

## Notes and News

### *Our New Volume*

THANKS to a partial relaxation of war-time control on the use of paper this first number of volume XVI contains 72 pages instead of 64. We hope that the time is not far distant when the Journal will recover its pristine spaciousness. Readers will notice that the shorter name of the Institute, authorized by the Executive Council in 1939, now appears on the title-page.

We are introducing a new feature for the benefit of members who wish to keep abreast with developments in African studies but are hindered by the fact that these are chronicled in periodicals which to them are inaccessible. We intend to print in each number abstracts of articles which have appeared in journals devoted to the social sciences—anthropology and sociology, demography, economics, law, colonial administration, education, psychology, and linguistics. We shall not eschew history and archaeology. Such abstracts must needs be very concise but they will at least inform readers of the main facts. Some topics will be reserved for comment in Notes and News. The abstracts in this number are presented tentatively and we anticipate that with the help of experts improvements will be made as time goes on.

### *The Voice of Africa*

EARLY volumes contained, under the rubric 'The Voice of Africa', specimens of poetry, proverbs, legends, and folk-tales in the vernacular with a translation in English or French. We invite the co-operation of readers to reintroduce this feature which, we are confident, would be widely welcomed.

A good example of what we desire is seen in the series of poems which Father Hulstaert has had the good fortune to obtain for a recent number of *Aequatoria* from Abbé Alexis Kagame, the first native of Ruanda to be admitted to the Roman Catholic priesthood, and editor of the periodical *Kinyamateka*. With the active support of King Mutara III a Comité de l'art indigène has been organized in Ruanda and one of its objects is to make a collection of the traditional lore. (The king has established a fund for the publication of books, the first of which, *A History of Ruanda*, appeared in 1943.) These poems form part of the collection. The King, the Warrior, and the Cow are the spinal cord of the Hamitic hierarchy of Ruanda and the poems have the king for their subject. One of them was composed by a dynastic poet named Semidogoro more than 150 years ago. It is entitled *Umwami si umuntu*, 'the King is not a human being'. We quote a few of the eighty-nine verses:

Le Roi, c'est lui le Dieu qui s'occupe des humains.  
 Ce n'est vraiment pas un homme, c'est un Roi.  
 Le Roi que voici, personne n'oserait se comparer à lui,  
 Sous prétexte que leurs demeures sont contigües . . .  
 Je trouve que le Roi est Dieu rendu accessible à nos prières;  
 Le Dieu suprême, c'est le Roi qui le connaît;  
 Quant à nous, nous ne voyons que notre souverain. . . .  
 Le souverain que voici boit le lait trait par Dieu  
 Et nous buvons le lait qu'à son tour il trait pour nous.  
 Le Roi est le seul grand responsable,  
 Lui qui se charge de tout un pays et le rassasie.