

Annual Report of the Southern Provinces of Nigeria for the year 1934.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

The aim of this Report is to provide a record of native affairs in the Southern Provinces during the year under review with special reference to the development of the policy of Native Administration. The first four paragraphs of the General Summary are reproduced from the 1932 and 1933 Reports with slight modifications in order to furnish a background for the general reader.

II.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

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Southern Provinces.*

The Southern Provinces, including the southern portion of the Cameroons under British Mandate, cover an area of about 90,000 square miles enclosed roughly by the parallels of latitude three degrees and nine degrees North and the meridians of longitude three degrees and twelve degrees East. Topographically, this area may be divided into three main zones, a coastal belt of swamp and mangrove forest varying from ten to sixty miles in width, a middle belt of tropical forest, rich in oil palm trees, and a northern belt of secondary forest and savannah. Administratively, it is divided into eleven Provinces, comprising one or more Divisions and Districts. Each Province is in charge of a Resident with a staff of District Officers and Assistant District Officers, while the administration of the whole group is vested in a Lieutenant-Governor, responsible to the Governor of Nigeria.

2. Politically, the Southern Provinces may be roughly divided into two main groups: the western group, west of the Niger, comprising the Yoruba tribe and its affinities, where the sub-tribal stage of political development has been reached and more or less highly organised communities, such as Abeokuta and Benin, have emerged, and the eastern group, embracing the Sobo, Ibo, Ibibio, and lesser tribes where political evolution has not advanced beyond the clan and family stage, and the idea of chieftainship has made little headway, except in the northern part of the Cameroons Province.

3. Historically, the Southern Provinces of Nigeria apart from the mandated territory of the Cameroons, came into being on 1st January, 1914, when the Colony of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were amalgamated with the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. Prior to that date the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was divided into three Provinces, Western, Central and Eastern, each under a Provincial Commissioner who was directly responsible to the Governor, with much the same system of divisions and districts as obtains to-day. In the West the policy had been to interfere as little as possible with the native system, executive or judicial. Such political change as occurred was mainly in imitation of European ideas, and at Abeokuta, for example, then in treaty relations with the Government, an artificial form

of constitution, modelled somewhat on Crown Colony lines, was established. In the East owing to the primitive state of most of the communities of the hinterland a more direct form of rule was devised and applied, and in the circumstances of the time no other course appears to have been practicable. It is true that in implementing this direct system the people were accorded a large share inasmuch as Native Courts were established everywhere, but it failed ultimately because it took insufficient account of the clan and tribal affinities and of the indigenous organisation: created Native Courts on too unrepresentative and arbitrary a basis which led to the assumption by individuals of unwarranted powers and to corruption; and so failed to win the genuine support of the mass of the people.

4. From 1914 onwards the definite objective was the development and extension of indirect rule on the basis of native institutions and its essential corollary, direct taxation, throughout the Southern Provinces, but progress was severely handicapped by the War. In the West the Chiefs and people of the Oyo Province, where the custom of paying tribute in one form or another still prevailed, were the first to accept direct taxation in 1918, followed by the Eghas, the Ijebus and the other smaller Yoruba communities; Benin and the communities akin to it followed suit by consent in 1921, and in all these areas Native Administrations based for the most part on the native system were constituted. On the other hand the Eastern Provinces including the Warri Province, but excluding the Cameroons where the direct taxation instituted by the Germans had been continued from 1916 onwards, showed no signs of conversion to the idea of direct taxation in return for the abolition of forced labour on road maintenance, and the time for introducing it was not held to be ripe till 1927-28. In the Eastern Provinces in contrast with the Western Provinces there had been no customary tribute and the organisation for applying direct taxation was to a large extent lacking. Intermittent efforts had been made after 1914 to discover and revive in some degree the native administrative system by a partial reorganisation of the Native Courts, but it was not until the beginning of 1928 that any systematic attempt was made to investigate the native social structure and to interest the people in a whole-hearted scheme of reform rooted in their own institutions. The disturbances at the end of 1927 in the Warri Province showed how tenacious the people were of their indigenous system and gave the stimulus to an intensive inquiry into its past and its future possibilities. Across the Niger the start came later, and it was not until the middle of 1929 that similar inquiries were generally set on foot. At the end of that year occurred the disastrous fall in prices and the disturbances beginning with the Aba riots and directed against taxation and the now discredited Native Court system. As in the Warri Province however they served to emphasise the general dissatisfaction with the existing method of direct rule and the need for the energetic pursuit of the inquiries, and the elaboration of schemes of reform in consonance, as far as modern conditions permit, with the native system and the people's desires. The years 1930 and 1931 were mainly years of inquiry, of trial and error, and few schemes outside the Warri Province were put into effect. In 1932 however the general line of policy became clearer and there was very marked advance, which was more than maintained during 1933 and 1934. The Warri Province, having started first was the first to complete its scheme of reorganisation in 1934 after nearly seven years patient and intensive study; and this province affords as good an example as any of the passing of the old order with its

somewhat arbitrary administrative boundaries and its 'chiefs' appointed with scant regard to native custom, and of the introduction of the new, with the administrative units formed according to tribal and clan distribution, and native councils and courts established on a wide democratic basis in conformity with local tradition.

5. To return to the Western Provinces, it was said in 1932 that fresh stock had been taken of a situation that to a large extent had remained politically static since Native Administration was introduced in the period 1918-1921. It could have been argued then, not without some justification here and there, that 'feudal autocracies' were apparently the 'be-all and end-all of indirect administration' and that the intention was for the natives to "stay put" politically. But there can be no justification for that charge to-day with such educated and enlightened rulers at the head of the more important Yoruba sub-tribes, the Alake of Abeokuta, the Oba of Benin, the Oni of Ife and the Awujale of Ijebu-Ode acting under the guidance of the Governor's (Sir Donald Cameron) Principles of Native Administration. It is only in the last four years that the last three have succeeded to men of the older school. The Alafin of Oyo still belongs to the latter category but is wisely noting the signs of the times. Generally speaking the main weakness had been the concentration of authority in the head of the community and the concentration of attention and of expenditure on the capital town, and it has not always been easy to persuade the Obas, more especially the minor Obas, that reasonable delegation of executive and judicial responsibility to the villages, far from undermining their position strengthens it by giving the sub-chiefs and people a wider share in the management of their own affairs and so creating in them a wider civic sense and loyalty. The foremost instance of this in the past year has been the constitution, with the consent of the Alafin, of Ibadan and the towns of the old Ibadan confederacy as an independent Native Administration, a measure which after all was only in consonance with the treaty of 1893 between Oyo and Ibadan, and which has given to Ibadan and its associated towns the greatest satisfaction and a new sense of administrative self-respect. A number of the larger villages too in both the Oyo and Ibadan Native Administrations have been given minor Native Courts. The Alake also has introduced a measure of decentralisation by which the three Obas of the Oke Ona, Gbagura and Owu quarters of Abeokuta will devote more time and attention to their districts outside Abeokuta, and while on the subject of Egbaland one must mention the strengthening of the Egba Council by the appointment of the Honourable Mr. E. O. Moore and the Honourable Mr. A. Alakija, members of the Legislative Council and of the Nigerian Bar, and of Mr. Pearce, former Member of the Legislative Council. This is a landmark in the development of Native Administration and should add greatly to its prestige. For the Ijebus a complete overhaul of the administrative system by means of Intelligence Reports has been put in hand and is already bearing fruit in the villages, which as the fundamental unit of local government call for primary attention. Judging from a recent visit by me and the Awujale to the first area to be reorganised and the manifest contentment given the people by the new scheme of local subordinate council and court based on their native system, I have sanguine hopes for the future, and the Awujale will not regret his liberal attitude. A similar policy of decentralisation has been adopted by the Oni of Ife in regard to the Modakeke people, while the Oba of Benin's tours of his districts are also a noteworthy sign of the new and broader outlook. As to the Ondo Province more

than half of it has been covered by Intelligence Reports and the proposals based on these reports are about to be put into effect. Among the Ekiti Confederation the Deji of Akure, though one of the old school and forty years a chief, has shown himself no reactionary but has set an excellent example to the others by delegating to his sub-towns a large measure of responsibility. And before leaving the Western side attention may be called to the public spirited action of the Owa of Idanre and his chiefs in sacrificing their private claims to forestry royalties for the public good by paying them into the coffers of their newly formed Native Administration.

6. In the Eastern Provinces during 1934 much more of the map was coloured pink, which denotes that an area has been reported on and its scheme of reorganisation approved by the Governor. Fifty-six reports were received during the year and fifty-one approved. In the Calabar and Onitsha Provinces reorganisation was almost complete by the end of 1934 and in Owerri and Ogoja not very much remains to be done. Among the numerous small Native Administrations established it is difficult to particularize, and not very safe to generalize. The idea of Native Administration seems to have caught the imagination of the Ibibio people of the Calabar Province more than the Ibo people of the Owerri or Onitsha Provinces and still more than the people of the upper Cross River. At the same time it is not a matter of comparative civilisation, for one of the sturdiest of little Native Administrations I have seen was the Anam group (Ibo) in the back bush of the Anambra Creek, while the backward Lengwe clan, which not so many years ago called for annual patrols, is working efficiently and contentedly. Generally speaking the Native Court, its constitution and working, is still uppermost in the people's minds but the idea of the Native Authority and the understanding of the new Native Authority Ordinance and of the executive side of Native Administration is making headway, notably in the Calabar Province in Calabar town and in some of the Ibibio clans, in the Warri Province among the Jekris and Ukpe Solos and in the Owerri Province at Okrika. As an example of the new outlook engendered by granting people a measure of self-government the Calabar Council has voluntarily constituted a Native Administration Forest Reserve although only a short time before they had hotly opposed a similar proposal for a Government Reserve as wholly immoral.

7. There have been difficulties and delays both in the West and East and one of the most serious has been the rivalry in regard to succession. At Ijebu-Ode it took the fanatical form of a dastardly attempt on the life of the Awujale, whose selection had been recognised by Government only after the most lengthy and patient exploration of rival claims. At Onitsha similar dissension has continued for nearly four years and militated against the formation of any satisfactory form of Native Administration, but now at last the question bids fair to be settled. At Oye among the Ekitis there is still a deadlock accompanied by mutual accusations of bad faith.

8. A word may be said of Progressive Unions and Young Men's Improvement Societies which have everywhere sprung up. Composed, as their nomenclature implies, of the younger and educated elements they have become a force, and where they have adopted the wise attitude indicated in the second paragraph of the Ijebu section of this report and resisted any tendency to become class-conscious, they have been a force for good. It certainly can be said for them that they have no desire to destroy native institutions and loyalties but only to modify custom as modern

circumstances demand. The problem in fact of uniting the Christian and educated elements with the pagan in local government no longer looms large as it did three or four years ago. There are difficulties here and there but they are not insuperable. Where title-taking is a condition of membership of a Council, rites have been modified so as not to be repugnant to anyone's religious scruples, and further modifications in this direction will undoubtedly be accepted. Communal representation in name there still is, as on the Egha Council, for example, which includes the Balogun of the Christians and the Balogun of the Mahommedans, but these men are far from being narrowly sectional

9. The Cameroons Province, being mandated territory, has its own peculiar history. Taken over by the civil administration in 1916 its system of rule under the Germans had been direct, more direct than in the Eastern Provinces of Nigeria, and direct taxation had been in force for a number of years. Certain chiefs had been given minor judicial powers but there were no formal Native Courts regulated by law. After 1916 Native Courts were established under the Native Courts Ordinance, and Native Authorities were appointed; and in 1921 there began a close investigation of the history, affinities and customs of the various clans with a view to establishing native administration on a surer foundation. The ensuing reforms were to a large extent successful, but mistakes were made, particularly in the Kumba Division where an artificial system of District Heads has conspicuously failed. In the last four years the situation has been reviewed and sound administrative progress made, particularly among the Banyangs of the Mamfe Division and the Bamsos of the Bamenda Division, to mention only two clans, and there are sanguine signs now that even among the Bakweris of the Victoria Division, who at one time were almost despaired of, an effective Native Administration may be formed. It may be noted that in the Cameroons forest belt the idea of chieftainship, of authority residing in a person rather than a council has made much more headway than in the Eastern Provinces although the indigenous systems are otherwise in close accord, and this development has to be taken into account in schemes of reorganisation.

10. The Cameroons Province is peculiar also in respect of the thirty European owned plantations in the Victoria and Kumba Divisions, running into some quarter of a million acres. These estates are a legacy of the German administration and the alienation of such vast tracts of land has reacted adversely on the native institutions and on the development of the policy of indirect rule, but the difficulties are being gradually overcome. It is a tribute to the good management of these estates that the German managers and their assistants numbering 123 with over 12,000 labourers from all parts work side by side with the Native Administrations with the minimum amount of friction.

JUDICIAL.

11. On 1st April, 1934, the Protectorate Courts Ordinance of 1933 came into operation, under which the Provincial Courts Ordinance of 1914 and the Native Courts Ordinance of 1918 were repealed and the Courts for the administration of civil and criminal law in the Protectorate became (a) the High Court, (b) Magistrates' Courts and (c) Native Courts established under the Native Courts Ordinance, 1933. For the Southern Provinces judicial divisions of the High Court were formed with Judges at Calabar, Ikot-Ekpene, Enugu, Onitsha, Warri and Ibadan, and magisterial areas for

Calabar, Enugu, Onitsha, Benin and Ibadan, while in places where Magistrates were not always available full or limited powers of a Magistrate were conferred upon District and Assistant District Officers.

12. It is early to draw conclusions but it appears that so far as the High Court and Magistrates' Courts are concerned the new judicial system has not yet had any very marked effect. The countryman has hardly grasped the significance of the change and few persons outside the old Supreme Court areas have availed themselves of the services of counsel, which they were denied in the Provincial Courts. The machinery has been working smoothly though there have been some delays, and the principle is being observed as far as possible that cases should be heard at or near to the place where the parties and witnesses reside. The fundamental difference between the new Native Courts and the old is that under the new Ordinance a channel of appeal is provided, either direct or through a Native Court of Appeal to the Magistrate and the High Court or to the District Officer, Resident and Governor. The power to review cases still remains with the District Officer and Resident, and except in the more advanced areas litigants have seldom availed themselves of their new right of appeal; and it will be some time before appeal becomes the normal mode of redress.

13. The scheme of reorganisation has resulted in the disappearance of the old Native Courts having jurisdiction over large artificial areas and the establishment of many more Clan and Village Courts but with very small powers; in the Eastern Provinces few of the new courts are above the lowest grade. Where Native Courts have been reorganised or new Courts created in the West or East the representation has been made wider than heretofore according to custom and to the wishes of the people. Criticisms of the unwieldiness of massed benches in the Eastern Provinces there have been, and it is not denied that they have their disadvantages, but modifications will come, and have already come about in some areas, and it is better for the people to work out under guidance their own salvation in this matter. Complete success is not claimed, and corruption has not been entirely eradicated, but there is no question that it has decreased and that the new and more representative system has provided a higher standard of justice generally and created far greater confidence.

14. In spite of the large increase in the number of the Native Courts the number of cases has fallen from 192,991 to 187,455, due partly to economic causes and partly to the greater encouragement given to settlement of minor disputes by arbitration in the villages.

NATIVE TREASURIES

15. Owing to the marked improvement in produce prices at the end of the year and its reflection on the payment of tax the financial position of the Native Administrations at the end of March, 1935, was generally far better than was expected. At the time of writing all the returns have not been received but it appears that nearly all Native Administrations will show a surplus above that of the revised estimate.

16. There are six fully organised Native Administrations, Benin, Egba, Ibadan, Ilesha, Ijebu and Oyo taking sixty per cent* of the direct tax, the classification depending on the degree of control over its finances and the measure of responsibility for public services assumed by a Native Administration. The remainder are

* 55% in the case of Benin

classified as unorganised with a fifty per cent share of direct tax. As regards the third category, though the District Officer may receive and control the funds of several Native Administrations in a central District Native Treasury, yet by means of subsidiary budgets each little Native Administration has its own balance sheet and is made aware of the state of its own finances, and this system is doing much to inculcate in the people a sense of financial responsibility. But what has done and will do much more is the grant of the physical custody of their funds to a Native Administration under the close supervision of the District Officer, and already demands for this have been made. At Aboh (Warri) the Ohi has assumed control and in the Owerri Division and Abakaliki Division (Ogoja) and in Bansa (Camerouns) partial control has been accorded by means of strong rooms on the spot, a measure which has pleased the people and reacted most favourably on the collection of tax. At the same time they have a good deal to learn and too many of them still expect the Lieutenant-Governor when he visits them to conjure up schools, dispensaries, roads and bridges from nowhere. Some have been impatient and taken the matter into their own hands. One clan on its own initiative demolished the Native Court premises and arranged for a contractor to rebuild at exorbitant prices, while another bought a canoe and started a ferry service. But if such financial exuberance cannot be approved it at least shows that some of the little Native Administrations are very much alive.

17. The collection of tax would have been a matter of great difficulty everywhere after the four year slump had it not been for the rise in prices towards the end of the year. As it was, collection varied to a great extent according to the efficiency of the organisation and the genuine interest of the people in the working of their Native Administration. Some of the newly created and smaller Native Administrations did gallantly, but in most places it meant hard work for chiefs, councils and the Government and Native Administration staff. There is little to which special attention need be invited. Nominal rolls have somewhat belatedly been introduced in the Ijebu Province, and the tax system there put on a sounder basis. There was trouble in the Bende Division (Owerri) in spite of reductions in tax to low rates, and an escort of police was called for which met with some passive resistance; and in parts of the Benin Province collection proved a very arduous business.

ECONOMIC.

18. The Residents in their reports have dealt so fully with the trade depression that nothing further on the matter is called for in this summary. The people fully deserve the tributes paid to their fortitude under adverse conditions; before the rise in prices of palm products came they continued to produce at levels that were almost uneconomical. In the Warri and Ondo Provinces owing to the continuous and abnormally low price for palm oil the Sobos attempted to force a rise by a prolonged hold-up of their palm oil, and from August until early December they brought in little to the exporting firms. The rapid rise however in prices in December, erroneously attributed by the Sobos to their concerted action, caused an equally rapid resumption of trade.

19. The improvement in oil prices has quickened the demand for oil palm presses, in the demonstration of which the Native Administrations have participated, and offered facilities for their purchase. The demand for new presses has been especially keen in the Calabar and Onitsha Provinces where stocks have been

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sold out. There are now exactly 100 presses in the hands of native owners. Oil palm planting too on scientific principles has shown steady progress with increases of native planters from 382 to 766 and acres from 1,014 to 1,550.

20. There has been very satisfactory progress with the Farmers' Associations for the sale of cocoa, twenty-two new Associations having been formed in the Ibadan area alone. They have worked under simple rules and have served the useful purpose not only of getting farmers to co-operate but of securing them higher prices for their produce. Three Associations in Ondo have been reorganised and have adopted model rules for co-operative societies. In the Cameroons also reorganisation has been in full swing with a view to forming a Marketing Union as at Ibadan. Membership throughout the Southern Provinces has increased from 4,877 to 6,277 and the tonnage of cocoa sold from 1,608 tons to 2,160 tons, and the cash received from £19,113 to £34,908. Eleven Associations have deposited their surplus funds in Post Office Savings Bank accounts.

