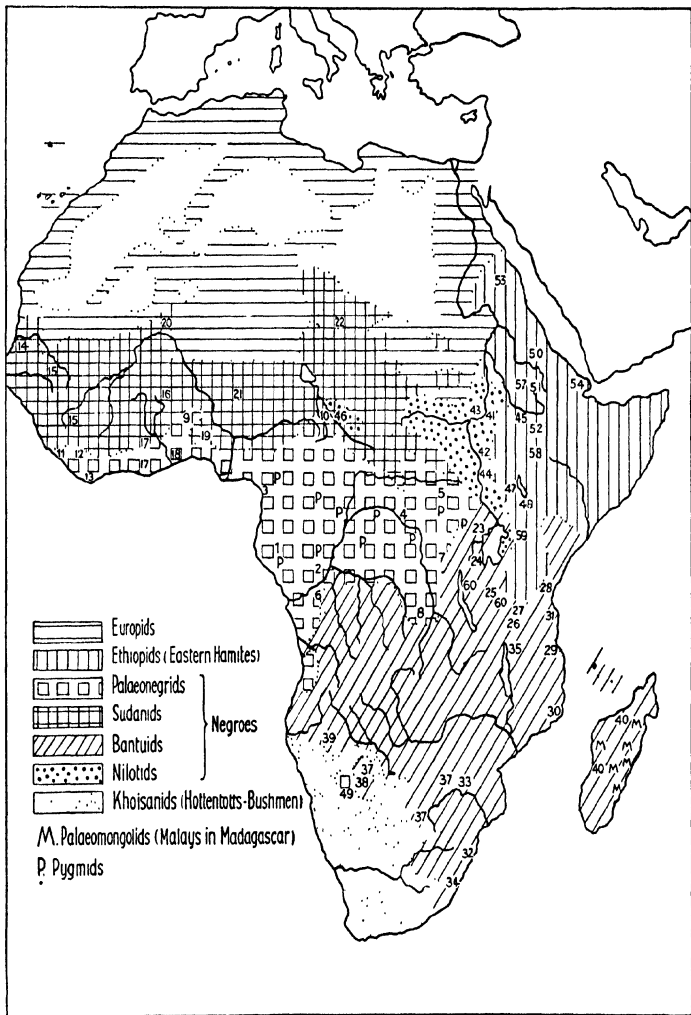
NILOTIDS: 41. Dinka. 42. Nuer. 43. Shilluk.
44. Bari. 45. Shangalla. 46. Sara. 47. Turkana.
48. Suk.

ETHIOPIDS: 50. Tigre. 51. Amhara. 52. Gurage.
53. Beja. 54. Danakil. 55. Somal. 56. Galla.
57. Agau. 58. Kafficho. 59. Masai. 60. Hima.

EUROPIDS include Arabs; also peoples in Abyssinia speaking Semitic languages (Eastern Hamites).

SUDANIDS are Negroes racially influenced by Europids and Ethiopids.

BANTUIDS are Negroes racially influenced by Ethiopids.



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