

NOTES AND NEWS

THE Eighth meeting of the Executive Council will be held in Rome on October 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1930 by invitation of the Italian authorities.

Mr. Hanns Vischer who is at present in Tripoli will visit Rome on his return in order to make preliminary arrangements for the meeting.

The Faculty Board of Archaeology and Anthropology of the University of Cambridge through the Chairman, Professor Ellis Minns, Litt.D., F.B.A., invited Professor Westermann to give a course of three lectures in Cambridge in March on African Linguistics. These lectures aroused considerable interest and Professor Westermann also had an opportunity of meeting members of the Institute resident in Cambridge.

Mr. Hanns Vischer has been elected an associate member of the Section des Sciences Morales et Politiques de l'Institut Colonial Royal Belge.

Le Professeur Westermann vient d'être élu membre d'honneur de l'Institut français d'Anthropologie. En lui décernant ce titre l'Institut français a voulu rendre un hommage solennel aux éminents services rendus par le Professeur Westermann à l'ethnologie.

Dr. C. T. Loram, M.A., LL.B., who represents the South African Committee on Bantu Studies on the Governing Body of this Institute, has been awarded by the Trustees of Columbia University, United States, the university medal for public service of a general nature. This year the medal was awarded to graduates of the university of foreign birth who had returned to their native land and there achieved distinction.

Mr. J. B. Charlesworth, who was elected in 1929 to the Anthony Wilkin Studentship (University of Cambridge), has left England for East Africa where he will conduct ethnological investigations and inquiries. Mr. Charlesworth has had considerable experience of travel in Africa and is a capable linguist.

Mr. George Herzog, Research Associate in Anthropology of the University of Chicago, will spend from March to November 1930 in Liberia on an expedition for the Department of Anthropology of the University of Chicago. The object of the expedition is to study the drum-language and music, also the ethnology of the Gweabo tribe near Cape Palmas. The expedition will

probably make its head-quarters at the native town Nimiah and hopes to obtain a large number of songs, signals and linguistic specimens on phonograph records.

Mr. Herzog is accompanied by Mr. Charles G. Blooah, a native of the Gweabo tribe, formerly a student of Anthropology at the University of Chicago.

Miss E. Dora Earchy of the Missão Ingleza, Portuguese East Africa, has recently been undertaking some research work at Sofala for the Witwatersrand University. She has been devoting special study to the VaNdau tribe and will also go to Melsetter for this purpose.

The Government of the Union of South Africa has recognized a fourth centre in the Union for the teaching of Bantu Studies, namely at the Transvaal University College, which has for some years past conducted special classes with the help of temporarily-appointed part-time lecturers in the various subjects taught. Mr. G. P. Lestrade has been appointed professor of Bantu Studies in connexion with the new centre and has relinquished his position as ethnologist in the Native Affairs Department.

UN PEINTRE SOUDANAIS: Kalifala Sidibé est originaire de Kankan dans la Guinée Française, c'est un Malinké n'ayant reçu aucune éducation artistique. Il a, un beau jour, essayé de peindre sur un morceau de toile de coton en se servant de couleur noire, blanche, rouge, jaune et bleue, réussissant à composer des tableaux représentant des scènes de la vie indigène. Ses œuvres sont ingénues et exactes, il a un génie propre et à ce qu'assurent les critiques, des qualités intuitives de plasticien.

Les tableaux exposés par Kalifala Sidibé à la Galerie Bernheim à Paris, du 15 Octobre au 1er Novembre 1929 ont été ensuite envoyés à Berlin où ils ont été également appréciés. Voici ce que dit de l'artiste le Professeur Georges Huisman: 'Ceux qui l'ont approché nous le montrent aimable, souriant, mais mystérieux. Kalifala Sidibé a trente ans: c'est la vieillesse pour un nègre qui ne songe pas à l'Institut. Il a trois enfants, deux cases et une femme. Quand il veut peindre, il s'accroupit devant sa case, auprès d'une table mal équilibrée, mal rabotée. Un vieux calendrier de bureau lui tient lieu de châssis et de carton à dessin. Il installe son calendrier sous sa toile et entreprend son sujet au crayon; il commence toujours à gauche. Kalifala Sidibé compose ses grandes toiles, morceau par morceau, sans jamais exécuter de croquis préalable. Et cet africain a un tel sens des ensembles qu'il met plus de vie dans ses compositions que bien des Européens trop expérimentés.'