21. Opportunity may be taken here to mention that the evil of illicit distillation of spirits is still rife, particularly in the creek districts. If convictions have decreased owing to an unavoidable relaxation of the special police campaign abnormal sales of sugar indicate that there is no decrease in the vicious traffic.

EDUCATION AND MEDICAL.

22. The only fully equipped Native Administration hospital is at Ibadan and a well-managed and popular hospital it is. Several Native Administrations however as at Owerri, Okigwi, Ikot-Ekpene and Ogoja have constructed wards for Government hospitals. The Infant Welfare Centre of the Egba Native Administration maintains its high reputation and other places are following suit. In everything to do with Maternity and Infant Welfare the Native Authorities and people take a keen interest and the Baby Show is becoming a popular event.

23. In spite of the depression some development in education can be recorded by the Native Administrations. The Iaro Native Administration (Abeokuta Province) entered the field for the first time with a school at Ipokia, while the Calabar and Warri Provinces in pursuance of their five-year plans opened eight new Native Administration schools each, staffing them with the products of their Elementary Training Centres at Uyo and Warri. These centres are designed to produce teachers who will live "not as superior beings in the village but as fellow villagers distinguished from the other peasants only by the fact that they are wiser, more practical and the sort of person to whom one would go for advice on a variety of subjects. They can live on Native Administration salaries, which are necessarily small, because they have not changed their mode of life from the village pattern to the town pattern, which latter, influenced by European fashion, has become far more costly". To this end the Training Centre at Ibadan, for an example, is constructed on the plan of a large Yoruba compound shared by the students, staff and their families and in matters of dress and daily routine, ordinary Yoruba custom is followed except where some improvement on existing conditions is aimed at. At Kake (Cameroons) the pupils go to neighbouring villages each week to find out what work of social service for the community they can undertake and this wholesome practice is followed in some of the Native Administration schools.

24. The Native Administration dispensary scheme continues to give great satisfaction and there are more demands for its extension than can be met. Eleven new dispensaries (five Owerri, four Calabar, one Cameroons, one Ogoja) were opened during the year and in the Southern Provinces there are now 155 dispensaries and attendances during the year numbered 416,425. Mention may be made of an intensive campaign against yaws in the Bamenda Division (Cameroons) by means of a number of men from various villages engaged by the Native Administrations and instructed in the art of giving bismuth treatment by the Medical Officer. They are then provided with the necessary appliances and set to work. Over 6,000 persons have thus been treated and, although it is early to judge finally of results, there is no doubt that great relief has been given to many children.

25. The campaign against leprosy initiated by the Native Administrations and Missions either singly or in combination has not been relaxed. There is the original institution at Itu (Calabar Province) under Dr. Macdonald of the Church of Scotland Mission and financed largely by Government and Native Administration grants, a model of good management and a self-governing state in miniature with a population of some 1,500. Then comes its imitator and rival at Uzuakoli, managed by the Methodist Mission but entirely financed by the Native Administrations of the Owerri Province, with some 500 lepers. The latest on a large scale is at Ossimo in the Benin Province built out of the Colonial Development Fund and managed and financed by the Native Administrations of the Benin and Warri Provinces, and it already has 169 lepers. The American Baptists manage a leper settlement of about forty at Oghomoshu and there are other Native Administration settlements of about the same size at Abeokuta and Bamenda (Cameroons). The Missions also maintain leper settlements at Uburu (Ogoja) and Abeokuta, while the villages of the Edda clan of Afikpo Division (Ogoja) have of their own initiative established little leper settlements.

PUBLIC WORKS

26. The need for economy prevented development work except where Native Administrations had built up substantial reserves. The Egba Native Administration was able to contribute £4,000 to a £51,000 scheme for the improvement of the water and electric light services at Abeokuta, and the Ife Native Administration £4,000 towards a water supply costing £20,000 at Ife, the balances being found by Government from Loan Funds, while the Ilesha Native Administration provided £3,000 to build a Council Hall, and the Native Administration Works Department of the Calabar Province carried out a programme of Roads, Bridges, Council Houses, Courts and Dispensaries costing over £5,000. A further important work was that undertaken by the Ogoja Native Administration in linking up Ogoja with the main trunk road system, and it only remains now for the River Onwu to be bridged and a few miles of road beyond Ogoja to be constructed for a new road connexion with the Northern Provinces to be completed.

27. The demands of the people for motor roads outstrip the resources of their Native Administrations but so keen are they for improving communications that several villages have constructed roads voluntarily and one in the Ondo Province has offered to maintain their road by levying a special local rate.

CONCLUSION.

28. The year 1934 has been a difficult one, but if it was a year of little material development, administrative progress was fully maintained in spite of a depleted staff; and it is a testimony to the general soundness of the administrative system and to the spirit of the people that both system and people withstood the buffetings of fortune so well, even when they seemed to come nigh being engulfed in the trough of the depression in the middle of the year.

29. This report should not close without reference to Mr. (now Sir Walter) Buchanan-Smith, C.M.G., M.C., Lieutenant-Governor of the Southern Provinces, who left Nigeria in December, 1934, prior to relinquishing his appointment after serving since August, 1930, in the office of Lieutenant-Governor and for nearly twenty-six years in the Administrative Service of Nigeria. Assuming office in difficult times a few months after the Aba disturbances he was faced with the formidable and delicate duty of directing under the Governor the reorganisation of the whole system of native administration and native courts in the Eastern Provinces, and he set about that task with so much steadfastness of purpose and inspired his officers with so much energy and enthusiasm that by the end of 1934 he could look back upon it as well-nigh achieved. And not only in the Eastern but also in the Western Provinces he brought about a large measure of reform on similar lines. To the success of these reforms this and the last two annual reports have abundantly testified, and the people will look back on his period of office with genuine gratification. They and his officers have also accorded him a place in their affections which it falls to the lot of few to attain.

III.—PROVINCIAL REPORTS.

ABEOKUTA PROVINCE

By E. J. G. KELLY, Esq., M.C., *Resident*.

Abeokuta, although one of the smaller of the Southern Provinces of Nigeria presents marked contrasts in its two Divisions, not only in the characteristics of their peoples but in the stage of development of their Native Administrations. The Egbas are impatient for the progress of their country and, although mainly an agricultural people, have advanced far in education and many of them have achieved marked success in the professions, commerce and politics in the Capital of Nigeria and elsewhere. Egbaland with its dependent districts of Otta and Imala has as Native Authority the Alake of Abeokuta, an educated and progressive Yoruba Oba who is supported by a representative Council which includes, in addition to the holders of certain titles, twenty-one Councillors who are chosen triennially. This Native Administration is an example of the highest development of the principles of indirect rule to be found in the Southern Provinces to-day. The Ilaro Division, on the other hand, comprises twelve tiny administrative areas, each controlled by its own independent Oba supported by a council of traditional chiefs. Its people are no less intelligent but are as yet largely untouched by the influences of education and European civilisation. Their interests are those of a contented agricultural community undisturbed by the restless ambition which characterises their Egba neighbours.

2. No account of the work of the Egba Native Administration would be complete without some mention of the character of its head. A man of strong personality, the Alake is an extremely hard worker and no detail of administration is too small for his

personal attention. During his fourteen years of office he has devoted his whole time without rest or holiday to the service of his country. To him is due the development of the Egba Council to its present state in which it can safely be said to represent all sections of the Egbas. Education, farming, the marketing of the natural products of the country, the improvement of the Native Courts, sanitation, health measures, public buildings and social services, in all these his interest, initiative and energy are to be seen. Naturally such a man must have enemies but, in spite of this, he enjoys the support and confidence of the great majority of his people. It is gratifying to be able to record that His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to recognise the Alake's services by appointing him in the New Year Honours an Honorary Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

3. The Egba Council has been enlarged during the year by the appointment of three new members chosen with a view to strengthening the judicial capacity of the Council when it undertakes its new duties as a Native Court of Appeal. Two of these gentlemen are prominent members of the Nigerian Bar while the third is a merchant of high standing. All reside in Lagos.

4. Another important change in the Egba Native Administration has taken place in the launching of a scheme of decentralisation whereby the Obas of the three quarters of Oko-Ona, Gbagura and Owu will spend a portion of each year at an important centre in the districts outside Abeokuta where their people have settled. Hitherto all authority in Egbaland proper has centred in Abeokuta town to which all Egbas refer as "home" and whither it is their practice to repair for important feasts and family gatherings. Peace and the development of trade have tended towards more permanent settlement of the rural areas, the construction of better houses and a general inclination on the part of a number of Egbas to adopt a country life. The object of the scheme now inaugurated is to bring the administration into closer touch with these people and at the same time provide greater administrative scope for the three Obas and enable them to identify themselves more closely with their people. A house for the Oshile is under construction at Ifo and he has spent a considerable portion of his time in that area during the year. The Olowu and the Agura have been prevented by ill-health from visiting their respective areas but they have sent important chiefs to represent them. It is early yet to form an opinion of the success of the scheme. If it is wisely developed it should not only strengthen the position of the Obas amongst their people, a position which was tending to become obscured by the increasing control of the Council in Egba affairs, but also provide an important link between the Council and the districts of Egbaland.

5. In the Iaro Division more far-reaching changes have taken place. The Council of the Obas has remained the Native Authority in name but the part which it has played as an administrative machine has been confined to the making of certain rules and bye-laws to which its sanction is still necessary by statute. During the year the Division has been partially reorganised into twelve administrative areas each politically and financially independent of its neighbours with its own area treasury and its own subsidiary estimates. The affairs of each area are controlled by an administrative head and his council. Minor adjustments of boundaries and native authorities are necessary to complete this reorganisation and will follow intelligence reports. A report on

Ipokia has been completed. The results are already apparent in the political rest which has prevailed throughout the year. The interest which has been shown, not only by the Obas and their Councils, but by the people themselves augurs well for the ultimate success of the scheme. A marked feature has been the revival of ancient titles many of which had long been in abeyance. At Ajilete, once a centre of factional intrigue affairs have undergone a remarkable change for the better. Here increased responsibility has drawn opposing factions together the troubles of the past have been forgotten and the Council is now working in unison. The Central Treasury at Ilaro has been retained and each area contributes to the cost of this and other central organisations which are maintained for their mutual benefit.

6. In common with other parts of Nigeria Abeokuta Province has felt the increasing strain of low prices and trade depression and the year has in consequence been one of growing difficulty. In spite of this, the revenue of the Native Administrations has been maintained at a fairly satisfactory level. In the Ilaro Division it has been possible by careful control of expenditure not only to consolidate the financial position but to restore the cut in salaries which was imposed in 1933. The Egba Native Administration, however, was faced with greater difficulties as its commitments are heavier and the fall in revenue is more marked. The upward trend of prices which became apparent in the last weeks of the year has now considerably brightened the outlook and there is every hope of bringing the financial year to a successful close. The efforts of the people to fulfil their financial obligations to the Administrations are beyond praise. The collection of tax has progressed smoothly and though the burden has undoubtedly been more difficult to bear the results are satisfactory.

7. With the introduction of the new Native Courts Ordinance, the Native Court of Ilaro Division was abolished and appeals from decisions of the Native Courts now lie to the Administrative Officers. No such appeals were heard during the year as the people still prefer the old system to which they are accustomed and continue to apply to the District Officer for review rather than incur the expense of a formal appeal. In the Egba Division appeals lie to the Ake Grade "A" Court and thence to the Egba Judicial Council and the High Court. The system is not yet in full operation as the Judicial Council has not received its warrant. The Ilashe Native Court, formally a branch of the Okeodan Native Court, was established as a separate Court in April and has since justified its existence.

8. Close supervision of the work of the Native Courts continues. No prisoner is committed to prison until he and his case have been seen by an Administrative Officer and lists of all criminal cases are submitted to the Resident monthly for scrutiny. In the Ilaro Division applications for review continue to decrease. All reviews are dealt with at the Court in which the case was tried, and experience has shown that it is seldom necessary to alter the judgments. In the Egba Division in addition to reviews by travelling officers complaints are also heard at the monthly meeting of Court Presidents at Abeokuta and the District Officer sits weekly in the Ake Native Court to review cases. Here the majority of the complaints concern the execution of judgments rather than the actual judgments themselves and arise from the efforts of judgment debtors to postpone the fulfilment of their obligations. It can be said with confidence that the standard of justice in the Native Courts is as high as that attained elsewhere in the Southern

Provinces. The age-old Yoruba custom of the hopeful giving of a present dies hard and it cannot be claimed to have entirely disappeared but, when it is considered that the channels for the ventilation of grievances are so numerous, so easy and so well known and that the individual is never slow to take advantage of them, there seems to be but little room for real corruption.

9. The low price of palm oil which prevailed up to December resulted in the virtual cessation of the export of this product which once formed the main source of wealth of the Province, the total for the year being less than one-tenth of the quantity exported in a normal year. In these circumstances it has been difficult to interest farmers in oil plantations and improved methods of extraction. There is still only one good plantation in the Province and that belongs to the Alake. In spite of this, propaganda has continued. During the year improved seed has been laid down in nurseries at the Egba Native Administration Farm Centre. A party of Egbas visited the United Africa Company's plantations at Ndiom at the invitation of the Company and issued a report on their visit. A pamphlet on palm planting printed in the vernacular and English was issued to farmers and demonstrations of palm presses have been made. As a result some farmers have applied to make plantations next planting season. The rise in prices in December has revived interest to some extent.

10. The bulk of the kola consumed in Nigeria is produced in the Abeokuta Province and the adjoining area in the Colony round Agege. The crop has been good but prices have been low. At the instigation of the Alake the farmers concerned have combined with some success in an effort to raise prices to an economic level. A rise in the price of cotton has stimulated interest in this crop in the Meko area. Increased areas have been planted and at the end of the year, the cotton was growing well and was found to be remarkably free from disease. Food crops have been exceptionally good and food is plentiful and cheap. Exports from both Divisions to Lagos have served substantially to augment the farmers' depleted incomes.

11. Progress in the co-operative sale of cocoa has been slow. In all, some eighty-five tons were sold co-operatively. A new departure was made at Iruagha where on the advice of the Superintendent of Agriculture the farmers collected and sold co-operatively five and a half tons of palm oil and four and a half tons of kernels. These farmers are prepared to make further sales and the Owode farmers are about to follow their example. This is the first occasion on which oil-palm products have been sold co-operatively.

12. The Egba Native Administration Farm Centre has now been working for a year. The scheme is yet too young for the value of crop rotations to have been demonstrated. Plantations of oil-palms, kola and cocoa have been made and are progressing.

13. The reorganisation of the Egba Forestry Department has been undertaken under the direction of an Assistant Conservator of Forests lent for the purpose. The problem of the preservation of the remnants of the Egba Forests is acute. The Alake and some of the more advanced members of his Council are alive to the urgency of the problem but little support is forthcoming from the majority of the chiefs of Egbaland and in the circumstances the Council are not unnaturally reluctant to press an unpopular measure. Now Forestry rules have been formulated and are under consideration by the Council and certain proposals for the formation of reserves have been put forward.

14. The Native Administrations have co-operated actively in health and sanitary measures and, with the help and advice of the Medical Officer of Health, much good work has been done. The Egba Native Administration has its own staff of Sanitary Inspectors. House to house inspections and inspection of animals and meat are carried out. Slaughter slabs are provided in Abeokuta town and places set aside for slaughter in many of the larger villages. A conservancy scheme has been inaugurated.

15. The Egba Native Administration has a leper settlement at Abeokuta. The lepers whose numbers vary from thirty-five to forty receive regular treatment from the Medical Officer. A new block of buildings was added during the year. The Native Administration also contributes to the cost of a leper camp maintained by the Roman Catholic Mission.

16. The social services provided by the Native Administrations include eight permanent dispensaries and two infant welfare centres. A temporary dispensary was opened at Ipokia during the year as an experiment. The attendances at the dispensaries which totalled 68,766 give ample proof of the value of these institutions. The progress of the Abeokuta Infant Welfare Centre under the energetic control of Miss Jane McCotter, M.B.E., has surpassed that of previous years. The total attendances during 1934 reached 15,418 an increase of 31,893. There is a growing demand for the services of the Centre's maternity nurses and requests for their help have been received from women who have not attended the Centre. This is an important advance as it shows that the women are beginning to realise the value of trained assistance. The Ibaro Centre has also a good record with a total of 27,018 attendances.

17. The first Native Administration School in the Province was opened at Ipokia in May when twenty scholars were admitted. The school building is an example of what a school should be and the equipment is excellent. A feature of the school is the parents' club formed to ensure the interest of the parents in the education of their children. Each parent contributes a sum of five shillings which is deposited with the Native Administration. Should a child be removed without due cause the club forfeits its deposit and a fresh contribution is called for. The results have been remarkably successful. The School, with its alert and cheerful pupils and its enthusiastic teacher stimulated by the support and encouragement of the parents, has already aroused the interest of neighbouring Administrative Areas and it is hoped, will inspire them to similar effort.

18. The Egba Native Administration provides scholarships at King's College, Lagos, and Abeokuta Grammar School and also contributes annually to the Abeokuta School Exhibition. This exhibition which is organised entirely by Africans covers the whole range of school activities and does much to stimulate competition in the many schools in Abeokuta. The proposal to make a grant to the Blaize Memorial Institute for the equipping of a Manual Training Centre has not met with the approval of the local school managers and is being reconsidered. The Alake has opened a small school in the Afin for the education of the children of his dependents. All expenses are borne by him and no fees are charged. The school is well run and is yet another example of the real practical interest in education taken by the Alake.

19. At Ilaro a site for a modern town consisting of a market, motor park and building plots has been laid out near the Railway Station by the Native Authority. Some progress has been made in the improvement of the lay-out of a number of markets throughout the Province.

20. Work on a combined scheme for the improvement of water and electric light services in Abeokuta was begun. This undertaking was made possible by a grant from Government to the Native Administration of £30,000 and a loan of £21,000. The work has progressed rapidly and will be completed early in 1936.

21. The Province is well served by roads and two new sections in the Egba Division, Ota-Ajeganle and Sium-Dogo a total of twenty-three miles were opened to traffic in November.

22. The Native Administration police and prisons have been efficiently maintained during the year. In the Egba Native Administration Prison bad characters are segregated in a special enclosure. Additional facilities for training prisoners have been added and a Warder-carpenter engaged.

23. In spite of bad times the lighter side of life has not been neglected. Festivals are well attended and on these occasions old and young alike are smartly dressed. The Centenary Hall in Abeokuta is in fair demand for dances and other social gatherings. Here and elsewhere the Police Band discourses very creditable music. The educated youth of Egbaland is taking an increasing interest in sport, and football matches and athletic meetings are popular and keenly contested. The Native Administration Library housed in the Centenary Hall is managed by a committee with the advice of the Superintendent of Education. A literary and social circle formed in connexion with the Library provides a focus for social activities.

BENIN PROVINCE.

By A. R. A. DICKINS, Esquire, *Acting Resident.*

Trade depression has continued, bringing with it a smaller income for the individual and for the Native Administration. The development of social services and the advance of material progress were checked when the slump began, and the Native Administrations' revenues continue to be too small for much beyond the bare maintenance of the services which were begun in what already we look back on as the good old days.

