

The Journal of African Law

INTEREST in the customary law of Africa has been steadily growing in recent years: some straws in the wind include the successful symposium at Leiden on the future of the customary law in Africa, the second Judicial (Native Courts) Advisers' Conference at Jos in November 1956, and the appearance of a number of books and articles on customary law. Not only anthropologists, but lawyers and administrators, are now concerned with the promotion of these studies. At the same time study of the non-indigenous legal systems of Africa is becoming increasingly important. One reason for this is the rapid social, economic, and political development that is now taking place; another is the likely appearance of departments of law at African universities, preparing local practitioners-to-be for their future profession.

To meet these needs and provide a forum where all those concerned with the law in Africa might discuss their common problems, the initiative was taken to institute a *Journal of African Law*, which has (after much preliminary labour) just begun publication. It appears with the backing of a distinguished Board of advisers (on which the judiciary in Africa is strongly represented), and edited by an Editorial Committee consisting of Professors J. N. D. Anderson and I. Schapera of the University of London, Professor Arthur Phillips of the University of Southampton, and Dr. A. N. Allott, also of London University, who is acting as managing editor.

The primary field of the *Journal* is the law of British Africa south of the Sahara (other than the Union); within this field the *Journal* covers the general law (whether of English, local, Roman-Dutch, or Indian origin), African customary law (to which special attention will be paid), and Islamic law as applied in Africa. The first two issues contain articles on Muslim marriages and the courts in East Africa, the authority of English decisions in colonial courts, the need for the study of native law, conflict of laws relating to homicide in Northern Nigeria, and the new Ghana constitution; and further issues will include, *inter alia*, a number of articles on customary law in Kenya, Bechuanaland, the Sudan, West Africa, and elsewhere.

The *Journal* also has an extensive section devoted to decided cases, in which reports of or excerpts from recent unreported decisions in the courts in Africa, and comments on these and other decisions, are given at length. This section should be of value, not only to the practitioner, but also to anyone interested in studying the way in which customary law is administered in the courts today. A further feature of each number is an extensive bibliography, which collects all current publications relating to the law in Africa, both in the English-speaking and foreign press. This should be a useful source of reference for the research-worker. The *Journal* also contains notes on legal news, research in progress, legal education, commissions of inquiry, and similar topics.

The *Journal of African Law* is published by Messrs. Butterworth & Co. Ltd., of London, at a price of £2. 2s. per annum.

[Communicated by A. N. Allott]

Nutrition and Food Research in Africa

IN February and March last, Professor William J. Darby, University School of Medicine, Nashville, Tennessee, and Dr. James M. Hundley of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, visited several countries in Africa in order to establish a nutrition programme to be implemented with assistance from the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and UNICEF.

The programme is primarily directed towards research on current foodstuffs to compensate the shortage of proteins (especially animal proteins), amine-acids and vitamins in the

daily African diet. Studies include laboratory investigations into the composition of food-stuffs and research on methods of distribution, particularly to vulnerable groups of the population, such as school children in French West Africa and Uganda and miners in the Union of South Africa. The aim of this research is to provide complementary or supplementary food for those who need it most.

In French West Africa the creation of ORANA (Institute for Nutrition and Food Research in Africa) and its achievements in the pilot village of Popenguiné, have resulted in a considerable decrease in the infant mortality rate, and emergency measures have been taken against the spread of 'kwashiorkor'. Research is also being carried out in Nigeria, the Belgian Congo, Uganda, and the Union of South Africa.

Meeting of European and African experts at Strasbourg

A GROUP of Europeans and Africans met at the Maison de l'Europe in Strasbourg in the summer to study suitable methods of promoting economic and social development in Africa.

The members of the group, who have been chosen because of their knowledge and experience and whose opinions are their own and not necessarily those of their governments, are as follows: A. R. Bolamba (Belgian Congo), L. Bourgier de Carbon (France), C. Carbonnelle (Belgium), Arthur Gaitskell (United Kingdom), Alexis Kagame (Ruanda-Urundi), A. Lawrence (French Guinea), E. Miesch (German Federal Republic), Ceriani Sebgondi (Italy), Paul Rykens (Netherlands), O. Arikpo (Nigeria), Jules Ninine (French Cameroons), and Tshekedi Khama (Bechuanaland).

The aim of the group is to gather together a number of independent experts from the member countries of the Council of Europe (whether or not they have responsibilities in Africa) and African territories likely to be interested in the study of methods to promote economic and social development in Africa. The group should put forward suggestions to encourage and accelerate such development and to raise the standard of living of African peoples, in the interests of African as well as of European prosperity, by co-operation on an equal basis between African territories and the member countries of the Council of Europe.

University Training for Community Development in Ghana¹

THE Certificate Course in Social Studies at the University College of Ghana started in January 1956. It has been found that much of the resistance to community development met with arises from inadequate use of sociological and anthropological knowledge of the community it is hoped to develop. Nor is the need for community planning any less great in new towns and housing estates than in villages and rural areas. The syllabus for the Certificate Course therefore comprises social administration, the study of society (i.e. a representative group of African societies), political and administrative institutions, and social economics, psychology and philosophy. The aim of the course is to integrate theory and field work, for which the student is sent to an area which is new to him.

As this is the first experiment of its kind in Africa, considerable difficulties have been encountered, notably the language difficulties of Mass Education officers, and shortage of textbooks on the social service organization, social history, and social problems of Ghana. There is need for more adequate staffing and for research into such subjects as social psychology and social philosophy and for money to carry out these projects.

¹ See *Africa*, January 1957, pp. 79-80.