Kalifala Sidibé se considère comme l'interprète d'un dieu qui le possède. Ce qu'il produit n'est pas de lui. Sa main est guidée par la divinité. Quelle

soit l'inspiration reçue, on s'accorde généralement pour trouver sa peinture originale, décorative, monumentale et très bien adaptée aux matériaux et aux besoins de l'architecture moderne.

Father Wanger writes: 'Dr. Westermann, in a reference (*Africa*, Vol. II, p. 421) to my article on how to write the names of African peoples in European languages (p. 413) represents me as "coming to the conclusion that it is scientifically more correct to use the form without a prefix". Had he said he has come to this conclusion, I might say *transeat*. But since he gives it as my conclusion, I must take exception. As can be seen from the tenor and gist of my article, I have arrived at the conclusion that it is unscientific to use "Bantu" for "Ntu". I quote my own words: "If any one wants to cling to Bantu as something he is used to, or even as something dearly cherished, there is no police court to prevent him from doing so. But if there is a moral power able to constrain him to use Ntu instead of Bantu, the name of that power is science in conjunction with systematical consequence." If one prefers, with Westermann, to continue using "Bantu", be it because "it has become a household word or an acknowledged technical term" or for any other reason, he is, of course, free to do so, but he does so at the price of being unscientific. This is the gist of my article'

Mr. E. Torday writes: 'In expressing my thanks to Dr. Seitz for honouring my paper on the "Principles of Bantu Marriage" with his criticism, I answer him reluctantly, forced to do so by the dictates of courtesy. I am convinced that the apparent divergence between his opinion and mine is mainly based on the fact that we have in mind entirely different areas. He says "my conception is based exclusively on experience acquired as judge and governor in the Cameroons", whereas I have attempted to draw conclusions from a general survey of Bantu speaking peoples. As for personal observations there is no comparison possible between those made by one who occupied the position of a judge and colonial governor and those of a man of minor importance who, during the ten years he spent in Africa lived for long periods among the natives as one of themselves. There is a considerable difference between information culled through direct questions or the circulation of a questionnaire and that derived from the mere observation of the natives' daily life untrammelled by any restraining influence. My mind was formed by these; I was, however, reluctant to publish any of my conclusions till I found support for them in the writings of men who, by their long experience in the field, their unrestrained intimacy with the natives and their familiarity with the native idioms, are entitled to be considered best qualified to express an opinion on native institutions.

'I did not claim for the principles I laid down actual observance in our day.

I recognized that they were violated in practice, and if I have not gone into the causes of the deterioration of ancient customs, I was restrained by the limits imposed on a paper in any scientific publication. I certainly did not say that economic conditions were the primary motives influencing the natives, though I admitted that they played an important part in perpetuating abuses born of exceptional political conditions. I said that such an important question required a paper for itself, and it is still my intention to write this as soon as time permits. Appealing for a revival of the ancient laws I naturally implied that they had been neglected or forgotten. This process would, of course, be a more rapid one in such colonies where it was the policy of the colonizing power, to substitute a new order for the traditional tribal conceptions of society as has been the case, for some time at any rate, in the Cameroons.

‘It would indeed be foolish to contest the exactitude of any observation made by one so well qualified as Dr. Seitz; but it would be equally unwise to forget the past history of the Cameroons. In 1862 Burton (in the *Anthropological Review*, I. p. 52) called attention to the extent to which the natives’ morals had been corrupted by the degraded white men who before and in his time infested the West Coast. He found that only among those natives who had escaped their influence did the marriage tie preserve its original significance.

‘But, with all diffidence, I venture to question one or two of Dr. Seitz’s conclusions. The first is that matriarchate is due to the doubtfulness of paternity. I assumed that this theory had died with McLennan. It implies a slight on the African woman’s chastity and, as one who has received much kindness at her hand, has been nursed by her when he was ill, fed when he was hungry, protected by her occasionally against men’s aggressions, I am in duty bound to protest. I venture to say that among many African peoples conjugal fidelity is as much the rule and adultery as much the exception as in any European community. This grave accusation that in Africa descent can be counted from women only because of their notorious frailty, was made nine hundred years ago by El Bekri and has been ever since piously repeated; it were time that it sank into oblivion. In the same order of ideas I believe it to be quite wrong to say that, wherever inheritance is in the female line, kinship (*Zugehörigkeit zur Familie*) depends entirely on descent through females. If that is so in the Cameroons, then indeed its people stand alone among all the tribes of Africa, where, without exception, the relationship which links the father to the child is one of the fundamental principles of marriage.’