

taines forces mystérieuses, qu'ils exploitent à volonté et que le commun des mortels ignore. Le devin-guérisseur y a recours pour le bien de la société ou d'un de ses membres, le sorcier au contraire en use dans un but nocif.

Cette dernière particularité a permis au Dr. van Bulck de mettre en vedette certaines caractéristiques fondamentales de la sorcellerie. (a) Il y a tout d'abord le caractère anti-social de la sorcellerie, qui sépare ce phénomène de tout le reste de la magie. Le sorcier agit au détriment de ses semblables, membres de sa communauté. Le devin-guérisseur au contraire s'efforce de leur venir en aide. (b) Le mode d'action est différent. Le sorcier opère en secret, le devin-guérisseur en public aux vues de tous. Souvent même, ce dernier remplit dans l'organisme de la société indigène une fonction indispensable. (c) La réaction de la part de la communauté est autre. Elle punit le sorcier de peine de mort ou d'exil, peu importe qu'il ait acquis son efficacité nocive consciemment ou inconsciemment, volontairement ou involontairement. Le devin-guérisseur par contre est respecté et vénéré au sein de la communauté: il y jouit souvent d'un réel prestige. (d) L'exercice de la profession également varie. La plupart du temps, on devient sorcier accidentellement, pour satisfaire une vengeance, par haine ou par jalousie. La profession de devin-guérisseur est acquise généralement par héritage de père en fils, ou par initiation auprès d'un maître. L'expérience personnelle ici joue un grand rôle. (*Communication du Professeur N. DE CLEENE.*)

Two West African Authors.

Two vernacular publications have recently appeared which deserve attention, one a literary production in Ewe, and the second, of a scientific character, in Twi.

The first is a drama by Fiwwoo, entitled *Toko atōlia* and published in Ewe and German in the *Mitteilungen der Auslandhochschule* (Berlin, 1938). The German translation was made by Dr. R. Schober. *Toko atōlia*, 'The Fifth Lagoon', is the name of a place on the Keta lagoon which has obtained an historical significance, because here were executed criminals who had forfeited their life because of a capital offence against the commonwealth. The time of the action is the pre-European period when only a few Portuguese slave-ships occasionally visited the coast. The story is purely African, removed from any Christian or other European influence, and gives a living and realistic picture of the original life in an Añlō (Awuna) clan. A girl is engaged to marry a young man of a wealthy family who leads a dissipated life and is accused of having relations with a number of married women. The girl loves another young man who is of a somewhat savage, but straight and honest character, and who is secretly devoted to her. When the girl's father insists on her marriage with the first man, to whom she has been betrothed as a child and from whom her parents have received many presents,

she refuses. Her father curses her and she, together with her younger sister, runs away to a distant relation on the Gold Coast. The girls on their flight are seized by the Portuguese slave-dealer, but the second lover has with some friends gone in search of her and in a heavy fight they redeem the girl. They all turn homeward in triumph, the parents are easily reconciled, and nothing stands in the way of a happy ending. Before, however, this comes to full realization the misdeeds of the prodigal have been discovered and he is sentenced to death, the secret servants of justice appear, singing their song, 'We come by night, we go by night', and beating the death-drum over the culprit. He is buried in the ground, only his head remaining above the surface, and is left to die. But the second lover, who has just returned from his adventure with the slave-dealer, rescues his rival, who had been his friend, from his terrible interment and helps him to escape to Dahomey.

The picture of African life given in the drama is true in every detail. The language is of a richness, a force, and a fluency such as the writer of this note has never before met in Ewe. It is a true work of fiction based on reality and contains passages of genuine poetry. The manuscript won a second prize in the competition of the Institute for books by Africans. The author is to be congratulated on his achievement.

The author of the second book, a *Twi Grammar*, is C. A. Akrofi.¹ *Twi Kasa Mmara* means 'The Laws of the Twi Language', this being the author's rendering of 'Grammar'. It is a book intended primarily for native readers and as such has its appropriate place besides Christaller's classical grammar of the language. Mr. Akrofi is a real scholar; his book is the result of prolonged independent investigation. He has gained an insight into the inner structure of his mother tongue as few others have, whether European or African. In many details he goes his own way and succeeds in shedding fresh light on the language. His rules are illustrated by numerous and well-chosen examples. In certain sections, such as that dealing with intonation, his description is incomplete, but this is excused by the fact that for natives a study of the laws of intonation is of less importance than for Europeans. It may be regretted that so few Europeans will be able to read the book, but those who do read it will be rewarded for their trouble. They will not only understand the language better, but will also learn how an educated African with a scientific mind is able to give an account of his own speech.

Hausa Orthography

When in 1934 Dr. G. P. Bargery published his Hausa Dictionary he based the orthography of the language on the recommendations of this Institute,

¹ *Twi Kasa Mmara*. London: Longmans; Accra: Scottish Mission Book Depot. Pp. 110. 2s. 6d.