

representatives of African opinion to-day would not be opposed to the idea of giving legal recognition in native law to a contract of monogamy. He quotes the unanimous opinion of the Meru Local Native Council ('there is no tribe which clings more tenaciously to its indigenous institutions') in favour of adapting or interpreting Meru law in such a way as to grant recognition to the institution of monogamy. And Mr. Phillips recommended in his Report that research and planning be instituted with a view to the possibility of incorporating provision for contractual monogamy within the systems of African law. He believes that progressive Africans generally would be in favour of the recognition of monogamy by native law. According to M. Sohier there are precedents in the law of some tribes for this recognition: he instances the fairly widespread pact of *lusalo* which renders the marriage indissoluble and forbids the husband to take a second wife.

If African law requires investigation, so does the effect of endeavouring to force European law upon people who are not prepared for it, who do not understand it, who have their own laws. An African Christian in British colonies is normally bound to use a standardized English law of marriage and divorce, the divorce law being that obtaining in 1905 without the subsequent amendments. The marriage law prohibits his marrying persons whom by his own law he is allowed to marry, and permits him to marry other persons union with whom is regarded by his own people as incest.

We welcome the announcement that the International Missionary Council (Protestant) is considering the possibility of attempting a study of African marriage customs and has asked Mr. J. Merle Davis, Director of the Department of Social and Economic Research, to undertake a preliminary exploration of the subject. We trust that the articles we publish may help to further this inquiry.

Handbook of African Languages

A REPORT of progress during the year ending 31 May 1946 was presented to the Bureau of the Institute at its meeting on 27 June. Considerable progress has been made in the course of the second year's work; a scheme for the terminology and method of classification to be employed throughout the Handbook was recommended by the Sub-Committee appointed to consider these questions, and approved by the Linguistic Advisory Committee (see *Africa*, xvi. 3, pp. 156-9). Miss Bryan has completed her study of the material relating to the languages of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, the areas south and east of Lake Chad, the north-east area of the Belgian Congo, and the northern parts of Uganda and Kenya, and her notes on the Semitic, Cushitic, Nilotic, and Nilo-Hamitic languages of these areas, together with comprehensive bibliographies, will shortly be published. Dr. Malcolm Guthrie has completed his Classification of Bantu Languages, which is now being prepared for publication. M. Nicolas has been working in Paris on the languages of French West Africa, including Fula, Mandingo, Wolof, Serer, Bambara, and Hausa. Father Santandrea has been engaged on research in the Bahr el Ghazal province of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and it has been suggested that he should undertake a further field-study in Equatoria Province, Southern Sudan.

Ethnographic Survey

WORK on the Ethnographic Survey has gone forward as material and personnel have become available. For West Africa considerable progress has been made, particularly as regards Nigeria. A draft section on the Ibo-speaking people has been prepared, and similar sections on the Ibibio, Yoruba, and Tiv groups are in hand. A classified list and index of the ethnic groups in Nigeria is being assembled from published and other available material in order to clarify the confused nomenclature. In the Gambia, the preliminary survey of the ethnic