

Notes and News

Sixteenth Meeting of Executive Council

THE meeting of the Executive Council was held earlier than usual this year and took place in Brussels on June 8 and 9 by kind invitation of the Belgian Government.

The session was presided over by the Chairman, the Rt. Hon. Lord Lugard, and at the opening meeting the Minister for the Colonies, M. De Vleeschauer, welcomed the members on behalf of the Government. Professor R. Coupland, Beit Professor of Colonial History of the University of Oxford, was appointed Administrative Director in succession to Dr. J. H. Oldham. The meeting was attended by the following members. Professor N. De Cleene, Professor C. Conti Rossini, Professor R. Coupland, Rev. Father H. Dubois, Professor Éd. De Jonghe, Professor A. Klingenheben, Professor B. Malinowski, Gouverneur Général Olivier, Professor P. Rivet, Sir E. Denison Ross, Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Rev. Father M. Schulien, Rev. E. W. Smith, Professor H. Labouret (Director), Professor D. Westermann (Director), Mr. H. Vischer (Secretary-General), Miss D. G. Brackett (Secretary). Professor M. J. Herskovits representing the American Anthropological Association on the Governing Body attended under Article V, Rule 6 (f) of the Statutes. A full account of the proceedings will appear in the next number of the Journal.

The members of the Council were received with great hospitality by their Belgian hosts, and a number of social arrangements gave them opportunities of meeting those engaged in the study of colonial questions in Belgium.

Methods of Study of Culture Contact in Africa.

THE articles on the study of culture contact in Africa published in recent volumes of this Journal have now been published as Memorandum XV under the title *Methods of Study of Culture Contact in Africa* (price 2s. 6d.). There is a preface by Dr. L. P. Mair, the Editor of the series, and the papers are introduced by an essay by Professor B. Malinowski on 'The Anthropology of Changing African Cultures'. After this introductory essay come the following articles: 'The Place of History in the Study of Culture Contact', by L. P. Mair; 'Contact between European and Native in South Africa': (1) In Pondoland, by Monica Hunter; (2) In Bechuanaland, by I. Schapera; 'Culture Contact on the Fringe of Civilization', by A. T. and G. M. Culwick; 'The Village Census in the Study of Culture Contact', by Audrey I. Richards; 'Culture Contact as a Dynamic Process', by M. Fortes, and 'The Study of Culture Contact in its Practical Applications', by Günter Wagner.

The significance of this publication lies in the fact that it provides a synthesis of the principles and the methods of work observed in the execution of the Five Year Plan of Research of the Institute, the results of which are gradually appearing in a series of books. The Memorandum shows what the Institute understands by practical or applied anthropology, namely, a purely scientific method of study which lays the emphasis not on the past but on the present and its living problems of contact, change, adaptation, and the establishment of a new equilibrium.

The outstanding feature of the Memorandum is Professor Malinowski's introductory essay. It is an interpretation, a summing up, a criticism, and an extension of what the following authors say, almost all of whom have been his students. Professor Malinowski first gives a bird's-eye view of Africa to-day and then goes on to examine a number of questions, such as the new tasks of anthropology, the contact situation as an integral whole, the product of change as a mechanical mixture of elements, and the search for 'zero-point' (i.e. the conditions of pre-European tribal equilibrium).

He emphasizes the fact that under present conditions three forms of society are to be distinguished in Africa, viz. tribal communities, detribalized communities, and white communities; none of them exists independently, each is influencing the others, and consequently a constant change caused by contact is going on in each group. The future development will be marked by the fact that while the purely or relatively tribal groups are decreasing in numbers and influence, the two other groups are constantly growing. The state of things prevailing in detribalized society is, however, not only a mixture of half-forgotten elements of the old order and half-digested fragments of European acquisitions, but is developing into an entity of its own, a new order of things which will be African in a form adapted to conditions of to-day.

The Memorandum may well serve as a vade-mecum for every anthropological research worker going to Africa and will likewise be of interest to students in other branches of anthropology and sociology. Every contribution has its own special features, has something to teach, and stimulates thought.

A Note on 'The Bornu Sahara and Sudan' by the Author.

THE following interesting notes have been received from the author regarding points raised by Dr. Meek in his review of *The Bornu Sahara and Sudan*, by Sir Richmond Palmer, which appeared in the last number of this journal:

'That in detail what Dr. Meek terms "ethnological speculations" may not in all cases be correct I would be the last to question, nor does the book itself suggest a dogmatic attitude in respect of them. On the other hand, the pre-Islamic non-African characteristics and oriental non-Islamic peculiarities of old Bornu were and are, as a whole, so unlike anything else in the Central