

Notes and News

African Missions and the Institute.

THE Institute has from the beginning laid stress on the co-operation of missionaries. The outstanding aim of the Institute is to study African languages and cultures and their educational values, and nobody can be more interested in such studies than missionaries working in Africa. The plan of founding the Institute was first conceived in a missionary circle, and missions are contributing to its financial support. On the other hand, the Institute has, through its publications, its Fellows, and through personal contact and correspondence, tried to bring about a closer contact between missionaries and scientific study and an interchange of experience. Missions realize to-day that a training in anthropology and sociology gives the missionary a better insight into the African's mind and also 'helps to develop an attitude of mind which is prepared to listen to the people themselves before plunging in to teach them what the foreigner brings'. Father Dubois, in his handbook *Le Répertoire Africain*, urges that every mission should have among its members one or two fully trained anthropologists, and that every missionary should be given some grounding in anthropology so that he may be able to avail himself of the help of his more fully trained colleagues.

The same plea for paying attention to what may be called applied anthropology on the part of missionaries is made by Dr. J. H. Oldham, Administrative Director of the Institute, in a Memorandum on 'African Missions and the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures'. He points to the numerous contributions made by missionaries to the study of African languages and peoples and to their efforts to demonstrate the values inherent in this mental heritage. 'The necessity of preserving what is good in the African's past is not merely a question of wise statesmanship or of sound educational method. It has solid roots in Christian theology. . . . The Christian doctrine of God speaks of him as Creator and Redeemer. The religious meaning of the doctrine of creation implies a reverence for the institutions which a race has evolved in the historic process of its growth. However much they need to be changed the Christian must approach them with respect, and with an effort to understand. . . . The Gospel comes to deliver men and their relations with one another from the evil that corrupts and maims their true life. But the life which it seeks to redeem is life as it actually exists and its given surroundings and context.'

As an illustration of the way in which the different attitude towards this problem of adaptation works in practice, Dr. Oldham gives two examples drawn from papers contributed to the Institute.

A careful and trained investigator had recently the opportunity of observing closely the work of two neighbouring missions. One had been successful in developing a vigorous native church with well-educated ministers and excellent schools. The leaders in the churches and schools were men of good family who would in any case have taken a high position in the community, and the education which they had received gave them an added authority and influence. The days of slavish imitation of the European had passed, and the leaders of the African community were now thinking about their traditional customs and ideas, which they felt to be of real value, and which they desire to preserve in the Christian community. The African Christians were taking their full share in the ordinary life of the tribe. The chiefs attended the services regularly and expected their people to do the same. At a large gathering to hear evangelistic addresses the local big chief attended and sat in state throughout the meeting.

‘In a neighbouring mission among the same people the standard of education was not so high, and many of the chiefs and leading men expressed themselves bitterly about the way in which the mission had attempted to suppress much in their traditional life. They inquired of the anthropologist, for example, whether in England Christians ever burned their dead, because the missionaries had told them that, since the paramount chief was a Christian, he could not be buried according to their old rite of burning the body. When they were told that cremation was practised by Christians in England they were full of indignation that they had been led to believe otherwise. In this mission a missionary was overheard addressing a man of high standing and greatly honoured as though he were a menial, and the native comments on the incident were revealing. One of the younger missionaries expressed much concern at the loss of young people from the Church because after they had become members there was nothing special to hold their interest. The age-group system played a large part in the life of the tribe and an intelligent adaptation of the interests connected with it might have done much to keep the younger people attached to the Church.’

Dr. Oldham concludes by directing attention to several features of the Institute's work in which it can be useful to missionaries. (a) The Institute encourages a new type of anthropology which is of special importance for missionaries. This is the study of the changing African, an attempt to understand what is happening to the African under the impact of new forces. It can shed light on almost everything that the missionary is attempting to do and can make his work more intelligent and effective. (b) A number of Fellows of the Institute are carrying out in Africa studies of African life and institutions. Missionaries in the areas where Fellows are at work can obtain from them help and suggestions. The results of these investigations will in due course be published, and preliminary results are being published in *Africa*. (c) Co-operation with the Institute will help to bring missions into

closer touch with the main stream of African development. (d) The Institute has rendered service in the field of African languages. It is willing to give help and advice in questions relating to the practical and the scientific side of African linguistics as well as of anthropology.

Human Geography in Tanganyika.

Two publications recently issued by the Tanganyika Government give information of a type which is sought, usually in vain, by students of every African territory. The first is Mr. C. Gillman's *Population Map of Tanganyika*, which shows not only population densities but areas alienated to non-natives, forest reserves and anti-sleeping-sickness concentrations. A smaller map shows the types of occupation of land and their relation to the nature of the water-supply, and the fly-free areas. The question of water-supply, as the author points out, is of paramount importance in determining settlement in a territory like Tanganyika, where in many regions, though rainfall may be sufficient to make cultivation possible, permanent water-supplies for domestic purposes are lacking. Another significant factor is the distribution of tsetse-fly. In the author's opinion the fly has no chance where the bush is kept down by a sufficiently dense human population maintaining or extending its area of cultivation; it does not drive man away, but at once occupies any land which has been allowed to revert to bush. But when human settlement penetrates into the dry savannah forests, the pioneers are small bands who shift their ground and keep no clearings permanently open. Here man is a competitor of the fly, with the odds against him.

Over 62 per cent. of the Territory is uninhabited, mostly in the centre and west—not because vast open spaces are waiting to be peopled, but for the greater part through the lack of permanent water, in some places aggravated by floods in the rainy season. Ten to 20 per cent. of the uninhabited area is accounted for by forest reserves, swamps, land alienated but not yet developed, the upper regions of the great volcanoes, and the scarps where the land is so steep as to make settlement difficult.

One practical conclusion that results from the plotting of population is that while the main railway lines link up the areas where it is densest, the branch lines prove to have been uneconomically planned, and that in the districts where railways have not yet been built the population is too scattered to justify the expenditure, and the present policy of preferring the Diesel-engined road-train is the more efficient.

Another important point is that the provision of domestic water-supplies in areas where the rainfall is sufficient for cultivation should be more productive than the development of irrigation in regions where the rainfall is lower.

The second publication, by Mr. R. C. Jerrard, officer in charge of labour in Tanga Province, is intended as an aid to 'rationalization' in the employ-