2. Progress is not, however, altogether at a stand still, and among the people there is no real hardship. The earth still yields her fruits abundantly and—*o fortunatos numquam sua si bona norint*—most of the people are farmers. The luxuries which they used to buy from the European firms they must partly go without, but their farms and forests still supply them with necessities and, bad as the market is, the firms still pay enough for produce to leave the producers with money for those things—cigarettes, European clothes, alcohol—which a prosperous decade or two taught them to regard as essential.

3. The Oba of Benin, the Native Authority for the Benin Division, who succeeded his father in 1933, is an educated and enlightened Chief. Progress, as the Americans would say, is his second name. He is the centre of the Benin Native Administration. He is assisted by a Council of six Chiefs and the Native Treasurer, Chief Ogwa. Benin City the Oba administers through ten ward

heads and the 4,100 odd square miles of the Benin Division through nine District Heads. The latter are not free from control: the Oba takes a close interest in their work.

4. Towards the end of 1934 the Oba began a round of visits to the districts, holding 'Durbars'. So far five districts have been visited. The Resident and the District Officer have been present at each of these functions. Proceedings are opened by a speech by the Oba explaining at some length the reasons for tax collection and treating with all matters of local interest. He then invites communities and individuals alike to air their grievances. Those who have such burdens unload them readily and each receives a personal reply from the Oba. The meetings have in every case been a great success and the large crowds attending them have been orderly and well conducted, a clear indication of the loyalty and the deep respect which the people feel for their Oba. On each occasion the Oba has spent two nights in the locality and the enthusiasm of the whole population over a period of forty-eight hours' continuous dancing again shows his well deserved popularity.

5. To turn to material progress. The Benin Native Administration, with a grant of £20,000 from Loan Funds, has almost completed work on a new and potable water supply.

6. Great strides have been made during the year in the leper settlement at Osiomo. The settlement is maintained by contributions from the Native Administrations of the Benin and Warri Provinces. Admission to the settlement is confined to able-bodied lepers, and the numbers from the area of each contributing Native Administration are limited to quotas which are based on the contributions divided by £6, which is the estimated annual cost of maintaining one leper. In January there were only one block of permanent buildings and two temporary lines to house the ninety-six inmates. There are now nine permanent blocks, each capable of housing thirty-two lepers, while the temporary hutments have been demolished. Of the 169 lepers now in residence twenty-three are women, who are housed in a permanent block some distance apart from the men. The £6 annual cost per head provides subsistence at the rate of 2d. per day, two suits of clothing, blankets and the cost of the drugs. A large communal farm is now bearing, and it is anticipated that this, with the individual farms now in preparation, will reduce the cost of food by a considerable amount. Permanent incinerators, salgas and roads have been constructed, and the general lay-out of the settlement has been much improved. Most of this work was effected by Mr. J. W. Davies Sanitary Superintendent, whose enthusiasm and tireless endeavour have been instrumental in bringing the settlement to its present standard. In August Dr. A. C. Howard was seconded to the settlement; in November he was transferred to Kano and was relieved by Dr. L. Lengauer, a lady medical practitioner, who brought two other European ladies to assist her. Dr. Lengauer has been engaged by the Native Administrations and is being paid from their contributions. As far as is possible the settlement is run by leper labour. Leper nurses, male and female, are employed in the hospital, and leper carpenters and bricklayers are used in the construction of the buildings. The clean staff consists of a dispensary attendant, a tailor, and ten labourers.

7. This development has been made possible by a grant of £6,000 from the Colonial Development Fund. There is still a balance left, part of which is ear-marked for building a ward for clean and leper babies. This ward had been designed at the end of the year and work on the building will begin shortly.

8. One of the chief sources of wealth in the southern half of the province is the oil palm. The Native Administrations have established a scheme whereby palm oil presses, capable of producing twenty-five per cent more oil from the nuts than the native method, can be bought from the Native Administration on the hire purchase system. This combined with the unexpectedly good results of the campaign, fostered by the Agricultural Department and encouraged by the Native Administrations, for scientific planting of palm plantations, should lead to a valuable increase in the people's wealth.

9. Not on public works, health and agriculture alone is the energy of the Benin Native Administration expended. A scheme was worked out, to come into operation next year, for the whole work of the conservation of the forests in the Division to be taken over by the Native Administration from the Government Forestry Department.

10. One of the main difficulties of the forest industry has resulted from the system of exploitation by Africans. A contractor would take out permits to fell so many trees. He would engage labourers but pay them only a subsistence allowance while the work of extraction was being done. When the timber was sold, then the labourers would receive their wages. It often happened that for one reason or another the timber could not be sold. The labourers then went unpaid. The Oba of Benin to cure this evil now refuses to issue permits until there has been deposited by the contractor a sum sufficient to pay the labourers. If they are not paid, the deposit is distrained upon.

11. The Asaba Division contains two Native Administrations, Ogwashi-Uku and Aghor. In the Ogwashi-Uku District there are several native authorities joined together for the purpose of forming the Ogwashi-Uku Native Administration. In 1927 a District Council was formed. It consisted of five District Heads (appointed for convenience when taxation was first introduced) and the Presidents of the Native Courts. It was dissolved in 1932 owing to complaints that it was not truly representative. In 1934 village and clan heads began asking for its revival on more representative lines and in December a meeting of all the village heads was called to discuss the question. The meeting was a great success and itself became the new revised Council, which will meet quarterly to discuss all matters affecting the District.

12. The Ogwashi-Uku Native Administration lost two of its leaders during the year. The Asagba, the Village Head of Asaba, died at a great age in January. According to native records he was 120 years old. No successor has been appointed and there has been a good deal of heart-burning about who the successor shall be. Ezenweani, the Obi of Ogwashi-Uku, died in July, and is succeeded by his son, an educated man with progressive ideas. The Obi's death followed soon after one of his wives had obtained a divorce and refunded her bride-price to him—an unheard-of thing for an Obi's wife to do. The town oracle ascribed the Obi's death and the death of several other leading men of Ogwashi-Uku to this violation of custom. The people clamoured for the banishment of the wife and her alleged lover and the town was in an uproar. The police had to be called in as a precaution while an inquiry was held, and pending a decision the town is keeping quiet.

13. The Aghor Native Administration covers an area occupied by a group of clans of Ika-Ibo stock, which in their common language and their common social organisation form a corporate whole. Public opinion is voiced through the clan

councils to the District Council, a non-judicial deliberative body composed of all the clan heads. The traditional relationship and interdependence of the clans is fostered by their meetings in the District Council and there is slowly being evolved an Ika Confederation. Each clan head is accompanied to the Council by a body of elders who take an active part in the discussions. The meetings are open to the public and the people show an intense interest in the subjects of deliberation.

14. It is a pleasure to see the enthusiasm of the clans in the Agbor District for the reorganisation of their administration along traditional lines. Three clans have, with His Excellency's approval, been reorganised in this way, and the rest are all clamouring for it.

15. In the Ishan Division too the old order is giving place to a new. The Division used to be divided into Court areas, each governed by a District Head appointed by the Government. The District Heads together in the Ishan Council formed the Native Authority for the division. Although the District Heads were all men of importance by right of native custom as well as by Government decree, they were often put over other clans besides their own and given powers more autocratic than native custom allowed.

16. The Ishan Council has been abolished and there are now separate native authorities for the different clans, which are composed of the village and clan councils (in some parts where the real native authority has not been discovered, the Court has been appointed native authority for the time being). Although the working of the councils has proceeded smoothly enough, the elders who form them have not shown enough interest and have been content to send representatives to the meetings instead of going themselves. The councils, deprived of the wisdom of the old men, are thus in danger of coming under the influence of young men playing for their own hands.

17. The Kukuruku Division is a medley of tongues and peoples. The Binis came in from the south, the Yorubas from the west and various other tribes by way of the Niger on the east. Over these colonies flowed the tide of the Nupe invasions, leaving as it receded, like pools among the rocks, several Nupe settlements.

18. Until investigations on which to base a real native organisation are complete, the division is administered as seven districts arranged more or less irrespective of racial affinities. The District Heads meet in the Kukuruku District Council and show considerable interest in financial and administrative matters. As the Council is not truly representative, however, the people do not in fact have much say in the disposal of the Native Administration revenue.

19. The Okpe District has been without a head since 1931, and the Ineme District since June when the District Head died. The other districts have been quietly and efficiently administered by the District Heads.

20. The Ukpilla District was disturbed by an escaped convict named Doda. The son of a notorious poison-maker, he gathered a following consisting largely of his relatives and established himself in the hill tops. He was at last traced to the village of Opepwe, and there a force of police arrested him after a fight in which one constable was killed with a poisoned bullet and another was injured. An encouraging feature of the incident was

the way in which the village people behaved, tracking down the criminals and guiding the police to their lair. Doda died in Benin prison before his trial. His brother, who fired the fatal shot at the constable, was hanged.

21. Partly as a result of this incident, the Kukuruku District Council, the Native Authority for the Division, made a rule forbidding the use of poisoned weapons.

22. All the Native Administrations in the province maintain dispensaries which are visited by the Medical Officers at least once a month. There are twenty of these dispensaries in the province. Nearly all show an increase both in the number of new patients and of total attendances.

Native Courts

23. The Native Courts are as popular as ever and if there have been fewer cases this year than before it is not a reflection on the quality of the justice meted out but because money is too scarce to gamble with. The new Native Courts Ordinance provides avenues of appeal and the people are gradually getting to know their rights. Mostly dissatisfied parties still ask the District Officer to review the judgment of the court, but appeals will grow more common as time goes on. It is noticeable that where the courts have been established on a broad basis the requests for review are scarcer than where they are still after the pattern of the old-time courts. In the Agbor district in only three per cent of the cases has there been a request for review. The Ogwashi-Uku district, on the other hand, shows the highest percentage of reviews, namely twenty per cent, and in twelve per cent of the cases the judgment has required amendment.

24. The supervision of the courts occupies more of the District Officer's time than any other single function of his. Nowhere are the court records examined less often than once a month, and officers are constantly visiting the courts and advising and assisting the members.

25. The people never hesitate to complain if they do not think they are getting a fair deal and there is no doubt that they get it in the courts in eleven cases out of every dozen. In the twelfth case they go to the District Officer and get justice from him.

Native Treasuries

26. As a result, presumably, of the strong measures taken in 1933 tax collection in the Agbor District is complete but collection elsewhere has been slow and extremely difficult especially in the Ogwashi-Uku District of the Asaba Division.

27. The native treasuries are all in a sound financial position and no more cuts have had to be made in salaries. With balances including reserves estimated to amount at the end of the current financial year to between forty-two and forty-three thousand pounds, they can look to the future with confidence.

CALABAR PROVINCE.

By G. G. SHUTE, Esquire, *Resident*.

The catastrophic fall in produce prices which marked the year 1933 continued for the first seven months of 1934. The period of most acute depression at Calabar was from March to July when a new low record was reached of £3 a ton for first-grade oil and £2 10s. for kernels. This meant that the small oil-producer

might receive in his local markets from 6d. to 9d. in cash or its equivalent for a four gallon tin of oil, which once sold for as much as 7s. It seemed that the time had come at last when the price offered no longer made it worth the native's while to produce and market his oil, and that the people would have to look elsewhere for their livelihood. To the unspeakable relief of us all prices took an upward turn in August and have continued steadily rising ever since. At the end of the year oil stood at about £8 and kernels at about £5 a ton, and there was every indication that the rise would be sustained. The full effect of this providential increase could not, of course, be felt immediately and in reviewing the year 1934 one looks back on a time of unexampled depression which crippled progress and development of every kind and world within a measurable time have jeopardised the whole system of administration. In the following review the dominant factor throughout is the cumulative effect on the people of a four years' slump.

2. From the point of view of Native Administration the story of the year is one of the consolidation and development of the approved system of government by Council. The unit throughout the Province is almost everywhere the Clan, though the Efiks of Calabar (50,000) and the Ogonis (50,000) and Andonis (15,000) of Opobo Division are so large and so distinct from their neighbours as to merit the title of Tribes. These tribes and the great majority of the clans of the large Ibibio (410,000), Anang (290,000), Ibo and other miscellaneous tribes inhabiting the Province have been given their own local system of Government; their Councils have been, or will soon be, constituted Native Authorities; their Courts have been remodelled on wider and more representative lines; and their funds are administered and accounted for in separate budgets. The administration of the Efik, Ogoni, Andoni, Ibo and Ibibio peoples is now almost entirely reorganised in this way, two or three of the twenty-two Ibibio Clans, have yet to receive recognition, and meanwhile are working on identical lines. Progress among the Anang Clans, and the miscellaneous Clans of the Aro District, has been slower, but special attention is being given to them and it will not be long before they too follow their neighbours' lead.

3. The Clan Councils, then, are the new Native Authorities, on whom the whole future of Native Administration depends. They are representative of every section of the community, including as most of them do a member or members of every extended family. There is room on them both for the venerable and illiterate elders traditionally entitled to membership and also for the younger "men of sense", many of whom are educated Christians, selected by the people to represent them. The Councils are new to their work; they have small financial sense but large ideas and no little enthusiasm. The work of Administrative Officers during the year has been to train them to manage their own affairs and to assume the responsibilities of their office. In this work the crippling effect of the slump has been manifest. The schemes of development put forward by the Councils could seldom be undertaken for lack of money: they ask for roads, bridges, schools, dispensaries, Council Houses and the like, and are told they can't have them: the salaries of their Staff and their own modest perquisites have been pruned and pared down to the minimum: they are asked to undertake responsibility and find it means accepting the odium associated with the collection of tax from the impoverished people, who see, in these hard times, little immediate return for it—at least in the smaller and remoter areas.

4. It might be thought from the foregoing remarks that Native Administration had become discredited in the eyes of the people, but this is far from the truth. The Councils are so fully representative of the people that everybody understands that their hardships and troubles arise through no fault of their leaders. The new Native Authorities have carried on nobly and in some cases have shown a sense of public spirit of the highest order. The Aro Clan Council, for example, fired by the example of its President, the Clan Head, has voluntarily sacrificed a large part of its salary for the common good, and this is no isolated instance. The collection of tax is always distasteful, but many instances could be quoted of Clan Councils, proud of their new position and, as I believe, grateful for it, making determined and successful efforts to produce their full Clan tax quota on, or even before, the appointed date. Out of evil comes good, and the slump has at least quickened the financial sense of the Councils. In these days every penny counts, as they are beginning to learn, and the more enlightened are even now asking for their own separate Treasuries, and the custody of their own funds, at present in the physical charge of the District Officers. Steps are being taken to give effect to their wishes subject to the necessary safeguards.

5. Among the individual Clan Councils mention may be made of the Calabar Council, formed in 1932 after much patient negotiation with the rival interests of the Efik Houses and their neighbours, for the Efik, Kwa and Efut peoples in and around Old Calabar. The Council meets frequently and, finding itself an unwieldy body, has formed its own Executive Committee to which questions of importance are referred for investigation and discussion before the Council decides on them. The Council is a new creation: it has no traditional authority except in so far as its leading members are the traditional heads of their respective Houses and executive duties such as tax and water rate collection, or municipal administration, are at present beyond it. But it is making headway, and its earnest endeavour to organise the House Councils and develop their authority is a notable feature of their year's work. The effect of the slump in this area, where evasion is most easy and authority most nebulous, has been to render tax collection the slowest and most worrying business in the whole Province.

6. Other Councils deserving of remark are the Ibibio Clan Councils of the Itu District, independent and assertive to the point of truculence, vainly seeking relief from economic hardship by the formation of mushroom "self-help" societies, intolerant of advice, and churlish in manner, the Ibibio Clan Councils of the Opobo Division, insistent in their demands for a joint treasury of their own, though far from unanimous in other matters; the young Ogoni and Andoni Councils, primitive but possessed of authority; the Anang Councils of the Abak and Opobo Districts, still dominated by the personalities of surviving "Warrant Chiefs", each with his axe to grind; the Opobos themselves, the wealthiest and most enterprising of all, as yet unreorganised, and clinging to their old undemocratic methods; and finally the great bulk of the Councils of the Uyo, Ikot Ekpe and Eket Divisions, quietly carrying on, relying for incentive and support on their District Officers, but ready and ripe for development when times improve.

7. The reorganised Native Courts have worked very well during the year. They differ from the old Courts in that their powers are much smaller and the number of Sitting Members much larger. Add to this the fact that the judicial reforms which came

into effect on the 1st April, 1934, have conferred the right of appeal from all Native Court judgments except those concerned with civil cases involving native law and custom pure and simple, and it will be seen that opportunities for injustice or oppression have been enormously reduced. The people are vocal and the District Officers and the Resident have their hands full in reviewing those classes of civil cases in which no appeal lies. It is the general opinion of the Clan Councils and the people whom I have been able to consult that the standard of justice under the new Native Court system is much higher than it was under the old.

8. The effect of the slump has been to reduce Native Court Revenue by twenty per cent as compared with 1933. The average litigant finds it difficult to pay fees at the old scale and a fine of 5s. to-day is a more severe punishment than a fine of £1 a few years ago. The scale of fees has been reduced in many Courts to meet the situation but even so the total number of Civil Cases has declined by thirteen per cent, though Criminal Cases have increased by seven per cent—a significant fact, and one closely associated with tax collection. It is clear that lack of money has driven the people to submit more and more of their civil disputes to the arbitration of the Family and Village Councils. Meanwhile Court Revenue is inadequate to cover Court Expenditure. Staff salaries have had to be cut and though there are more Court members there is less money available for their Sitting Fees. It is too much to expect that young and vigorous men capable of active work will sit long hours hearing cases for a pittance. An extreme instance may be quoted from a Report written by the District Officer, Aro:—"The Ukwas accepted the fact (with a despair stricken dumb) that their sitting fees during a certain month could be only six-pence". The trade recovery has probably come just in time to avert either a wave of graft or wholesale resignations from Court Membership. With a return of prosperity the new Native Court system will come into its own.

9. The Native Administrations of the Calabar Province have three institutions peculiarly their own:—a Works Department at Uyo managed by a seconded Inspector of Works; an Elementary Training Centre at Uyo, managed by an Education Officer but mainly financed from Native Administration Funds; and a chain of Native Administration Dispensaries managed by their own African dispensers supervised by the Medical and District Officers. Great progress has been made during the year, but in each case the slump has played its part. The Works Department has carried out a programme of major works, costing over £5,000, to the delight of the people, including Roads, Bridges, Dispensaries, Council Houses and so on. But there is little money available for 1935-36 and provision can only be made to retain the Inspector for the first six months of the coming year. In the field of Education no fewer than eight new Native Administration Schools were opened, each with an infant class of twenty-five children, in pursuance of a five year Provincial plan. The Staff is supplied from the Training Centre, where thirty-eight youths are undergoing their three-year course. The Schools are doing splendidly, but the slump has made it hard for parents to pay the modest fees and attendances have suffered in consequence. Finally the Native Administration Dispensaries, particularly those in the Eket and Opobo Divisions, are fulfilling their object. Four new ones were opened during the year and several others are nearing completion. The slump has made it difficult for the people to pay the fees of 2d. or 3d. charged

for medicine and attendances have suffered from this cause, especially in the Itu and Aro Districts. It appears that it may be necessary to reduce or abolish fees in the poorer areas until the people can easily afford to pay them.

