

The following papers were read and discussed: 'Problems of traditional history in Nigeria with special reference to the history of the Eastern Region' by Professor K. O. Diké, Vice-Principal and Professor of History, University College, Ibadan; 'King Jaja of Opobo in exile' by B. H. Atkinson, Assistant Regional Director, British Council, Enugu; 'Urhobo traditional history' by the Rev. E. Arawore, St. Thomas's Anglican Parsonage, Uwheru; 'The problems of relative and absolute chronology in Benin history' by Dr. R. E. Bradbury, Anthropologist, Scheme for the Study of Benin History and Culture, Benin City; 'Preliminary impressions of Old Oyo' by F. Willett, Surveyor of Antiquities to the Federal Government and Curator of the Ife Museum, Ife; 'International relations in the Western Sudan during the nineteenth century' by H. F. C. Smith, Senior Lecturer in the Department of History, University College, Ibadan; 'Fowell Buxton and the British "civilizing" mission of 1841-2' by Dr. C. C. Ifemesia, Lecturer in the Department of History, University College, Ibadan.

Approaches to African Literature

THIS booklet, recently published by the Ibadan University Press,¹ contains the text of two papers read at the 1959 Annual Conference of the West African Library Association and reading lists of African literature. The first paper, 'Non-English Writings' by Janheinz Jahn, gives a brief survey of creative writing in the vernacular, tracing the beginnings of modern African literature from Thomas Mofolo in Basutoland to the modern poets and novelists, writing mostly in French, whose work expresses the concept of *négritude*. Mr. Jahn makes the point that the number and quality of African authors are in direct relationship to the political situation and the educational level in the different African countries.

In the second paper J. A. Ramsaran deals with 'English Writings in West Africa'. He emphasizes the need for a general bibliography of African literature, by which he means 'literature written in any language by anybody so long as it deals with Africa'. Specialized works such as indexes, abstracts of critical essays on African literary themes, and guides to books on African art and to background books that will supply historical and sociological data would also be valuable. He suggests also a 'Who's Who' of Africans and non-Africans who have contributed, or are still contributing, to African literature, a closer cultural liaison between English speakers and West Africans, more conferences of African writers and fuller reports of their meetings, and, finally, 'a self-conscious society of authors and their readers to express themselves through their own journals and little reviews'.

The reading lists are classified under two sections, Non-English and English writings. The first is subdivided into French Africa, Belgian Congo, South Africa, and East Africa: the second into anthologies, periodicals, special African literature issues, fiction, and miscellaneous. The majority of the books listed are recent, few of them being earlier than 1950.

African Authors' Conference

A CONFERENCE of 89 African authors from the Union, the High Commission Territories, and from the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was held at Atteridgeville, Pretoria, from 7 to 9 July 1959. It was also attended by educationalists, missionaries, and publishers, and had been convened at the request of the 1956 Johannesburg Conference on Christian Literature for the Bantu of Southern Africa to consider all aspects of African authorship and to devise means of assisting African authors.

The following papers were read and discussed: 'The Author' by the Rev. J. J. R.

¹ *Approaches to African Literature*, Ibadan University Press, 1959. 2s. 6d.

Jolobe; 'The Problems of the Author' by Professor C. L. S. Nyembezi; a paper on this subject was also read by Dr. H. J. van Zyl; 'The Manuscript' by Dr. C. J. Oosthuizen; 'Types of Manuscripts' by Professor D. Ziervogel; 'The Book Publisher' by G. F. Laurence. Mr. J. Semmelink, the founder and director of Informo (a Christian literature service for Southern Africa), also gave a paper on the need for a comprehensive catalogue of all publications in the Bantu languages of Southern Africa. Mr. Semmelink is compiling such a catalogue himself and has already listed more than 800 publications.

Among the problems facing the African author are illiteracy, the large number of African languages, and the problem of finding publishers. Points for the future on which resolutions were passed included the completion of the catalogue of Bantu publications mentioned above, the possible establishment of a Bantu Academy to consider matters of orthography and vocabulary in the field of Bantu languages, and the establishment of a Bureau of Literacy and Literature to combat illiteracy among the adult Africans of the Union and to ensure the more effective distribution of wholesome literature among the Africans of Southern Africa.

Tropical Africa Study Project

THE recently established Institute of Race Relations (6 Duke of York St., London, S.W. 1) is undertaking a study of the human problems arising from the impact of industrialization in Africa, with special reference to the immediate context of industrial and commercial activity. The Study is under the direction of Mr. Guy Hunter, who left for Africa at the end of 1959.

The growth of modern industry and commerce has coincided with major political changes in Africa, where the situation is complicated not only by the presence of several races but by their changing relationships. The object of the present Study is to assess how far the necessary adaptations in these relationships are being made successfully, particularly in the sphere of industry and commerce, by Governments, by social groups, by industrial undertakings, and by individuals in the actual context of work, and, if possible, to suggest means by which relationships can be improved. It is intended that the Study should include work in East, West, and Central Africa, and comparative material from countries with French and Belgian associations will be valuable. While in some cases there may be need for original research on special issues, the principal task will be to draw upon the widely varied experience of all races in Africa and to bring together that experience from different areas and from different viewpoints. It is intended that the results of the Study should be published.

Economic Problems in Senegal

M. IGOR DE GARINE WICHATITSKY, who has recently completed a field study of the Massa peoples as a Research Fellow of the International African Institute, has been engaged by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations to make a four-month study of food and economic problems in Senegal.

Research among the Konso of Ethiopia

MR. RICHARD KLUCKHOHN, working under the supervision of Professor John W. M. Whiting, Director of the Laboratory of Human Relations, Harvard University, and supported by a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health, is doing a general ethnographic field survey of the Konso, with particular emphasis on child training, age grading,