

Traditional Music of the Vili (A.E.F.)

MONSIEUR H. Pepper, of the Institut d'Études Centrafricaines, was inspired by the accounts of early travellers in 'The Kingdom of Congo' to study traditional music and musical instruments in the village of Diossa where there lived a descendant of the kings of Loango. M. Pepper discovered a number of drums, xylophones, horns, and other instruments corresponding to those described by early travellers; he discovered also that the ancient musical traditions were most faithfully preserved among the Nganga, a sect of healers and diviners, references to whom occurred in the records of the eighteenth-century missionaries. The Nganga made considerable use of music in their ceremonies, particularly at moments when they claimed to enter into communication with the god (*mokisso*); they also wore bells or other percussion instruments as bracelets, head-dresses, girdles, &c. when carrying out the rhythmic movements of their dances. A study of the songs with which the Vili celebrate the great crises of the life cycle enabled M. Pepper to record the pentatonic scale used and the rich varieties of sound achieved by the transposition and extension of the scale.

International Colonial Co-operation

As early as 1940 the possibility of Anglo-French collaboration in African technical matters of common concern was discussed, and in 1945 conversations took place between the British and French Colonial Offices to discover what subjects required joint action and how the activities of the two countries could best be co-ordinated. In 1946 similar talks took place between Britain and Belgium and in 1947 tripartite Anglo-French and Belgian discussions were held in Paris, as well as discussions between officials of the British and Portuguese Colonial Offices. As a result of the Paris conference a programme of international technical conferences was agreed on. Since that date a series of conferences has been held in Europe and in African territories at which the subjects under discussion have included Education, Forestry, Trypanosomiasis, Plant Diseases, Rinderpest, Soils, Transport, Food and Nutrition, Indigenous Rural Economy. In addition to these conferences, numerous regional conferences are being held to discuss such matters as fisheries, public health, and veterinary questions. Moreover, the possibilities of economic co-operation have been explored in a series of Anglo-French and Anglo-Belgian discussions. A considerable exchange of information on technical, scientific, and economic topics, as well as useful informal contacts between officials of various departments, have resulted from these international meetings.

As a result of the African Regional Scientific Conference held at Johannesburg in October 1949 the establishment of a Scientific Council for Africa south of the Sahara is proposed for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of scientific information, making recommendations regarding research projects and regarding joint administrative action, convening conferences on general or specialized scientific topics, &c.

Principles and Methods of Colonial Administration

FROM 12 to 19 April the Colston Research Society of Bristol University held a symposium on 'Principles and Methods of Colonial Administration'. Delegates from six countries (Belgium, France, Netherlands, Portugal, United States, Great Britain) attended. A number of representatives of the British Colonial Office were present, and Mr. E. C. Chadwick flew from Nigeria to introduce a special showing of his film 'Daybreak in Udi'. The symposium was led by Professor C. M. Innes of Bristol University and the papers and accompanying discussions are to be published.

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