10. In view of the slump the progress made in the extension of oil palm plantations is satisfactory. A further area of sixty-five acres was added, and at the end of the year there were 123 native-owned palm plots totalling 196 acres. Thirteen Duchscher Presses and fifteen Culley Presses are in use in the Province. With better produce prices progress should be rapid, at least in the Opobo and Uyo Divisions.

11. The key-note of this review has been financial depression. It is therefore the more satisfactory to record that by dint of strenuous economies the Native Treasuries (with the possible exception of the Aro Divisional Treasury) are in a sound financial position thanks to a conservative policy in the past: that the tax-rate has remained unchanged throughout the year, and that with a few minor exceptions the estimate of tax revenue will be realised within the financial year; and finally, that the people of the Calabar Province as a whole have shown cheerfulness and courage in the face of economic disaster.

CAMEROONS PROVINCE.

By G. H. FINDLAY, ESQUIRE, *Senior Resident*.

There have been no changes or developments during the year to disturb the even tenour of the lives of the people.

2. The low prices of cocoa and palm kernels, with which the majority of the inhabitants of the Province are mostly concerned, continued to make money scarce, but the peasantry and farmers are in much the same position as they were last year, and the year before. There is sufficient food and the cost of living to labourers and those who have to buy food varies between 3d. in Victoria and 1d. in Mamfe. There is no destitution and the output from schools of youths dependent for a livelihood on clerical occupations is not yet sufficiently large to create an unemployment problem.

3. The people on the whole have been contented and prosperous according to their own simple standards of living. Even though the sale of their produce may not be remunerative there is always an extensive internal trade between the forest people of the southern areas and the grasslanders of the north. The amount of palm oil manufactured by the farmer for export is negligible in comparison with the total amount of palm fruit available in the forest areas of the Province. The Mamfe and Kumba people supply the grasslanders of Bamenda with their edible oil and the Bamendas bring down potatoes, corn and livestock.

4. A feature of the Province is the growing organisation of cocoa cultivation, preparation and marketing in the Kumba and Mamfe Divisions, where societies of village farmers are co-operating to produce a good grade of dried cocoa to be marketed by their union. As a result they have been receiving prices which have improved from £9 to £15 a ton. This movement which has been slow in starting, has developed considerably during the year and is beginning to make its influence felt not only because of its obvious financial benefits but also by means of the growth of the co-operative idea, which by increasing intercourse between village and village, tribe and tribe, in this thinly populated country, is having far reaching social and political effects.

5. Another feature of the Province, though not a new one, is the number of native strangers residing temporarily or permanently in districts where a livelihood is to be gained by trade or labour. Apart from 12,400 labourers on the thirty plantations and timber concessions in the Province, there is a large population of settlers. In Kumba Division, there are 4,600 adult male strangers residing on the land in settlements or farms of their own. Many of these, of course, are casual and drifting labourers, but many also have brought their families and have settled permanently.

6. A census taken in 1933 showed that 1,000 were farmers, 600 traders and 170 cocoa farmers with their own small plantations, and that 500 were cocoa traders.

7. The census showed also that approximately 1,150 had come from other districts in the Cameroons under British Mandate, 400 from Nigeria, and that about 3,000 were migrants from French Cameroons.

8. The stranger settlers are law abiding for the most part and amenable to local authority, although prone to elope with the wives of villagers, but it is necessary that their position should be regularised and controlled. An effort has therefore been made during the year to begin a system of registration of strangers by the village councils concerned. This progresses satisfactorily, but the proposal approved by Government that the boundaries of all the farms of which strangers are in permanent possession should be demarcated, has been found impracticable and it is doubtful whether it could be carried into effect for some time to come even though the staff and funds were available.

9. The work of the reorganisation of the Native Authorities, where this is found to be necessary, has been continued during the year, and in fact, has been the main objective of the administration of the Province in order to make the Native Authority a practical and workable entity based upon the will of the people and the sanction of native custom; allowing room at the same time for growth and expansion under modern conditions. The spade work in regard to intelligence was done ten years ago when the present forty-seven Native Authority areas were identified and created. During the last three years further intelligence work has been undertaken and some twenty intelligence reports have been written, each taking several weeks of concentrated effort by an Administrative Officer. The results have not led to drastic changes on the whole, but to a regrouping of clans or villages in some cases and in others the replacement of a single District Head, whose authority, perhaps, was derived more from Government than from the people, by a representative council. Everywhere the tendency has been towards forms of Government which accord with native custom.

10. Up to the end of 1934 the reorganisation of two areas had received the Governor's final approval, and as a result of the year's work seven are approaching finality.

11. During 1934 much ground has been covered and the work done has stimulated local interest to a very marked degree. Two years ago the Lieutenant-Governor (Sir Walter Buchanan-Smith) observed that the annual report was "tinged with pessimism in the face of the formidable task of a fresh reorganisation". There would seem now to be little need for pessimism. The interest of the chiefs and people in their local government is remarkable. They are grasping the idea of native administration and their interest in it is shown by the fact that they collected and paid their taxes without help and with little need of persuasion.

VICTORIA DIVISION

12. More than half of the available area of good land is in the hands of the plantation companies and the consequent control of a great portion of it by unofficial Europeans, in most cases of German nationality, the existence of a large body of hired labourers, chiefly strangers to the Division, and the resulting influx of strangers, has led to the development of a Native Administration which is in contrast to that found elsewhere in the Province.

13. The Victoria Native Authority area consists of seven groups of people, some indigenous, some strangers and the Native Authority for this area, Chief Manga Williams, a descendant of the Head chiefs of his own tribe, is also President of the Native Court. His co-ordination of activities as District Head with the interest of the native population and the plantations has been successfully continued during the year.

14. Buea Native Authority area contains villages of the Bakweri clan, under Chief Endely III, a son of a Chief appointed District Head in German times. During the year intelligence work on this clan has resulted in proposals which will increase the number of native courts in the clan area and will leave Chief Endely as constitutional Head of the clan. The Bakweris at the time of writing have opened their own Treasury at Buea.

15. Balong Native Authority area contains the Balong clan and stranger settlements under a District Head. Intelligence work on this clan also has been carried out during 1934 which will make the District Head a Clan Head in council and his position more constitutional than heretofore.

16. *Native Courts*—The four Courts in the Victoria Division, and one Native Court of appeal have worked satisfactorily. Easy communication by motor road allows for adequate and regular supervision. Membership of the courts is still limited to nominated individuals, but the proposals for reorganisation give adequate representation for all villages and also for stranger settlements. The appeal court, of which Chief Manga Williams is President and Chiefs Endely and Fritz Mukete are members, is an institution peculiar to this Province. It is popular, however, and there is no desire on the part of the chiefs and people to abandon it.

17. There were 482 criminal and 1,220 civil cases heard during the year as compared with 567 and 1,630 in 1933. The Native Court of appeal heard forty-two cases.

18. *Native Treasury*—There is one Divisional Native Treasury, at Victoria. The three Native Authorities, however, work to their own estimates of revenue and expenditure. Chief Manga Williams, and the other two District Heads are literate and fully cognisant of the financial position.

19. The tax rate is calculated at 8s for each adult male. Village Heads collect the amount due for their village and pay to their District Head who pays to the Native Treasury or direct to the Bank. The District Head himself visits outlying villages to receive the village tax.

20. During the year the nominal rolls of tax payers in each village have been revised before the time of tax collection. In this Division, as elsewhere, tax is paid in the form of lump sum collection, the richer making up in payment for the short-comings of the poorer.

21. Taxes payable by plantation labourers are collected by the District Officer through the plantation managers.

22. The financial position of the Native Treasury is as follows:—

	Revenue	Expenditure	Balance on hand.
1932-33	£5,216	£3,893	£1,279
1933-34	£4,799	£3,713	£5,365.

23. The people of the Victoria Division are more advanced in culture and in their standard of living than elsewhere in the Province on account of proximity to the port of Victoria, and the fact that Victoria is the oldest missionary and educational centre in the Division. Moreover, the Division is adequately supplied with motor roads. English is universally spoken and the majority of the population is Christian. They dress, for the most part, in European style of clothes.

In addition to the Government and Mission Schools at Buea and Victoria there are two Native Administration Schools which supplement the educational facilities of the Division. Both are popular and well attended and both during the year have increased their standard by the addition of an Elementary Class II.

24. The work of the Medical Officer, who has his hospital at Victoria and a dispensary at Buea, is extended by two Native Administration dispensaries which treated 2,822 patients during 1934 and 1,867 in 1933.

KUMBA DIVISION.

25. The Kumba Division, which occupies 4,400 square miles and has a density of population of 15.9, presents the most formidable task of all in the Province in regard to the establishment of Native Administration. Communications are extremely difficult. The entire Division is covered with dense forest; and is very broken and it takes eight days or so to reach the more remote clans. Kumba is accessible by motor road from Victoria, and during the year the Divisional Officers have done excellent pioneer work in continuing, with Native Treasury funds, northwards towards Mamfe and Bamenda thirty-eight miles of good and well bridged motor road. A road which can be used by light cars in the dry seasons has also been maintained eastward from Kumba for thirty miles and westwards, towards the rivers which lead to Rio-del-Rey and Calabar, for twelve miles, and along these the country is being opened up by cocoa farmers and others. Elsewhere the people remain particularly primitive. There are now nineteen established clans or village groups, which seven or eight years ago were controlled by eight District Heads. Of these all except one have died or been removed for abuse of office. The native Courts of which they were the Presidents now fulfil the functions of Native Authority. One District Head, Chief Abel Mukete of Kumba, who is actual head of his own clan and nominal head of three others, remains. The work of reorganisation has been continued during the last year.

26. The Bakossi clan of 10,000 people, till 1932 was controlled by a Native Authority in the form of a District Head, who committed suicide rather than face his trial for misappropriation of tax money and Court funds. Since then the clan has split up into its component family parts and been reorganised on that basis, having now eight courts for the eight kindreds and eight Native Authority Councils. These have worked well but a reaction is setting in. The people say they lack leadership. The

chiefs, at a recent meeting attended by the Acting Lieutenant-Governor said that they "were as sheep without a shepherd." Further regrouping may be necessary to establish courts that are more practically convenient and a Native Authority more representative of the whole clan.

27. In spite of these difficulties, however, there is every where a very real interest in local government and the people themselves are beginning to take an active part in the solution of their own administrative problems.

28. *Native Courts*—The Courts have worked satisfactorily during the year. The number of cases heard, both criminal and civil, amounted to 2,711, an increase of 459 over 1933, attributable largely to the establishment of the new Bakossi Kindred courts. Also the membership of some courts has been increased to allow all villages to be represented on them and the courts are, in consequence, more popular.

29. There are seventeen Native Courts, including the eight courts of Bakossi and two Native Courts of appeal which sit at Kumba, one for the Eastern half of the Division and one for the Western. These Appeal courts, on which all clans are represented by a single member, are losing their popularity in the face of the growing tendency towards self determination. Twenty-five cases only, criminal and civil, were heard by the Eastern, and thirteen by the Western appeal courts during the year.

30. The number of cases heard by the courts is small, in comparison with the work of courts elsewhere in Nigeria, but litigation is not popular. The majority of disputes, particularly matrimonial, are settled by the village heads.

31. *Finance*.—The Native Administration funds are kept at the central Native Treasury at Kumba. Each of the Native Authority units works to its own estimates of expenditure in regard to its administration, based on a percentage of revenue. Expenditure for development is pooled for the common benefit. A beginning was made during the year with the Bakossis and the more advanced clans, to estimate their "development" expenditure in the same way.

32. The approved rate of taxes is calculated at 8s. per adult male, though remissions, which amounted to 2s. per head were allowed in the case of two large clans whose economic condition demanded it.

33. The nominal roll system was extended throughout the year and all nominal rolls were revised with such good effect that the total tax paid during the year exceeded the estimate by £900.

In the absence of District Heads and representative Native Authorities, the village heads bring their own taxes direct to the Treasury, and no difficulty whatsoever was experienced in the collection.

34. The financial position of the Treasury is shown in the following figures:—

	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Balance.
1932-33	£5,724	£4,812	£2,401
1933-34	£6,010	£3,756	£4,655

35. *Cultural and Economic.*—Whilst the Kumba Division contains some of the most primitive and backward people in the whole Province it is very noticeable that along the motor roads there is definite advancement, encouraged, no doubt, by the advent of enterprising strangers. The cocoa farmers' union, whose committee consists of men of standing and intelligence, is a striking example of this. There is a demand for schools but not for general education. The four Native Administration schools in the Division, which are situated among the more remote clans, provide for infants only and are not particularly well supported. It must be noted, however, that Bakossi clan insisted upon taking over the Government School at its centre, Nyasoso, when it was about to be closed down for reasons of economy.

36. One Native Administration Dispensary and two dressing stations are maintained from Native Administration funds and are in great demand.

MAMFE DIVISION

37. The same conditions as in Kumba prevail over the greater part of the Division. There are eight clans or groups each forming a Native Authority area. In three of these the authority is vested in individual Head chiefs, according to custom and the remaining groups consist of collections of villages whose councillors assemble together for deliberation.

38. In one area only has reorganisation been completed that of the Banyang clan which consists of forty-eight villages and a population of 13,000. The village is the administrative unit and each village head in council is a recognised and gazetted Native Authority. They are divided into fourteen village groups for judicial purposes, each group forming a Native Court of its own with "D" grade limited powers and dealing only with civil cases. At the clan centre there is a clan "D" grade Native Court of which all village heads are members, and this also acts as a Native Court of appeal. The organisation was instituted in 1932 and 1933. It appears to be unwieldy but, in fact, it works well and is popular. They like their "family" courts as they call them, and also they are keen on the subject of their clan affairs. At general meetings at their clan centre the forty-eight village heads and their followers always attend and take their places in the large thatched court building. They have their spokesmen and they take an intelligent and increasing interest in their own local government and are well aware of the financial position of the clan. Forty-eight separate Native Authorities do not lend towards progress, and owing to mutual jealousy and anxiety lest one village head should attain too much power, they will not at the moment combine to form one Native Authority in council; but there is every possibility that they themselves in the near future will evolve a form of local government which will enable them to exercise control over the Clan Treasury and other functions of administration.

39. No change has been made in regard to the reorganisation of the other units, of which the Native Authorities are as before, the Native Courts.

40. *Native Courts.*—The courts of the Banyang clan have been mentioned. These have proved popular and satisfactory. Each of the remaining units has its own court of "D" grade and there is also at Mamfe a Native Court of appeal from all courts in the Division. All groups and clans are represented on the bench. It is an artificial institution but popular and useful and it affords

opportunity for a gathering of persons of importance from all parts of the Division. It is useful, too, in a large Division where the courts cannot be visited frequently as it ensures a quick way of appeal and, if necessary, of review by the District Officer.

41. During the year 1,131 civils cases were heard by the Native Courts of the Division. There were sixty-two appeals to the Native Court of Appeal which reversed twenty-five judgments, confirmed thirty and modified seven. The District Officer was asked to review eighteen cases from decisions of the Appeal Court of which he confirmed eleven.

42. In one land case in the Bangwa area Native Court the District Officer sat as President.

43. *Financial*.—The funds of all clans and groups are kept by the District Officer at the central Divisional Native Treasury. In this Division progress has been made during the year by causing each unit to work completely to its own estimates of revenue and expenditure. The Head Chief of the Assumbo clan decided to forego the salary which he receives from clan funds (£30 per annum) in order that his clan may have a school next year.

44. *Taxes*.—The rates vary from 3s. in the poorer areas to 8s. Nominal rolls of each tax payer were prepared during the year by each village head and each village head collected according to his nominal roll and not, as heretofore, on a figure fixed by a census in a previous year. This system accounted to some extent for a decrease of £690 in a total tax of £4,940, but it is fair and is appreciated by the village heads and people.

45. There was delay in collecting all the tax for 1933-34 due not so much to unwillingness to pay as to inability. A total of £388 was remitted where the rate was too high and this amounted to a reduction in the rate of tax in such areas by 1s. per head.

46. The financial position of the Mamfe Treasury is shown below:—

	Revenue	Expenditure	Balance.
1932-33	£4,285	£4,008	£4,466
1933-34	£2,828	£2,945	£4,340

BAMENDA DIVISION

47. The Bamenda Division is all open hills and grasslands and the people therefore differ considerably from the forest tribes in the south and middle of the Province in culture and custom. In the sixteen Native Authority areas authority in four of them, Banso, Bah, Nkom and Bum, lies with a single chief. In the remainder it is vested in a council of the Elders of the various villages which make up the group.

48. the Banso people, under their Head chief or Fong, have their own Native Treasury in the Fong's compound and the Fong keeps the key of the safe. This Treasury, opened in 1932, has worked successfully during the year.

49. No final reorganisation in regard to any of the groups was completed during the year, but intelligence work continued and proposals in regard to four of the groups are at the time of writing ready to be put into effect.

50. *Native Courts*.—The sixteen courts, all of "D" grade and each the court of a Native Authority area have worked satisfactorily. The total number of cases heard was 1,910 as compared with 1,955 in 1933. The personnel of the courts is usually

the same as that of the Native Authority. In the areas where the Chief alone is Native Authority, he administers Justice with the help of certain elders, and the vast majority of civil cases are still settled in the old way by the chief in his compound. In other areas the village heads together form the 'bench' of the court. Village disputes are settled by the village heads. Inter-village matters come to the Native Courts, where there is still a tendency on the part of the chiefs, in their capacity as court members to champion the cause of their own people.

51. *Financial*—Apart from the Bansos who have their own Treasury, the chiefs have not yet much appreciation of financial autonomy or the position in regard to clan funds.

52. The rate of taxes vary from 4s. to 1s. and there is a large community of Hausas who pay at the rate of 6s. Taxes are paid by the villages to their Native Authorities, but where these Native Authorities have little or no powers and where they are in fact, an assembly of village heads, the tax is collected and paid direct by the village head.

53. The 'Jangali' tax decreased considerably in 1934, the decrease in the number of cattle as revealed amounting to 10,585. This is accounted for in part by the natural nomadic habits of the Bororo. The Jangali collected for the year was £1,436 as against £1,062 in 1933 and in the Bansa area £199 as against £833 in 1933.

54. The position of the Treasuries is shown in the following figures:—

		Revenue.	Expenditure.	Balance.
BAMENDA	1932-33	£6,204	£5,996	£6,284
	1933-34	£6,155	£5,319	£7,116
		Revenue.	Expenditure.	Balance.
BANSO,	1932-33	£792	£661	£1,139
	1933-34	£978	£669	£1,449

55. Cultural and economic advance is not noticeable. The geography of the Division, difficulties of communication and lack of facilities for export trade militate against progress in this respect. The people themselves are contented pleasant and not unattractive. They have to work hard for their livelihood and school learning does not enter greatly into their scheme of life. It must be admitted, however, that in handwork, such as house building, iron work and weaving they are far superior to the people of the coast.

IJEBU PROVINCE.

By MAJOR J. WANN, *Acting Resident*.

