'The unique flexibility and range of expressiveness of the ideophone in Bantu languages are well known. Recent observations have given some indication that the educated African often tends to use the ideophone much less frequently than the illiterate villager and that males today use it less frequently than women—a point related to the first observation, since female education is less widespread than that of males. At a recent Provincial Council meeting in the Kaonde–Lunda province of Northern Rhodesia I noticed that during the deliberations only three ideophones were used, all by one speaker. In the course of recent linguistic work, I have closely observed the speech of two females, one educated who used ideophones infrequently, and one illiterate who used them continuously and rarely uttered more than a sentence or two without an ideophone. It would be interesting to know whether other workers have noticed the same sort of thing.'

Bride-price, Bride-wealth, Dowry

In the discussions on African marriage, to which we continue to devote much of our space, there should be uniformity in the use of certain terms. What term should be employed for the cattle or other goods that are transferred from one group to another as an integral part of marriage? Most people are now agreed this is not a buying and a selling. Let us then avoid the use of the word 'paying'. For the same reason we dislike the word 'bride-price' and prefer, for want of a better, 'bride-wealth'. Dr. A. E. Grootaert, the eminent Belgian jurist, rightly protests against the use of *dot* ('dowry') and proposes *titre matrimonial.* Instead of *payer le dot* he would say *constituer le titre matrimonial*, and instead of *rembourser le dot* he would say *retourner le titre matrimonial, retirer le titre matrimonial*, according whether the action is by the woman's or the man's group; or *annuler le titre matrimonial* if no particular reference is made to either party. What would our readers, and especially the legally trained, say to adopting in English 'matrimonial title'?

Marriage Ordinances for Africans

Mr. Martin Parr writes to us as follows:

'In the July number of *Africa* Mr. W. Y. Turner comments on my article in the January number. He writes about 'Christian marriage', an expression which has no legal significance and which Dr. Quick (the late Regius Professor of Divinity, Oxford) and many other churchmen hold should not be used in considering the laws governing marriage. A marriage, however celebrated, can become a 'Christian marriage' if the parties have the intention, the faith and the grace to make it so. But that has nothing whatever to do with the civil law by which the marriage is contracted. Incorrect use of the term 'Christian marriage' has caused Mr. Turner to write: "In the Church of Scotland mission to the south of the protectorate the rule was adopted that Christian marriage must be only between Christians, but in the northern part of the protectorate . . . Christian marriage continued to be celebrated even where only one party was Christian"—a statement the real meaning of which, I fear, eludes me.

'Mr. Turner expresses surprise that in Nyasaland an Act has been passed giving legal status to marriages of Asiatics according to their several religious tenets, while thousands of native Christians, who are demanding legal status for their marriages, are denied this right. I have not the Act to which he refers, but I suspect that the principle enacted in it is that the parties may be married according to the laws of the community to which they belong: in some Asiatic communities the civil law may be identical with the religious law. I cannot believe that any Christian African is denied legal status for his marriage according to the civil law of the community to which he belongs, a civil law which in Nyasaland is not the ecclesiastical law of the Church of England or the Church of Scotland; this is not

to be wondered at because two convinced Christians who get married in England or Scotland are married under the civil law of their community and not under ecclesiastical law. The parties may hope to turn their marriage into a Christian marriage, but that hope does not prevent their having recourse to the civil law and the civil courts for e.g. divorce which is quite contrary to the tenets of their religion. All I am pleading for is that the same treatment should be given to African Christians in Africa as is given to British Christians in Britain: African Christians in Nyasaland alone enjoy at present that privileged position; African Christians in other British colonies do not. Religious freedom (to which Mr. Turner refers) surely cannot mean that a man who has voluntarily embraced Christianity is thereby legally debarred from his ordinary rights as a citizen under the civil law.

'Mr. Turner asks that legal status should be given to Christian marriage—an odd request, because no one can say whether it is a Christian marriage until after the parties have lived together for a period. What I think he means is that legal status should be given to a marriage rite performed by a recognized minister of religion. This is quite another matter. I am not at all sure that the religious ceremony has validity even in Britain; the minister is, I think, regarded as a registrar of marriages and legal status is given to the marriage by the signing of the register. But, however that may be, it is clear that no minister in Britain celebrates a marriage unless he is satisfied that the requirements of the civil law have been fulfilled and there is no bar to the marriage. In Africa there are so many separate communities with their own laws that the minister could not be expected to be familiar with them all. There seems, however, to be no objection to giving legal status to a marriage celebrated by a minister provided the proper Native Authority has certified there is no bar. But such marriage should have no legal consequences other than those which follow a civil marriage.

'I must apologise that in my article I referred to the Blantyre Native Christian Association. The word " Christian " should have been omitted. This Association strongly opposed the alterations in the law proposed by the missionary bodies and their opposition was upheld by the Governor and Secretary of State.'

A REVIEW

Encyclopedia of the Negro: Preparatory Volume. Revised and enlarged edition. 1946. New York: the Phelps-Stokes Fund. Pp. 215.

THE first edition of 1,000 copies was disposed of inside a year; and the editors and sponsors have, to meet the need, had the material thoroughly revised and some additions and corrections made. Some, but by no means all, of our suggested additions and emendations have been accepted. Lord Lugard, for example, now has a place but we are not satisfied to see him described simply as 'writer and explorer'; the title of his famous book is *The Rise of our East African Empire*. We still do not understand why under 'Languages of Africa' the names of such authorities as Doke, Laman, Meinhof, Torrend, H. H. Johnston, Kropf, and Bryant should be omitted: Bleek has been put in but his name misspelled. Dingiswayo has been added to African notabilities, but not Sebituane and others we named. Moshesh is now described as 'African chieftain, south central Africa' instead of 'African chieftain, Bechuana tribe'; why not say 'Basutoland'? We wish the enterprise well and when a third edition is called for we trust it will be still further improved, for it is a very useful book of reference. E. W. S.