The Province of Ijebu for the purpose of administration consists of six artificially created District Areas, each under the charge of the most important local Oba, under the Head Oba, the Awujale, a first class Chief and the Native Authority for the whole of the Province. The Awujale is assisted by his Council which consists of the six so-called District Heads with both executive and judicial functions. The Council when sitting in its executive capacity is now enlarged by the co-opting thereto of the four principal Ijebu-Ode Chiefs who are the senior members of the four Societies, and by an unofficial Advisory Board consisting of leading citizens of Ijebu-Ode and Ijebu-Remo. The Council meets frequently and the Resident sits in his capacity as adviser to the Awujale and Native Authority. A start has therefore been made upon making this Council more representative of the people as a whole and it is now termed the Central Council.

2. It had long been felt that the system of Districts was artificial and that the indigenous village or village area organisations were not only not being utilised but were being destroyed. An intelligence report had been compiled by Mr Abell, Assistant District Officer, in 1933, but it was considered necessary to amplify this. A start was accordingly made early in the year by preliminary investigation over most of the Province by Mr. E. G. Hawkesworth, District Officer, as a result of which it was considered expedient to render short intelligence reports on separate village group areas. The first of these on Ago village group area, prepared by Mr Abell, Assistant District Officer, was submitted in October and disclosed the very gratifying fact that the greatest interest was manifested by all sorts and conditions of people, and a very real desire to be allowed to take their part in the administration of their village area. In this connection a representative of the Odogbolu Progress Union states, "We do not want our ideas forced upon our elders, but we merely want the opportunity of proffering our advice to our fathers in some public assembly as we used to be able to do under old conditions". The report envisaged shortly a greater amount of decentralisation, the composition of Councils and Courts on traditional lines with modifications to meet the desires of the literate sections, and the substitution of a normal method of tribute collection.

3. Reports on Ijebu-Ife and Odogbolu are practically completed and a start has been made upon a report on the Remo District. The investigations have revealed that the indigenous organisation is essentially democratic and many of the failings of the present system may be attributed to failure to recognise this.

4. The administration also includes Treasury, Assessment, Police, Prison, Forestry, Sanitary and Public Works Departments, all of which function with considerable efficiency. The fusion of Court messengers and Police into one Police Force enhanced the general discipline and efficiency. The various departments still require the closest supervision by the Administrative Staff, especially where the collection of revenue is concerned.

5. On the 20th October, 1934, on the occasion of the Lieutenant-Governor's visit to Ijebu-Ode, a deplorable attempt was made upon the Awujale's life by one Yesufu Idimota. The Awujale since his recognition in November, 1933, has had a difficult task. He has resolutely set his face against the prevailing corruption, and though he has not taken overt action, yet he has made it plain that he was aware of what was going on. He has confided in the Resident that it was impossible for him to take direct action so soon after his installation, and the suppression of Ijebu corruption would take time.

6. The position on the occasion of the Lieutenant-Governor's visit to Ijebu-Ode was that the Awujale was unpopular with a certain section whose corrupt activities he was endeavouring to curtail, while the houses whose members opposed his selection were hostile to him. On the other hand, he was popular with the townspeople who appreciated his efforts and especially with the women, always a powerful element, and in the Districts he was universally accepted and respected.

7. As a result of the attack the Awujale's popularity has been enhanced, the power of the disaffected minority diminished, and a greater opportunity given him to assist in the reorganisation schemes now in being with a greater measure of support from his people.

8. As a result of the attack, the Awujale had to submit to the amputation of his right arm and during his six weeks in hospital he has assiduously practised writing with his left hand with the result that at present he is capable of writing a perfectly legible letter. This says a great deal for his character and determination, and throughout his ordeal he always thought of his people before his own condition.

Native Courts

9. There are twenty-two Native Courts in the Province and up to the present no change has taken place in their constitution. A greater amount of touring by the Administrative Officers has been carried out during the year and it can definitely be said that the closer supervision of the Native Courts has brought about a marked improvement. It has been customary in the past to condemn the Native Courts, but unless they are constantly visited that is what can be expected. The pernicious system of reviewing cases *ex parte* in the absence of the judges has been abandoned, with the result of a marked diminution in the number of petitions. Judgments are usually fair and sentences even appear to err on the side of leniency. The Ijebu-Ode and Shagamu Courts, however, have still to rid themselves of their former bad reputation.

Reform of the Ijebu-Ode Courts and Judicial Council will follow reorganisation in the Districts. Meanwhile as strict a supervision as possible is exercised and the District Officer visits the Courts weekly to hear complaints.

In the first few months of 1935 a remarkable improvement in the work of the Shagamu Native Court was produced by a change of President. It is hoped, further, that the establishment of a representative executive council will give such an outlet to public opinion that any corruption in the judiciary will be speedily reported.

10. The percentage of administrative travelling for the year is 20.1 and from June 27.7.

Finance and Taxation

11. The financial position of the Ijebu Native Administration continues to be sound and it was possible to place the sum of £8,000 in the hands of the Crown Agents for investment. The total surplus funds amount to nearly £13,000.

12. One of the most important aspects of reorganisation of the Province is the method of assessment and collection of tax. The method in existence, that of demanding production of receipts, is not only dangerous but inefficient and a determined effort has been made throughout the year to complete the nominal roll of taxpayers for the whole Province. No particular opposition was met and the work has proceeded smoothly with the result that, before the beginning of the new financial year, the new system of collection by nominal rolls should have taken the place of the old "dragooning" system. In the past, the "District Heads" have been the tax collectors. Individual responsibility for collection will now pass to the Village Chiefs. The collection of water rate in Ijebu-Ode Town was carried out by means of nominal rolls and resulted in few prosecutions and increased revenue.

13. The Native Administration Accounts were again audited this year by Messrs. Cassleton Elliott and Company and, whilst the accounts called for no particular comment, valuable suggestions as to the system were afforded by the Auditors and have been carried out.

Departmental.

14. The activities of the Native Administration in the Departments have been curtailed to some extent in expansion owing to falling revenue but do not call for any extended comment. Owing to the dismissal or conviction of six out of nine Forest Guards and increased supervision, the enforcement of the Native Administration Rules has been carried out more efficiently. Partly owing to this and partly owing to an increased demand for timber, it is anticipated that the estimate of £800 for Forestry Fees will be exceeded by some £600.

15. The work of the Native Administration Public Works which is under the supervision of the Divisional Engineer, Public Works Department, has been almost entirely confined to maintenance. The Water Works, by the closest economy and increased revenue, show an annual profit of over £200.

General.

16. In the Annual Report for 1933 it is stated that "the old order has passed away". The recent attack on the Awujale proves that it is dying slowly and many grave difficulties are in front of the Administration before that bane of Ijebu life, corruption, can finally be suppressed. Although the efforts of an enlightened Awujale and close supervision by touring Administrative Officers can temporarily check corruption, its permanent elimination can only be achieved by the efforts of the people themselves. This aspect has been stressed during the reorganisation campaign and it is hoped that the opportunity of taking an active part in administration, which is being given to the people as a whole, will prove a beneficial factor.

17. A start has been made upon reorganising and it is believed that this is on the right lines and acceptable to the people. The great obstacle of co-ordinating an ancient system with a system providing an outlet for the expression of the younger and more literate element has been surmounted. The scheme also admits of far greater decentralisation and whilst thoroughly democratic in character still recognises the Chiefs' authority. It also removes that embarrassing heritage of the past, the District Head system, which has done more perhaps than anything to foster corruption and extortion.

18. The Ijebu is an intensely patriotic person and, amongst the vast majority, the grave consequences, if Yesufu Idimota had succeeded, are fully realised. Public opinion may therefore be brought to bear against the disaffected minority. It is not considered that the incident has damaged the new order though it has delayed it.

OGOJA PROVINCE.

By MAJOR H. C. STEVENSON, O.B.E., M.C. *Resident.*

During the year the task of reorganisation was continued on the lines of which the general principle had previously been approved. Village areas were, wherever necessary, regrouped on a clan basis and the councils, organised in consonance with local

custom, were recognised and authorised to perform both administrative and judicial duties. The areas over which the different councils exercise authority vary in size. In those clans in which a central authority is not customarily recognised, the village council has been appointed as the highest Native Authority, but where a well marked feeling of clan consciousness exists advantage has been taken of the fact and the clan council appointed as a superior Native Authority. Generally speaking, there may be said to be a greater cohesion between Ibo villages than is apparent in the semi-Bantu groups.

2. In the Abakaliki Division, of which the population is almost entirely Ibo, the four clans of Ezza, Izi, Ikwo and Ngbo comprise five-sixths of the total population. The people of these clans trace their descent from a common ancestor, but it does not appear that before the advent of the British Government they recognised one central authority and they have not yet expressed any desire for federation. Native Administrations have been constituted for three of these clans, but in the Izi clan, judicial reorganisation alone was carried out in April, no Native Authority has yet been appointed, as doubt exists as to the degree of authority possessed by the mother towns from which the ten sub-clans sprang.

3. The Ezza Native Administration is said to be the most successful in the Division. The councils take a lively and intelligent interest in the affairs of the clan including the management of the Native Administration funds. A strong room was built at the Clan Headquarters early in the year and, after some persuasion, one of the council was appointed by his fellows to hold one of the two keys. The second key remains in the hands of the District Officer, as the clan council cannot as yet be persuaded to assume responsibility for the safe custody of the funds.

4. The Ikwo Native Administration has not progressed as satisfactorily as that of Ezza. Enquiries conducted during the year not only confirmed the impression that the clan council was not sufficiently representative but indicated that the fifteen council members should not in fact form the executive. It is now apparent that at this stage of the clan's development a single native authority is justified neither by native custom nor by popular suffrage.

5. The Ngbo and Ezengbo clans, which voluntarily united to form the Ngbo Native Administration, work harmoniously together but the people are primitive and not naturally progressive.

6. In the Afikpo Division, a Native Administration was constituted for the Edda clan during the year; one of the first tasks of the Native Authorities in this area will be to endeavour to adjust the differences which exist between the Christian and Pagan elements in the clan. In the indigenous social organisation the community is divided into groups, each of which plays a specified part in public affairs. Admission to the different groups is accompanied by initiatory ceremonies which the Christians consider they cannot conscientiously perform on account of their pagan origin.

7. In the Afikpo clan, which is composed of Ibo speaking people of Aro origin, the approved scheme of reorganisation which had initially been accepted by the people, had proved to be unacceptable when put into practice and had been modified in the previous year. The modifications made have not provided

a complete solution of the problem to be faced and during the year further inquiries were made. In this area, there is no tradition of common ancestry to bind the component units together, the country was settled in the past by bands of emigrants. Before the advent of the British Government, the administration was largely carried on by members of the Otosi society, the senior member of the society in each unit held an emblem in the shape of an Aro spear and wielded considerable influence. By this system of administration, however, a large proportion of the population, namely those families (using the term in its wider sense) who had not formed an Otosi lodge, were debarred from full share in the control of the affairs of the community. The Otosi society is essentially a pagan organisation admission to which was gained by the payment of considerable sums, it does not seem desirable to form a modern Native Administration in which the control would be in the hands of such a society, especially as the relations between the Otosi members and those who do not belong to the society are not entirely harmonious. On the other hand, if the administration is to be based on the indigenous organisation the influence of Otosi cannot be entirely ignored.

8. In the Obubra Division the task of evolving satisfactory Native Administration has proved uphill work. Six different tribes are found in the Division, three of these are represented by scattered settlements only. The remaining tribes are divided into fourteen clans, none of which show any desire to federate.

9. Lack of interest, by the people concerned, in schemes for the better administration of their areas has proved to be one of the greatest difficulties in this Division. Of the five Native Administrations which have already been constituted, one only shows promise of making any progress, namely that of the Adun Clan. The Ovat Kudedin (Clan Head) of the last named clan is a man of some intelligence who takes an interest in the new administration and with his council appears to command the confidence and respect of the people.

10. In the remaining reorganised areas in the Obubra Division there is no apparent discontent, but little hope of much progress in the near future. The units are small and after meeting the normal recurrent expenditure there is little money left for development, a factor which adds to the difficulty of overcoming the apathy of the councils. In short the experience so far gained is such as to indicate the need for a pause before proceeding with the reorganisation of the remaining areas.

11. In the Ikom Division the Olulumo clan was reorganised as a separate unit with its own Native Treasury. The people of the clan are intelligent and show an interest in the newly formed administration, the unit is very small however and the revenue is small, lack of funds has been a handicap.

12. The Ofutop and Nde clans were reorganised at the beginning of the year. Ofutop seems to be the more progressive of the two clans, but in each case the opening of new courts and the recognition of the natural authorities, who are taking an active part in the administration, has proved popular. Sub-estimates are kept for the clans, but the funds are kept in the central Treasury at Ikom.

13. The Boki clan is the largest in the Ikom Division. The clan which extends into the Ogoja and Mamfe Divisions occupies an extensive area of thick forest and also of mountainous country and is composed of some of the most primitive people in the Southern

Provinces. Most parts of this area are difficult of access and in many places the traveller cannot progress at a greater speed than one mile per hour, the difficulties in carrying out any scheme of reorganisation are thus considerably increased. During the year a modest scheme of bridge building was carried out and roads suitable for bicycle traffic were made linking up the centres of Boje and Aboabam with Ikom. The scheme was financed from the Government grant of £850, as Native Administration funds were not available owing to the poverty of the area. Sub-clan courts were opened for the Boje, Aho, Alankwo and Eastern Boki groups. The opening of the courts was a popular move and it is hoped that they will help to awaken the interest of the village councils in the local administration. Lack of staff prevented the posting of an officer for duty exclusively in the area and it was consequently not found possible to put into effect the proposals for grouping all the Boki sub-clans in one administrative unit.

14. In the Ogoja Division, which includes the Obudu District, no new Native Administrations were constituted. The schemes for reorganisation which had previously been put into effect appeared to give satisfaction to the people, but in these primitive communities it has proved difficult to get the authorities to take an interest in general problems of administration or in the allocation of the Native Administration funds. The people live in widely scattered villages, the majority of which have little communication with the outside world, they manage their own affairs after the custom of their forefathers and do not appreciate the necessity for any change.

15. The Native Courts in the Province, speaking generally, have never been subject to the charges of corruption and extortion which have in the past been brought against these tribunals in other parts of the Eastern Provinces. In those areas which have not yet been reorganised, the people appear to be satisfied with the justice meted out by the courts, the reorganised courts are, however, more popular. The new courts are, as a rule, more conveniently situated and easier of access from the villages they serve, the proceedings are conducted more in accordance with native custom than was formerly the case and each is presided over by a bench which is widely representative.

16. During the year the powers of many of the old courts were reduced. New courts when first constituted are given "D" Grade powers only.

17. In parts of the Province where the people have expressed a desire for village courts with minor civil powers, such courts have been established. Written records of the proceedings are not kept, but the claim and judgment are reported verbally to the clan court and there recorded. Appeal from the decision of the village court lies to the clan court. It is not yet possible to say whether such a multiplicity of courts is required, but there are indications that they may fall into disuse.

18. The provision in the new Native Courts Ordinance for the right of appeal from decisions of a Native Court, has in practice had little effect in the Ogoja Province. The natives do not yet appreciate the difference between appeal and review and provided a grievance is investigated by an Administrative Officer they seem satisfied. All criminal cases involving a sentence of imprisonment are scrutinised by District Officers and the Native Courts are visited frequently.

19. It had become evident that owing to the continued financial depression, the Native Court fees were, in many places, beyond the means of the average native and that people were debarred from recourse to the courts on account of poverty. Where such a state of affairs existed the fees were reduced; the relief was appreciated and evidently necessary as the reduction of fees resulted in an increased number of cases.

20. The Ibo communities in the Province are inclined to be reactionary and the semi-Bantu clans are, for the most part, prevented by geographical conditions from getting into contact with civilising conditions. These factors necessarily hinder cultural advancement. The low prices obtained for produce and the general scarcity of money have also proved an obstacle in the path of cultural progress.

21. Education makes small advance in the Province. There is one Government School at Afikpo which is well attended by children living in the vicinity and two assisted schools, one at Ikom and one at Ishibori near Ogoja. There are large areas untouched by mission influence and in the Abakaliki Division the elder people show a marked distrust of education. The Roman Catholic Mission Society have increased their activity in the Boki country between Ogoja and Ikom where a lively desire for education is said to be evinced, efforts in this direction are hampered by lack of funds.

22. The fall in the price paid for oil palm produce, the lowest figure on record being reached in the middle of the year, has affected the semi-Bantu and the Ibo people alike. The latter are more dependent on the sale of farm produce for their wealth, but the price offered for yams and livestock moves in sympathy with the oil market. The price of oil palm produce took an upward trend in the latter part of the year. The beneficial effect of the rise should be felt in the coming year.

23. An increasing amount of oil and kernels are being taken direct to Calabar from areas adjacent to the Cross River. Itinerant traders have also taken advantage of the lower railway fares and have purchased cotton goods at Port Harcourt for sale in their local markets. Trade generally is passing from the hands of the up-country European factories into those of the native traders.

24. No changes in the rate of tax have been made during the year, progress has been made with the checking of nominal rolls. The collection of tax has proceeded smoothly and without incident, but in the Abakaliki and Afikpo Divisions, payments have been more tardy than in previous years.

25. The financial position of the Native Treasuries has prevented the expenditure of large sums on capital works. In the Abakaliki and Afikpo Divisions, the Native Administrations maintained 113 and 74 miles of motor roads respectively and in the latter Division four pontoons capable of taking motor vehicles are also maintained. In the Ogoja Division, the motor road from Ogoja to Yabe was completed, one lorry, run by private enterprise, has been operating on this section and has been well patronised. At Yabe, the unbridged River Onwu separates the Ogoja road from the Southern Provinces' road system. In the Obuora and Ikom Divisions, motor roads are impracticable and cycle paths are maintained. In the latter Division, communications with parts of the Boki area have been improved with the aid of a Government grant.

26. A Native Administration dispensary was opened at Ngbo in the Abakaliki Division in August. The existing dispensaries maintained their popularity but would prove of greater value if more frequent visits by a Medical Officer were not prevented by shortage of staff. In the Edda clan, Afikpo Division, leper settlements have been established by the natives, and treatment at a convenient centre is given weekly by the Church of Scotland Mission Doctor.

27. The financial position of the Native Treasuries is satisfactory and is indicated by the following figures:—

Treasury	Surplus, 1-4-34.	Estimated Revenue, 1934-35.	Estimated Expenditure, 1934-35.	Estimated Surplus, 31-3-35.
	£	£	£	£
ABAKALIKI	5,747	4,979	4,898	5,828
AFIKPO	6,289	5,662	4,529	7,122
BETTE-BENDI	627	555	561	618
EZZA	1,889	2,120	1,451	2,558
IKOM	1,219	3,232	2,654	1,797
ORUBRA	2,785	3,435	3,035	3,185
ORUPU	1,593	890	1,311	1,142
OGOMA	2,593	3,312	4,065	1,810
OLULUMO	145	130	5

ONDO PROVINCE.

By F. B. CARR, ESQUIRE, *Acting Resident*.

At the close of 1934 there were no actual changes from the previous year in the constitutions of the Native Administrations of the Province yet the intensive campaign of inquiry into indigenous organisation resulted in the compilation of fourteen intelligence reports. Of these ten were submitted in the course of the year and the proposals for future organisation contained in seven received the approval of His Excellency.

2. Preparation for the institution of the approved proposals was already being made in the latter months of the year and 1935 should see them in active operation.

3. In the Ondo Province there is not that active urge for reorganisation which has been evinced in other parts of the Southern Provinces yet increasing signs of discontent engendered in the sub-villages by the autocratic tendencies of the District Head system showed the dangers which were ahead if some means of self-expression were not provided for the general populace. In certain cases, therefore, but little active interest was displayed in the course of intelligence inquiries and certain of the Obas, or District Heads, and their immediate followers opposed rather than welcomed the prospect of changes. They feared a drastic diminution of their powers and the accentuation of a desire among the sub-villages to throw off their allegiance.

4. It is gratifying, however, to be able to report that the preparations for the institution of the proposals for reorganisation have met with a far greater response and considerable eagerness is shown to hasten the inception of the new regime. Signs of discontent are receding and, generally, the Obas are showing a more conciliatory attitude and are realising that nothing derogatory to their prestige is intended.

5. The general trend of reorganisation proposals involves no drastic changes and aims principally at broadening the basis of Native Administration by incorporating the full councils of all the towns and villages and by affording greater judicial facilities and wider representation in the Native Courts. The interest in conciliar administration as an integral part of Native Administration is growing but, so long have the vast majority of the councillors been left beyond the pale, considerable encouragement and education will be necessary before they take up their full responsibilities.

6. The activities in each Administrative Division and events worthy of record may now be examined.

7. In the Ekiti Division the signs of discontent, in the form of expressed desires by a number of villages for complete independence, were much in evidence at the opening of the year as also was the conservative attitude of the sixteen District Heads comprised by the Administrative Division. With the proposals for reorganisation in view all but two of these claims have been withdrawn. In one case, the village of Ilawe, where claims for independence persist, approval has been received for direct administration. This, however, may be looked on as a temporary expedient adopted on account of an internal division of opinion, one section of the community not being opposed to offering allegiance to the Ewi of Ado. The other case, the village of Iddo Irappa, is under consideration.

8. The conservatism of the Obas has waned considerably and they are gradually realising the necessity for an adjustment of their ideas. As indicative of this the Deji of Akure, in the last month of the year, submitted, after consultation with the chiefs of Akure town and those of outlying villages, an almost complete scheme for reorganisation which was acceptable to the people.

9. The dispute regarding the appointment of an Oloye of Oye has persisted throughout the year. The selecting Chiefs were informed that there was no reason why they should not proceed with installation provided that they were satisfied that native custom had been observed and that no widespread discontent would be occasioned thereby. They proceeded, in June, to instal one Adeoba and there followed an outburst of indignation particularly from the sub-villages who, by custom, have no hand in the selection. A number of men were punished in the Magistrate's court for their disorderly behaviour, and the opposition disappeared. Adeoba was publicly acknowledged by all but was not recognised by Government. In August the opposition revived and continued to the end of the year. The difficult position, now complicated by the death of three of the six selecting chiefs, is still receiving attention.

10. Following on the compilation of an Intelligence Report on the Aiyede District, during which the people had agreed to proposals for reorganisation, an extraordinary situation arose by an almost unanimous rejection of the Oba, the Ata of Aiyede. Only during a visit of the Acting Resident to discuss the final proposals of the report did the situation arise. During the period of field work complaints had been made of oppression in past years but all had agreed not to persist in these complaints with the prospect of wider representation in view. A further, perhaps trivial, act of the Ata again roused the animosity of both chiefs and people with the result that the memory of all past acts of oppression was revived and his removal demanded. An inquiry

was held at the close of which the Ata voluntarily left Aiyede to reside in Ado-Ekiti. A report has been submitted and is now under consideration.

11. In the Okitipupa Division the approval for the institution of a separate Native Administration for the Ikale District was warmly welcomed by the Abodi, his Chiefs and people. The new organisation is closely akin to the indigenous organisation which is modified only in minor respects to meet the requirements of modern times. It entails the resuscitation of certain titles known as the Ijamo titles which had fallen into disuse since the Ijamo Society was banned in 1919 on account of illegal practices. With the spread of Christianity and education the illegal practices will not be revived and the recognition of the earlier system of administration has given great satisfaction. Appointments to the vacant titles are now being made and by April, 1935, it is hoped to inaugurate the new Native Administration and organisation.

12. No changes have been made elsewhere in the Division and when the separate Ikale Native Administration is instituted the remaining Districts will remain together as one Native Administration pending the compilation of further Intelligence Reports.

13. In the Ondo Division both the Ondo and Idanre Districts have been covered by Intelligence Reports and proposals for reorganisation were submitted early in 1935. These proposals entail the formation of two separate Native Administrations one for the Ondo District and one for the Idanre District instead of the one composite Native Administration which exists at present.

14. In the Idanre District matters are not complicated; the indigenous system is intact, even if in a state of decline, and will not be difficult to revive. The Owa is a capable Chief and both he, his chiefs and people are gratified at the prospect of having a separate Native Administration divorced entirely from that of Ondo.

15. In the Ondo District affairs are not so happy and dissatisfaction with the present regime led a number of villages to claim independence and so to attempt to throw off their allegiance to the Oshemowe, a second class Chief and the head of the Ondo people. Fortunately the proposals for reorganisation have satisfied all except one of the villages concerned and claims for independence have been withdrawn.

16. The one exception is the people of the village of Odigbo who have had a long standing dispute with Ondo concerning land. A special inquiry was made into their grievances in July and August and proposals were made to safeguard their interests. These were accepted and subsequently approved subject to modification as the result of the Intelligence Report. In the course of the compilation of this, however, the people withdrew their acceptance and demanded complete independence and demarcation of their land. There is no doubt that some of their complaints are justified but the intransigent attitude now adopted is unhelpful and renders assistance doubly difficult. At the close of the year matters had reached a deadlock and proposals for the future were under consideration.

17. It is with regret that it is recorded that the Oshemowe died on 8th of January, 1935. It was only just prior to his death that it was discovered that he had been ill for some months for, until then, he had not sought medical advice and had been able to carry out his duties.

18. In the Owo Division the proposals for the reorganisation of the Akoko District, entailing the formation of a separate Native Administration, received His Excellency's approval in September. The remaining districts of Owo and Ifon were covered by an Intelligence Report and this together with proposals for future organisation was submitted in December and is now under consideration.

19. Unfortunately it has proved impossible to institute the proposals for the Akoko District on account of a dispute as to the site for the new Native Administration offices and the appointment by the council of a President. The matter ended by the Olubaka and the people of Oka expressing a desire to withdraw from the proposed Akoko Native Administration and this has been recommended and is under consideration. Although this temporary setback is unfortunate yet it has shown that the council is capable of serious and reasonable deliberation. The enthusiasm for a unified Akoko Native Administration displayed by all but Oka has been astonishing and this combined with the power to reason which has been displayed augurs well for the future.

20. The Sashere of Owo who was deported in 1928 for being implicated in tax disturbances returned from exile on 8th of January, 1934. Similarly the Olamadashara who created disturbances in 1926 in an endeavour to obtain the Ojomo title and was deported returned on 17th of April, 1934. The conduct of both has been exemplary since their return, the Sashere particularly taking a keen interest in Native Administration.

21. The dispute concerning the appointment of an Oloja, the Village Head, of Ifon, has persisted throughout the year. The former Oloja was deposed and deported as the result of being convicted of criminal offences in 1931 but was permitted to return to Ifon in 1933 as a private citizen. No new appointment had been made during his absence and on his return the less reactionary section of the community regarded him and still do so regard him as the Oloja. This section has numerous supporters and opinion among the remainder is divided between two other candidates. The appointment in accordance with custom rests in the hands of one family but feeling in support of one candidate or another has now spread throughout the town and with the selecting family divided in itself a solution without Government intervention seems doubtful.

22. There have been no changes in the Native Courts during the year. They have operated satisfactorily and it is considered that the people obtain justice therein. All criminal cases involving a sentence of imprisonment are reviewed by District Officers and all criminal returns are closely scrutinised by the Resident. Requests for review of civil cases have been fairly numerous but it has seldom been necessary completely to reverse a judgment. Matrimonial affairs are the subject of the majority of complaints and this is due largely to the lax marriage customs generally prevailing.

23. There are in all thirty-five Native Courts in the Province and these heard a total of 4,861 civil cases and dealt with 5,180 persons in criminal cases. In addition a total of 485 adultery cases was heard, of which 242 were criminal actions, the remainder being civil suits for recovery of damages. There is again a considerable decrease from 1933 but again it is not due to the unpopularity of the courts but to the general state of economic depression.

24. The only change in the rates of taxation has been that whereby persons of ascertainable income have been brought on to an income tax schedule. In view of the persistence of the economic depression taxes have been paid well. Several changes have been made in the methods of collection and accounting in order to ensure that the collection is in the hands of the Chiefs and that all books and cash can be adequately checked at any period of the year.

25. Revenue has continued to decline in all Native Treasuries and it has been necessary to effect many economies. Particularly has difficulty been experienced in the Okitipupa Native Administration where the cessation of the collection of land rents from strangers has led to the loss of an estimated revenue of £1,000. Yet it has not been found necessary to touch reserve funds and it is confidently expected that all Native Administrations will balance their budgets at the close of the financial year.

26. Prices of palm products have been poor during the majority of the year but showed an improvement at the close. The price of cocoa rose sharply at the close of last season but this was of little avail to the producers who had by then sold practically their whole crop. During the current season prices have been appreciably higher than the average prices of last season and purchasers in Ondo, where competition has been great, anticipate a record tonnage. Internal trade has remained constant although there has been an increase in the trade in native woven cloth between Owo and the Eastern Provinces.

27. In the course of the year the Government Medical Officer, Dr J. S. Robinson, has opened and fostered Infant Welfare clinics at Akure Ondo and Owo. The clinics have met with marked success and so interested have the Native Authorities become that they have each voted sums for inclusion in 1935-36 Estimates for the provision of a midwife. A baby show was held at Akure in May when wide interest and appreciation were displayed.

28. There is only one Native Administration prison in the Province and that is at Okitipupa. The daily average of prisoners was generally good. The expense of supporting the prison is a heavy tax on the restricted resources of the Okitipupa Native Administration. An application was made to Government in the course of the year to take over the prison but it was refused.

29. The nine Native Administration dispensaries have been maintained and treated in all 13,391 cases.

30. A Native Administration school was opened at Ilutim in the Okitipupa Division in April. The school rolls were filled long before the opening and many intending pupils had to be turned away. The attendance has been continually good and there is no doubt the school is appreciated.

31. Generally it may be said that the investigations made and proposals for future administration approved during the year should lead to a better system of Native Administration in the near future. The people have passed a peaceful year free from oppression and with fortitude and hope in spite of the general state of economic depression.

ONITSHA PROVINCE

By W. H. LLOYD, ESQUIRE, *Resident*.

The year has been one of peace and steady progress. The economic depression continued but as the year waned a considerable improvement took place in the price of palm products which was reflected in the native markets and caused a spirit of optimism to arise. It was a little unfortunate that the improvement only commenced at the end of the oil season when oil was not available in large quantities, and in consequence the producer was unable to benefit to any appreciable extent. It is hoped, however, that the rise in prices will be maintained during the ensuing oil seasons. In spite of the depression, the people have maintained an amazing cheerfulness and courage, which cannot be praised too highly.

2. The reorganisation of the Province on the lines of the indigenous institutions continued during the year, and at the end was nearing completion. Small areas in each administrative division still remain to be dealt with, and reports on these will be submitted in the new year. Thorough investigation has been made before any of the new Native Administrations have been put into operation, and it is certain that the constitution of the councils conforms with native custom, and is in accord with the wishes of the people to-day. At the end of 1933 there were seventeen of these new Native Administrations in being, which has been increased to thirty-five during the year and reports on eleven others have been submitted. Throughout the Province, in all the newly formed Native Administrations control is vested in a council which is composed of representatives from each extended family. This council is constituted the Native Authority for its area, and as native custom does not provide for any differentiation between the executive and the judicial authorities, the personnel of the native tribunal is the same body.

3. The year has seen real progress, not only in the preliminary business of investigation and report, but also in the far more important and interesting business of practical application. Spectacular results have not been achieved, neither were they expected. With the slow working African mind considerable time must elapse before the councils are able to realise their true responsibilities and adjust themselves to modern conditions. It would be false policy to hurry them unduly and no attempt is being made to do so. In the meantime they are being nursed and guided by Administrative Officers as fully as the time of the depleted staff will allow. Progress is therefore slow and will continue so for some years. It can however be definitely stated that the constitution of the new Native Administrations is popular with the people. They are all based on a sound foundation, which conforms with native ideas and should evolve into a successful and popular form of Government in the future. The people have not yet had time to fully appreciate the idea of Native Administration though they realise the difference in their political status, and the fact that authority is now vested in a representative council is obviously popular with all.

4. It may be said that the councils generally give far more prominence to the judicial side of Native Administration activity, taking as yet but scant interest in their executive and financial duties. The Native Court has become so important a feature in native life and is so firmly established as a centre of social intercourse that it occupies like a precocious child the whole attention of the public, to the exclusion of its modest but more worthy

parents. The councils feel the importance of sitting in a Judicial Court, with authority supporting them. Every member is interested in these duties and their discussions are usually sound, but it involves little effort or initiative, whereas to sit in council, to make and enforce rules, to discuss the collection and expenditure of Native Administration funds, and generally to carry out the duties of Native Authority, involves both trouble and initiative. Therefore the councils of the newly organised areas are seen to plunge into their judicial duties with enthusiasm, but on the executive side they show little interest and wait to be advised. The result is that as far as the public can observe all executive and financial authority still rests with Government in which the councils are only casually interested. Tax continues to be regarded as a Government imposition, designed in part for the profit of Government and in part to pay for necessary works. There can be no immediate remedy for this evil, which no amount of explanation will cure in a day. Time and practical demonstration is the only cure and it is satisfactory to observe that it is less acute in those areas which have been working longest on reorganised lines.

5. The sense of acting for the welfare of the general public is being gradually acquired by the councils, but is still much in the background. Personal needs, place seeking and self profit is still in evidence, but as pointed out in last year's report, this is in no way surprising. The passage of twelve months has shown no great improvement on this feeling of self interest and there continues to be seen the depressing spectacle of a village or group council abandoning its work in order rancorously to dispute the question of the appointment of a Court Messenger or something equally petty. It is noticed that this bickering is far less in evidence with the councils in the more primitive areas.

6. The Ikem area of the Nsukka Division which a few years ago was one of the most backward in the Province shows signs of developing into a most efficient Native Administration. The elders are able to command obedience and appear to realise some of their responsibilities as Native Authorities. The collection of tax which prior to reorganisation had to be carried out almost entirely by the Administrative staff is now arranged completely by the elders in a satisfactory and efficient manner. The younger men give their support to the elders' decisions without question and assist them in carrying out executive orders. It remains to educate the people on the subject of their finances and to aim at creating a public opinion which will condemn lawlessness in any form. Once on these lines the administration should progress quickly and the elders continue to reflect public opinion without prejudice to law and order.

7. The Anam and Ayamelum groups in the Onitsha Division are further outstanding examples of primitive areas with well organised councils which carry out their duties efficiently with no sign of any internal squabbles. These councils have the full confidence of the people and are able to exact willing obedience from them.

8. The Abaja clan in the Udi Division is slowly but definitely recovering from the set back mentioned in last year's report. The recognised councils are now gradually regaining their sense of responsibility and although internal friction is still in evidence within some of the councils, a steady improvement is shown in the affairs of that area.

9. Education is eagerly sought by the people and is provided for by Government and Mission schools. Vernacular schools are to be found in practically every village, but the more advanced schools are only in such centres as Onitsha, Awka, Enugu and Eke. The finances of the Native Administrations are not sufficient to enable them to maintain any schools, but assistance is given by erecting and maintaining some of the buildings.

10. The Native Administrations in co-operation with the Agricultural Department continue their endeavours to interest the farmer in the cultivation of the oil palm with encouraging results. At the close of 1934 there were eighty-nine privately owned plots in the Province and applications have already been received for a further 150 in 1935.

11. Oil presses are also gaining popularity, especially in the Onitsha Division, where the Native Administration assists by financing a generous hire purchase system, which allows the native to purchase these presses and pay by instalments. The Agricultural Department continue their experiments with a view to obtaining suitable cover crops and green manuring for native farms. When this is found the farmer will be assisted very materially as it will enable him to shorten the long fallow periods which owing to the poor soil he now finds necessary. He is however suspicious of any new farming methods and until success is assured with these crops it is of no use attempting to interest him.

12. In addition to the roads maintained by the Public Works Department there are now 600 miles of very serviceable motor roads which have been constructed and are maintained by the Native Administrations. These are very popular with the people who realise the benefits of easy and rapid communication. In areas where motor roads are impracticable, improvements have been made to footpaths and light bridges constructed over streams. Medical aid has also received the attention of the Native Administrations who in addition to giving financial assistance to hospitals, maintain ten dispensaries in the Province. These dispensaries which are supervised by Government Medical Officers are well attended and greatly appreciated by the people. Only common ailments are treated, but possibly the greatest value of these centres is the lesson in cleanliness in the care of sores and wounds which they provide. The needs of the people in regard to water are not overlooked by the Native Administrations and schemes for supplying water to the waterless areas in the Udi and Nsukka Divisions are now being considered, in co-operation with the Geological Survey Department.

Native Courts

13. There are eleven "C" Grade Native Courts in the Province which will continue to operate until reorganisation is complete. The remainder numbering forty-eight are all newly constituted, on lines which conform with native custom. They have "D" Grade powers and are working satisfactorily. The personnel of these native tribunals is composed of the members of the village councils and although the membership at first is large in numbers, it takes the councils little time to realise that a large bench is unwieldy, and themselves arrange limited representation at each sitting. Patience is shown by the members of the court in their judicial duties and their decisions are usually just ones. All native courts have been adequately supervised by Administrative Officers and as far as possible each court is visited at least once

every month, when the visiting officer inspects all the records and deals with any applications for review. In addition to this the records are brought in to the Divisional Headquarters at the close of each month when they are again inspected and checked. Before any convicted person is allowed to enter a prison, he is brought before the District Officer, who after satisfying himself that the conviction is a just one, endorses the warrant.

14. There is no sign of any oppression in the villages and little fear of any serious injustice in the courts, as right of review by an Administrative Officer is so widely known, and the Ibo is never backward in taking advantage of it. From the 1st of April, when the High Court commenced operating every native has had right of appeal to this court from any decision given by a native tribunal on payment of the prescribed fee. Few have availed themselves of this right. During the year there were 12,724 cases heard in the Native Courts and 3,313 applications were made for review. Many of them were frivolous and in 1,724 cases the judgments were confirmed on review. The remainder were either modified or referred back for further evidence.

Finance.

15. The councils are taking a gradual interest in their financial affairs, but at the moment the councillors' ideas of finance are naturally very rudimentary and it is difficult for them to understand that expenditure must be governed by revenue. Each group works on its own estimates which are prepared annually and only submitted after full discussion with the council concerned, who are afterwards consulted in regard to all expenditure and encouraged to take interest in the control of their funds. The cash is still kept in the central Treasury at each Divisional Headquarters as it has not yet been found practicable to establish separate Treasuries. This however is kept in mind and as soon as any council is considered sufficiently advanced or shows any desire to establish its own Treasury, this will be arranged. The Treasuries throughout the Province are sound financially and though in the past years it has been necessary to exercise economy, funds are now available to expend on material development. All the Native Administration accounts are now audited annually by a firm of Auditors.

16. The revenue is solely derived from tax and Native Court receipts. Tax is now collected through the indigenous organisations and as much latitude as possible is allowed in regard to date of payment. It cannot be said that payment of tax is popular, but on the whole the people have paid with a good grace and it is expected that the collection will be practically complete before the end of the financial year.

OWERRI PROVINCE.

By O. W. FIRTH, *Senior Resident*

The Owerri Province has an area of 10,555 square miles and a population of approximately 1,615,437. With the exception of Degema Division, which contains a mixed population of Ijaw extraction, the inhabitants all belong to the Ibo tribe. The transfer in April of a small Ibibio Clan to the Calabar Province reduced the area of the Province by twelve square miles and the population by 1,844.

2. During the last few years much of the time of the Administrative Staff has been taken up in an intensive study of the customs of the people and in the preparation of intelligence reports on which have been based schemes for reorganisation which accord with the indigenous social system. During 1934 progress in this respect has been slower than in previous years, due to the fact that it was most necessary to consolidate the reorganisation that had already been effected. Although much useful intelligence work has been carried out, the efforts of the Administrative Staff have been primarily directed to the close supervision of the newly formed Native Administrations. This has had the effect of inculcating in the minds of the people a real interest in the management of their own affairs, which is markedly absent in the un-reorganised areas.

3. All the intelligence reports which have been compiled show that the indigenous organisation throughout the Province is essentially government by council and it is on this basis that the Native Administrations have been formed. Every village is fully represented both on the Native Administration Council and on the court. The system has proved both popular and efficient, though close supervision has been essential, particularly in the early stages.

4. The greatest advance has been made in Aba and Bende Divisions, reorganisation in the former being now practically completed. The main task has been in respect of the large Ngwa Clan which in the past has presented many difficulties. Exhaustive inquiries were made by an officer specially detailed for the work and as a result the clan, which numbers over 111,000, has now been divided into a number of groups of related towns each with its own court and Native Administration Council. These reforms have proved popular and effective. It is hoped that the groups will eventually combine to form one clan Native Administration and there are already signs of a desire for such an amalgamation.

5. Steady progress has been made in the Owerri Division where the most striking feature has been the success of a number of Native Administration sub-treasuries which were established at the request of the people. These have not only assisted in the education of the elders in financial matters but have greatly simplified tax collection.

6. In Okigwi Division reorganisation is practically complete except in the Orlu sub-district where considerable difficulty has been experienced owing to internal dissension and lack of interest shown by the people. Reports have, however, been compiled dealing with the two largest clans and will be submitted shortly.

7. The principal event in Degema Division was the establishment of a Native Administration for the Nembe Clan in the Brass area. This was formally inaugurated by the Lieutenant-Governor in July. The Nembe Clan has long been split by internal dissensions and there are signs that the Native Administration Council on which all parties are represented will materially assist in settling the differences which exist between various sections of the community. The senior Amanvanabo, Chief Ockiya, is permanent President of the council and is a man of high character and intellect.

8. The situation in Bonny has been more satisfactory than in 1933 and considerable progress has been made. The council meets once a month and shows a real interest in administering the affairs of the clan. Minutes are kept of all meetings and a copy sent to the Resident. The actions of George Secundus Pepple, the

Amanyambo and President of the council, still leave much to be desired. An intelligent and well educated man he has yet to realise that his position is not that of an autocrat, and his conduct called for final warning from the Governor.

9. The Okrika Clan Native Administration which was inaugurated in 1933 has proved most successful. By custom this clan should have an Amanyambo or Head Chief who would be permanent President of the council. Owing to disputes as to who was the right person to hold the title, no attempt has been made to recognise any one, and the council functions well without a President. As at Bonny and Nembe the council meets regularly and keeps minutes of the proceedings. Great interest is shown in the administration of the affairs of the clan and many matters which would formerly have been referred to the District Officer are successfully dealt with by the council. Whenever possible the council meetings are attended by the District Officer who acts in an advisory capacity.

10. Generally speaking, it may be said that a real advance has been made in Native Administration. At first the majority of the people took little interest in anything except judicial reform, each group or village area clamouring for its own court. Under careful supervision, however, the councils have now begun to feel their feet and show a genuine interest in administration and even in finance, though in regard to the latter the ideas of many are still somewhat rudimentary.

Native Courts.

11. The old system of Native Courts in which the bench consisted of four "Chiefs" nominated by the District Officer is now a thing of the past. All the Native Courts have been reorganised by broadening the basis of representation, even in areas in which full intelligence reports have not been written and where in consequence complete reorganisation has not yet been effected. The Native Courts as now constituted accord with native custom and are popular. They provide a greater measure of justice, and opportunity for bribery is reduced to a minimum.

12. In the reorganisation of the Native Courts a strong desire has been evident for each clan or group of related villages to have its own court. This desire has been gratified and one of the defects of the old Native Court system remedied, as it is quite contrary to native custom for a man to be tried by judges who do not belong to his own clan or village group. The result has been a large increase in the number of courts, the supervision of which has entailed considerably more work for the Administrative Staff.

13. With the introduction of the Protectorate Courts Ordinance in April, a new Native Courts Ordinance came into force. The main change which this Ordinance effected was the provision of an appeal either to the District Officer and Resident, or to the Magistrate and Judge of the High Court, in addition to the system of review by the District Officer or Resident. In practice there has so far been little change in the procedure in the Native Courts. Although the fact that a litigant has a right to appeal was announced in the courts and given publicity, little advantage has been taken of the privilege: in fact during the year there have been no appeals to the District Officer or Resident. It may appear that this is due to the fact that a fee is charged for an appeal, whereas a review is free, except for a small search fee. This.

however, is probably not the true reason. The Ibo is naturally conservative and is quite satisfied with the system of review with which he is familiar; furthermore he cannot appreciate the difference between an appeal and a review.

14. The policy has been adopted of giving the Native Courts very limited powers. With a few exceptions all the courts are now of "D" grade and have jurisdiction in criminal cases up to three months imprisonment or six in cases of praedial larceny.

15. The work of the courts has been satisfactory and has fully justified the opinion previously expressed, that better justice is administered than was the case in the days of the old Native Courts. Close supervision has been exercised by the Administrative Staff and practically every court has been visited at least once a month. Towards the end of the year a somewhat elaborate system of bribery and corruption was discovered in one or two of the Ngwa Courts in Aba Division. Prompt action was taken and a number of the staff and some members of the bench are being prosecuted in the High Court.

16. During the year 41,783 cases were heard in the Native Courts of the Province. This shows a slight decrease on the figures for 1933 but calls for no comment. Applications for review were made in 6,157 cases. In 2,473 of these the judgments were confirmed. 791 were quashed, the remainder being modified, or transferred to other courts. These figures may be considered as satisfactory, especially in view of the fact that many of the applications for review were in respect of cases in which the applicant was absent at the original hearing.

General Activities.

17. One of the principal activities of the Native Administrations throughout the Province is in respect of medical benefits. The hospitals at Owerri and Okigwi are maintained by Government but were originally built out of Native Administration funds. During the year additional accommodation was provided for the staff at Okigwi. At Degema the Native Administration helped to provide a much needed ward for the Government Hospital. The dispensaries which have been established have proved increasingly popular, five new ones have been erected and equipped during the year making nineteen in all. These dispensaries are in charge of local youths who receive a year's training at a Government hospital and are capable of dispensing simple remedies and rendering first aid in cases of accident. They are regularly supervised by Government Medical Officers and the Motor Ambulance stationed at Owerri conveys serious cases from the dispensaries to the hospitals at Owerri and Okigwi.

18. One of the most striking examples of Native Administration activity is the leper colony at Uzuakoli where over 500 lepers are now accommodated at a cost of £2,300 a year. The colony is in charge of a Medical Superintendent provided by the Methodist Mission. An attempt has been made to admit mostly cases in the early stages of the disease in which there is a chance of recovery under modern methods of treatment. The social life of the inmates of the colony has been carefully studied. The colony possesses its own police force, boy scouts, schools, carpenter shops, a brass band, and even a Native Court conducted on approved lines. During the year a "clean" children's ward has been added to the colony.

19. The campaign against sleeping sickness in Ahoada Division was continued during the year, a large part of the necessary funds being provided by the Native Administration. The team completed its work in December, but a Dispensary Attendant is being trained to enable him to continue the treatment.

20. The Native Authorities in various parts of the Province are evincing an increased interest in sanitation. To meet the demand for improved sanitation in the villages a training school for Native Administration Sanitary Inspectors has been started at Umudike under a Government Medical Officer of Health. The pupils are subsisted by the Native Administrations during training, at the end of which it is intended that they should be employed as Sanitary Inspectors in the areas to which they belong.

21. Sight has not been lost of the question of Education. There is only one school entirely maintained by the Native Administration. This is at Nembe in Degema Division. It is well attended and favourably reported on by Education Officers. It is proposed to establish two Native Administration schools in Okigwi and one in Ahoada Division. Youths have been sent to Uyo to be trained as teachers and when their training is completed it is hoped that the schools can be opened. It cannot be said, however, that there is any widespread desire for elementary Native Administration schools. The numerous Mission schools which are to be found throughout the Province provide all that is necessary in the matter of elementary education. The wish of the people is more for facilities for higher education. This is in part gratified by the provision for scholarships tenable at the Government College at Umudike which is made by several of the Native Administrations. Native Administration funds are also used to improve and extend the buildings of the Government schools.

22. The Native Authorities are showing an increased interest in agricultural development and the suspicious attendant on Government's efforts to improve palm oil production is rapidly vanishing. Several of the Native Administrations have engaged Agricultural Assistants to supervise palm oil plantations and to advise the farmers generally on agricultural matters. In addition to extensions to existing plantations fifty-one farmers have planted palm oil plots on approved lines during the year involving a total area of sixty-two acres. A palm oil nursery is maintained at Orlu by the Native Administration. Twelve new kola plantations have been established by private enterprise and experiments in green manuring have been successfully carried out in Owerri and Okigwi Divisions.

23. Owing to lack of money, there has been little demand for palm oil presses, though the Native Administrations are willing to make advances for the purchase of them. Two presses only were bought during the year, one on hire purchase arranged by the Bende Native Administration.

24. The Native Administrations maintain about 1,300 miles of road throughout the province. Owing to the necessity for economy the construction of new roads during the year has been negligible, but a number of temporary bridges have been replaced by permanent structures.

Financial

25. It is somewhat difficult to give a clear picture of Native Administration finance as the province is still in the process of reorganisation. With some exceptions, each division has a

central Treasury. The funds are administered at headquarters and estimates are prepared for a whole. When an area is reorganised and a Native Administration is established subsidiary estimates are submitted as an appendix to the Divisional Estimate, the Native Administration being allotted its share of the capital in the Divisional Treasury. Thus, when a division is complete, the Divisional Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure in the division and estimates, how this is divided amongst the various Native Administrations of Bonny, Okrika and other divisions, are printed. The same applies to a small Division.

26. In framing the estimates the Native Administrations are fully consulted, though for the most part their finance is rudimentary and they have to be guided by the District Officer.

27. An interesting experiment was tried during the Owerri Division. Six Native Administrations of related towns in an unsophisticated and densely populated area were provided with a safe and allowed to handle its own funds. Each was under careful supervision was exercised. The result has been satisfactory and the elders have begun to realise that expenditure cannot be incurred unless the Revenue is there to meet it. The establishment of these Treasuries also had a most beneficial effect on tax collection. Where previously it was necessary for the Administrative Officer to visit each village before any paying was forthcoming it is now quite common to find the people paying it voluntarily to their own Treasury.

28. There are encouraging signs of the development of a sense of financial responsibility which is one of the key stones of Native Administration. The Olokoro Clan in Bende Division has asked for its own Treasury and the Ngwa Clan in Aba Division which consists of twenty-four group councils and courts has suggested a central Treasury for the whole clan.

29. Throughout the province tax is now collected through the indigenous organisations of the people. Owing to the serious depression in trade and consequent poverty, considerable latitude was allowed in respect of the date of payment; this was particularly necessary in view of the fact that arrears for 1933-34 had to be collected before a start could be made with the 1934-35 collection. These arrears were considerable in Bende and Okigwi Divisions where it was necessary to employ a small escort of Police before the balance was forthcoming. On the whole, however, tax collection was carried out satisfactorily. On December 31st about twenty-two per cent of the total tax for 1934-35 was still outstanding, but this does not indicate unwillingness to pay, as in many areas the most suitable time for collection is after Christmas.

30. Owing to the low level of produce prices, it was necessary during the year to effect considerable reductions in the rate of tax in Owerri, Okigwi and Bende Divisions. In parts of Owerri the rate is now as low as 1s 6d per adult male. The rate throughout the rest of the province remained unchanged.

31. With the exception of Bende Division the financial position of the Native Administration is satisfactory, Owerri and Okigwi in particular having large surplus balances. These balances have, however, been built up in more affluent days and the greatest economy is now necessary to keep the annual recurrent expenditure within the limits of the annual revenue. Avenues have been sought for spending some of the capital to the benefit of the people without incurring any serious additional recurrent expenditure. The great desire is for roads and water supplies. Owing to the cost of upkeep any considerable extension of the road system is not feasible at present, but the desire for water is shortly to be gratified. A scheme has been approved for sinking a number of wells in Owerri, Okigwi and Aba Divisions at a cost of about £5,000 to be spread over several years. These wells will supply a long felt need and the cost of their maintenance will be small. The work is to be carried out by the Geological Survey Department and the sites for nineteen wells have already been fixed.

32. The state of trade during the year has given rise to considerable apprehension. The price of palm oil at one time fell as low as 4d. for a four gallon tin and the plight of the people in the densely populated areas, who depend almost entirely on the sale of palm oil for their living, seemed serious, in spite of some alleviation brought by a reduction in the rate of tax.

33. The depressed state of trade brought out the enterprising nature of the Ibo middlemen. In order to obtain the higher prices for oil which the firms could afford to pay at Opobo as opposed to Port Harcourt and the stations on the Railway line, the middlemen adopted a system of bicycle transport. For months the roads converging on Aba were thronged with hundreds of cyclists with as many as three tins of oil strapped to their carriers. On reaching Aba the oil is sold to traders from Opobo who convey it to that port in canoes.

34. Towards the end of the year there was a very considerable rise in the price of oil and by December 31st the producer was obtaining from 2s. to 2s. 6d. for a four gallon tin.

35. The natives of the Owerri Province have endured hard times with their usual cheerfulness and it is gratifying that at the end of the year improving trade provided a reward for their fortitude.

OYO PROVINCE.

By H. L. WARD-PRICE, *Resident*.

The Oyo Province comprises five separate Yoruba Native Administrations. The largest is Ibadan with a population little short of a million; the smallest is Illa, with 14,000. The others are Ife, Ilesha and Oyo. It was from the town of Ife that the whole Yoruba people, numbering three millions, originated; and it has been conjectured that it was a highly civilised city about 1,000 B.C. All the present Obas, that is, independent head chiefs of Yoruba groups, trace their descent from Ife in the distant past. There are four of these Obas in the province, each with a title peculiar to his position; namely, the Oni of Ife, the Alafin of Oyo, the Owa of Ilesha and the Orangun of Illa. Each one is the Native Authority for his District. It now seems likely that the old controversy concerning their order of precedence will soon cease to arouse much interest.

2. These Obas were never allowed to see each other; and the only communication between them was to express salutations at festivals and on occasions of important bereavements. 1934 can be said to have seen the birth of a new outlook among them; they are now desirous of meeting one another; to exchange views on current affairs. Such a meeting would, of course, include the chiefs of the Ibadan confederation.

3. The system of administration in these four groups is simple and effective. The Oba is the head and, theoretically, full powers over all the people are invested in his person. His office and crown are consecrated and revered, and are loyally served. Numerous servants are attached to his house, who see that their master's orders are obeyed. In practice however, an Oba rarely acts by himself, he regularly consults his council and has to be very sure of himself before he opposes their advice. This council consists of titled persons who are each charged with certain duties; such as, the care of a ward or section of the capital town, acting as the representative or deputy of some other town or village to express its wants or views in the Oba's council; acting as daily advisers to the Oba, as judges in the Courts of law, as the priest of some cult or religion of importance, or as leaders in times of war or rebellion. Everybody has right of access to one or more of these titled persons, especially the heads of families; and thus any grievance or proposal can easily be transmitted to the Oba's council in which all public matters, great or small, are discussed, and from which, in the name of the Oba, orders are issued.

4. The same system is applied locally to towns and villages other than the capital town.

5. Events of the year have confirmed once again, however, that native customs and systems among these people are in no respect rigid or unalterable. The Yoruba is ever ready to trim his sails so as to make the most of whatever breeze blows at the moment; and the organisation is sufficiently deeply-rooted and flexible to enable it to be adapted to changes of a far-reaching nature without disturbing the general tranquillity.

6. The Ibadan Native Administration is in a different category. Here the head chief is not an Oba, in fact, though his position is a very important one, his title is the same as that of the headman in any small hamlet, namely, Bale, which means the father, or guardian, of the community. Ibadan, the 1931 census population of which is given as 387,000, became early on in its story a large war camp and it is still organised on a military basis. It was by the power of Ibadan that the Fulani invasion from the north, which destroyed the original city of Oyo, was prevented from penetrating further south. Numerous towns and villages then put themselves under the protection of Ibadan; and it is the people of these same places which to-day form the Ibadan Native Administration.

7. In April, 1934, an Ibadan Native Authority was established by the Government to cover all the territory known as the Ibadan Division. For some years, the Alafin of Oyo had been officially recognised as the head of the administration, as well as that of Oyo; though his power was exercised almost entirely in a nominal manner.

8. The Bale of Ibadan is recognised by all the chiefs and people of the division as being the leader among them; but the Native Authority is a composite body of nine chiefs; four from Ibadan, and the leading chiefs of five other large towns.

These chiefs have met frequently, and together they carry on the affairs of the whole group. Local matters are dealt with locally; only matters of a general nature being discussed by the Native Authority. They have worked together harmoniously and have shown at times a creditable spirit of mutual goodwill, such as the yielding up of claims to land for the sake of preserving the unity and harmony of the confederation.

9. The system of administration is entirely satisfactory to the people concerned, though constant minor changes are necessary to meet the numerous demands and new ideas which come at them from all angles in the present-day Nigeria.

10. There has continued to be the closest co-operation between the Native Authorities and the Administrative Officers. In fact, nothing of any importance is ever done by the chiefs without first seeking advice. During the year they have been encouraged to speak out what is really in their minds, as there is often a strong tendency, inherent in the people from time immemorial, to concur with the suggestions of those in authority—in this case, the Government of Nigeria—with a shrug of the shoulders, as if they were compelled to acquiesce even though the proposal before them was not to their liking.

11. Nearly all the members of the councils are illiterate, but not all of them are lacking in wisdom and knowledge of local affairs and needs. The educated element among the population, however, cannot claim that their views, or offers of assistance, are neglected as they have been brought into contact frequently with the authorities. Some are appointed to titled offices, where they are eligible for this honour; others have been made members of the councils, have sat on committees; given aid on special occasions, and acted as judges in the courts; while the suggestions of the various Progressive Unions, which are composed largely of educated persons, have always been carefully considered.

12. Several disputes have arisen over the appointment of successors to replace deceased heads of towns and villages. Formerly, the choice was left to the chiefs who formed the local council; but now-a-days it is not difficult for unauthorised persons to stir up opposition to a proposed candidate, or to press for the appointment of one of their friends. The Township of Ede, for instance, a large town on the railway, was vacant for eight months, on account of such a dispute.

13. One of the most important duties of the Native Authorities is, naturally, to collect the taxes, forty per cent of the total being paid over to the Government Treasury. Heads of towns, wards, and families exercise their influence in this direction. The collection has, on the whole, been carried out satisfactorily; but not without constant attention and the expenditure of much energy on the part of both chiefs and administrative officers. It is the duty of each adult male to pay between 6s. and 8s. The administration is legally responsible for this collection from each individual of a population in which there is a good deal of movement; and which is scattered over the whole countryside, now that the custom of residing in the towns has given way to spending most of the year in a house on the farm. The heads of families give all the assistance they can. To collect the tax of Ibadan town is a large undertaking and has occupied almost the whole-time supervision of an administrative officer, not only to guard against losses of money, but to persuade some 70,000 men, distributed over hundreds of square miles of country, to pay what is due and to pay it in full at a certain time.

14. The tax is an income tax and though the vast majority pay a flat rate, the assessment of wealthier persons, nearly all reluctant to admit their true income has been found difficult and calls for time and patience. At the beginning of the year it seemed that a delicate task was ahead, but later on, more money seemed to be circulating, and the tax was paid more readily than was anticipated, though there are still arrears, even from the previous year, in some places. The only reduction in the flat rate was in the Oyo Division, from 8s to 7s.; but numerous reductions had also to be made in the special assessments on incomes which are above the average of the ordinary farmer.

15. By careful handling of their funds, the Native Administrations have kept their financial position sound, though it must be admitted that they have been closely advised by the administrative officers. Each treasury except Ila has savings apart from its Reserve Fund, and these have been made part use of. For example four thousand pounds was allocated by Ife Native Administration towards the £20,000 Ife Town Water Supply, now nearing completion, over three thousand pounds by the Ilesha Native Administration on a small but well-conceived Council Hall; while £7,000 was set apart by the Oyo Native Administration for a water supply for the large town of Iseyin, and £1,000 for the extension to the village of Awe. All these works have been designed by Mr. R. Jones, the Native Administration Engineer, who was responsible for the massive Council Hall at Ibadan. As regards Ibadan funds, the expenditure of savings on urgent works has been held up by Government while the proposals for a large water and electricity supply were under discussion. This comprehensive scheme has unfortunately been abandoned, as a sufficiently large free grant from Government was not available and the rate of interest charged on the money to be borrowed was so high. Plans have been prepared for other urgent works to cost £20,000, these await approval, being for new court houses, new and wider streets, roads, and a water supply for Oghomoshó, one of the largest towns in Nigeria.

16. Financial assistance has been given to the Grammar Schools at Ibadan, Ife and Ilesha; the Native Administration schools at Oyo, Iseyin, Oghomoshó and Ila have been increased in size; the Bale's school and the Practising School at Ibadan are now entirely Native Administration institutions; two reading rooms, with small libraries, are now available at Ibadan and are appreciated. The training centre for teachers has carried on successfully; its products are of a high standard and they do very useful work.

17. The continuous increase in road mileage and other public works means increase in cost of maintenance; and the time has nearly arrived when new ventures must be withheld until a considerable augmentation to the revenue is possible. Four Europeans were employed by the Ibadan Native Administration Works Department, but they each help with works anywhere in the province.

18. The Ibadan Native Administration hospital was often full to overflowing. 673 operations were performed. It is run on modern lines, and is supplied with electricity and X ray apparatus. A Government doctor is in charge, ably assisted by a Nursing Sister. The numerous dressing stations distributed over the province have been well managed on the whole; and it is rather surprising they are not more largely patronised. No fees are

charged, and this may cause some people to think that the treatment cannot be of much value. The Leper Colony at Ogbomoso, for early cases only, has been increased to hold forty patients. Some cures have already been effected. It is managed by the American Baptist Mission on behalf of the Ibadan Native Administration.

19. The course of study of the first batch of pupils in the Health Training School is nearing its end. They are being taught the principles of hygiene, and are to act as advisers to chiefs and householders, and to give practical demonstrations of how to carry out improvements. A committee of men and women chiefs and educated persons now sits at Ibadan to study sanitary questions and make suggestions as to how to encourage healthful habits at a low cost.

20. A firewood plantation has been started at Ede, which will eventually cover 250 acres. Several other small ones have been established, especially in the Oyo Division, and are greatly appreciated. As much progress as possible has taken place regarding the demarcation of two large Forest Reserves in the Oyo Division, and the new Ife Reserve will soon be finally settled.

21. The new houses now being built by the public are nearly always on more modern lines than of old. The customary quadrangular compound, which housed various branches of one family, is dying out; a sign of the gradual break-up of the large families into individual units.

22. Co-operative societies for the sale of cocoon are increasing in numbers and in membership. The Produce Inspection Scheme at Ibadan, supported by voluntary contributions, though often adversely criticised, seems to have improved the quality of produce which enters Ibadan; and so has prevented a good deal of expensive congestion at the Government Examination centres. The produce buyers at Ife, Oshogbo, and other towns are anxious to establish similar systems in their own markets.

23. A news-sheet has been introduced at Ibadan and is issued monthly, containing only Native Administration news. It was eventually decided to include news from the rest of the province. The difficulty of spreading information is very real, especially now that the towns are not the permanent home of the farming population.

24. The Ife Native Administration has given encouragement to its scheme for the registration of births, deaths and marriages. The Council decided to make the registration of marriages compulsory; no fee is to be charged unless a certificate is supplied.

25. The land tenure question has been in an unsettled and confusing state; especially as regards the Ibadan Division. Some preliminary rules have been drafted. The chiefs do not want to see their traditional trusteeship of the land weakened; and hope to be able to protect improvident or ignorant occupiers from parting with their land to the detriment of themselves or their children. Nor do they like to see strangers occupying and selling land without permission. The Protectorate Court attaches land and houses for debt and these are sometimes sold before the chiefs are informed. The remedy of applying for an interpleader summons is complicated and not clearly understood. This matter is already under consideration by the Government.

26. The native courts at the principal centres have powers up to one year's imprisonment and a fine of £50. In nearly all other courts the limit is three months imprisonment and ten pounds fine. The judges are quite capable of dealing with the cases which come before them. Any case in which law is involved or which is particularly complicated is taken in the Protectorate Court. Land disputes have always been very difficult to settle owing to the lack of really satisfactory evidence. The Native Courts are popular; and though the judges are by no means free from partiality at times, they give sensible judgments on the whole; and the knowledge that the courts are so regularly inspected, and access to an administrative officer is so easy, would keep them reasonable in any circumstances. When a case is brought to court it can be said with safety that the parties concerned receive justice, particularly as the administrative officers regard this as the most important part of their various duties. What justice actually is, in any given case, is often, of course, a matter of opinion. The new system of appeals introduced in April, 1934, has not so far made much difference in this province. Formerly, "reviews" of cases, for which no charge was made, were not always recorded in detail, though they may have been exhaustively investigated; and they could not be legally demanded by a litigant; though, as a matter of fact, such reviews were never refused when applied for. Under the new system the results of the appeal, which has to be paid for, are recorded in a special book. Appeals from the Native Court lie to the District Officer, then to the Resident and then to the Governor, and not to the Protectorate Court.

WARRI PROVINCE.

By CAPTAIN E. A. MILLER, *Acting Resident*.

Native Administrations are just beginning to emerge from the transitional period which was the direct result of the inquiries into local organisations and institutions. Considerable progress has been made during the year but before discussing matters in more detail it may not be out of place to describe the general system of administration. The four main tribes in the Province are the Jekris, the Sobos, the Ijaws, and the Kwale and Aboh Ibos of the Aboh Division. The system is generally speaking the same throughout the Province and is based on the village group. With the exception of the Ohi of Aboh, who is a Native Authority in his own right, the clan or village group councils form the Native Authorities for their respective areas. Each of the tribes has its own native treasury which has been created through the federation of the component clans. One treasury however is composed of a combination of the Jekris and some of the Sobos as at the outset it seemed unlikely that any division could be made between two peoples who were so closely related by ties of marriage and who in addition lived side by side in the same towns and villages. The combination is not proving too successful though both Sobos and Jekris are developing along their own traditional lines.

2 The year has been perhaps the most unfortunate one on record from the financial point of view of the people. The prices of palm oil and palm kernels fell far below the low levels of 1933, and conditions were such that production became no longer an economic proposition. The price of foodstuffs in the local markets fell in proportion and in consequence the Ibo farmers and the Ijaw fishermen

suffered equally with the Sobo and Jekri palm oil producers and merchants. In such circumstances when it did not pay the people to market their produce it was not surprising that the Sobos should band themselves together in an effort to secure better prices. The resulting trade boycott commenced early in July and spread rapidly through all the Sobo areas of the province. Some colour was lent to the promoters' arguments by the fact that prices tended to rise immediately the boycott became effective. The Native Authorities found themselves in a very difficult position as their members are for the most part middlemen themselves and they cannot be blamed too severely for expressing their sympathies. In direct answer, as it seemed to the people, conditions improved early in December and at the end of the year trade was once again in full swing. Prices had more than doubled and the commercial houses reported a rising market. Whilst these conditions have affected the vast majority of the people there has been a pleasing exception at Sapele where the community has derived considerable benefit from the increased activity in the Benin timber trade.

3. The people have shown a remarkable degree of fortitude in these bad times and there has been a general desire to make the best of things. Experiments in the cultivation of rice, which had not been grown before in the province, have yielded fair results and there is no lack of interest on the part of the Jekri people. The desire for education is just as keen as in more prosperous times, and at the insistent desire of the Native Authorities several new schools have been opened during the year, staffed by local youths specially trained in the Provincial Training Centre. In a few places there has been a falling off in attendances at the established schools, but for the most part the parents have contrived to pay the school fees—in some cases at no inconsiderable sacrifice. Individual people have shown that they are by no means uninterested in the scheme for the development of palm plantations, but the communal system of land tenure still militates very strongly against enterprises of this nature. Improved seed however has been procured and when the superiority of the new palm has been demonstrated the natural thrust of the Sobo people will quickly make up for any loss of headway in the initial stages.

4. There are nine dispensaries financed and conducted by the different Native Administrations under the supervision of the Medical Officers. They are proving extremely popular and not the least of the benefits to be derived from them is the lesson of personal cleanliness. A local boy is being trained as a vaccinator in addition to his ordinary duties and it is hoped that vaccination may shortly become part of the recognised treatment at the dispensaries. Four of the six Native Administrations assist in the support of the new leper settlement at Ossomo in the Benin Province.

5. Tax collection has provided a striking instance of the spirit and courage particularly of the Sobo people. Commencement of collection was deferred until the end of October so as to allow the people to pay at the time best suited to themselves. As early as the end of December the energetic Sobo Native Authorities had completed payment and had paid into the local bank an amount well in excess of £8,000.

Native Authorities

6. Just as 1933 saw the completion of the task of re-organisation of the system of administration, so 1934 has been a period during which the Native Authorities have been consolidating their positions and learning their duties and limitations. The results

have been on the whole most encouraging, and if some of the Native Authorities have lagged behind others this was only to be expected. In the administration of their own local affairs a keen interest is shown.

7. Perhaps the most notable example has been shown by the Odogun, the Council of the Ukpe-Sobo Clan. This Council, composed of selected representatives of the main families of the clan, is proving to be a strong and determined body and keenly alive to its responsibilities as well as to the fact that its continued existence as a force to be reckoned with depends on progress on the right lines. The Ukpe-Sobo Clan is one of those which have in the past been under Jekri influence and it is included in the mixed Jekri-Sobo Native Administration.

After a series of well-conducted meetings the Odogun has expressed its desire to separate its administration from that of the Jekris. It considers that it is a sufficiently responsible body to conduct its own affairs until such time as all the Sobo Clans of the province have progressed sufficiently far to allow of federation. It does not under-estimate the difficulties which arise from the series of land disputes with the Jekris, though in this respect the air has been cleared to some extent by the recent decision whereby the Privy Council upheld the Jekri claim to an important area of land in Warri Township. Following this decision the Council is prepared to appoint an executive committee to discuss matters with the Jekri Native Authority. Time will show whether the ideal of a united Sobo tribe is practical politics.

8. The Jekri Tribal Council has perhaps not made the same headway as its Sobo neighbours, but the people who acknowledge its authority are so scattered, that its task is infinitely more difficult. The question of an administration separate from that of the Sobo is being discussed, and there is a movement towards securing agreement amongst the Olu families with a view to the restoration of that almost mythical title—the Olu.

9. The Olu of Aboh who is the only real chief in the province, is finding his position as Native Authority by no means a sincere. His task is rendered the more difficult by the fact that all the other clans are organised on the basis of government by council and that in these councils, which are run on truly democratic lines, there is as a rule no outstanding personality.

10. The council members of the Sobos, Ijaws and the Kwale-Ibos are for the most part illiterate but, particularly amongst the Sobos, a sense of responsibility is being developed which augurs well for the future. The Ijaws have again done well despite the difficulty of communication which is entirely by canoe. The advantages of federation for other than financial purposes are being realised. The Tarakri Clan recently approached the District Officer with a proposal to establish a dispensary. On learning that a neighbouring clan wished to build a dispensary close to the common boundary it postponed any decision and returned home to review the situation. The result was a request for both a dispensary and a school the cost to be borne equally between the two clans. Such a measure of co-operation would not have been feasible a few short years ago and the ultimate fusion of the nine clans is by no means impossible. The institutions of the Kwale-Ibos were only commenced during the year and it is too early yet to speak with any definition. A great deal of sympathetic advice and tuition will be needed.

11. The system of tax collection in the province affords an excellent opportunity for judging the degree of efficiency attained by the Native Authorities. The village councils prepare their own lists of tax-payers which they hand over to the Clan Council. These lists are then submitted to the District Officer who informs the Clan Council of the total amount of tax due from the clan as a whole and from the villages in particular. The rest of the collection is then left to the councils, and in the great majority of cases it is performed very well indeed. The Sobos perhaps show more aptitude than their neighbours, though some surprising results have been obtained by the Ijaws and Kwale-Ihos. It is no uncommon event for the village lists of payers to be revised so as to show more tax-payers, though the reverse is perhaps more common, and the machinery employed by the people to collect their tax is entirely adequate for the purpose. Tax collection started at the end of October and by the end of the year £15,405 had been paid in out of a total estimated at £28,513 17s. These figures reflect very great credit on the Native Authorities whose task, by no means easy, must have been carried out with the exercise of considerable patience.

12. At the end of the year there were some 250 Native Courts in operation. During the present period of the education of the people in local self-government, it is found that the number of such courts tends rather to increase, as each village is almost over eager to exercise its individuality and to prove its trustworthiness. Several of the village courts however do little work and all cases of any note seem to find their way into the clan courts. But the importance of these village courts lies in the fact that they can and do settle the matrimonial disputes which arise within their respective areas, and there is no tribunal more fitted than they to do so.

13. The judges in all the courts are the members of the councils who are entitled by their position as elders to determine cases. Their judgments may not always prove to be good law but I am satisfied that in the great majority of cases a real attempt is made to give a decision which is fair and equitable. The total number of criminal cases that came before the courts was 5,400 whilst 7,924 civil cases were disposed of. The figures for civil cases show a remarkable falling away when compared with those for 1933 (10,158) and the decrease is almost entirely due to the shortage of money in circulation. This reflects only too accurately the condition of the people's finances. With a continuance of these conditions the question of a reduction in process fees would inevitably have had to be considered, but happily this will not be necessary for the present owing to the recent rise in prices.

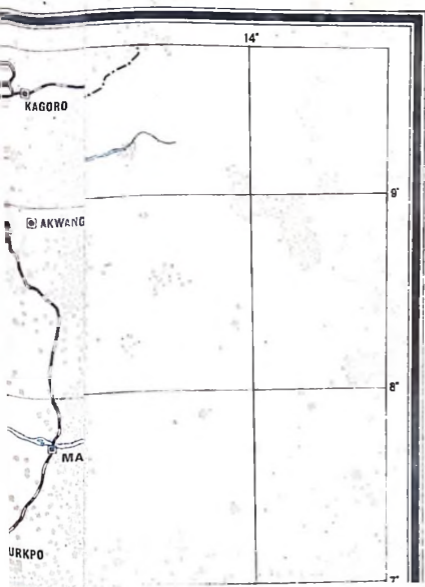
14. The continued low level of produce prices affected most adversely the revenue of the Native Treasuries. Native court fees have declined by more than 20%. In addition to this it was found necessary to reduce the general tax flat rate in the Aboh Division from 6s. to 5s. These factors entailed a reduction in the salaries paid to the Obi of Aboh and the clan councils subordinate to him. Economy has had to be practised, but it has been found possible to maintain practically all of the existing social services without seriously depleting the balances of any of the Native Treasuries, all of which are in a sound financial position.

15. Interest shown by the Clan Councils in financial matters progresses along the normal course and there have been no startling developments. It had been hoped that some of the clans would follow the example of the Obi of Aboh and ask for the custody of their own funds, but when it came to the point they found themselves unable to take the responsibility. There can be no doubt of

their ability which is instanced in the past by their management of funds common to the village, and once the similarity between these funds and the native treasury funds is realised development should be rapid. Apart from this one of the most difficult lessons has been learnt and the councils as well as the people themselves fully appreciate that the funds in the native treasury belong to themselves, and will be expended for their benefit on such services as health, education and communications. The smallest Native Administration in the province, with a revenue of approximately £100 a year, has decided that in the fullness of time it must have a school of its own. In consequence it has set its face against any but absolutely essential expenditure, and now with a surplus of some £130, it seems that its dream may be realised before very long.

16 Up to the middle of December the financial position of the people was one of unrelieved depression which only served to bring forth splendid qualities of courage and tenacity. Councils and people are alive to the necessity for progress and are busy trying to find the best lines on which they shall proceed. With such conditions there is possibly little that is exceptional to be recorded, but with the return of more prosperous times as was evidenced at the end of the year, the interest and ungrudging service of the past two years will undoubtedly bear fruit of the right kind.





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REPORT
ON THE
SOUTHERN PROVINCES
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Annual Report on the Southern Provinces of Nigeria for the year 1935.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

The aim of this Report is to provide a record of native affairs in the Southern Provinces during the year under review with special reference to the policy of Native Administration. The first four paragraphs of the general summary are reproduced from the 1934 Report with slight modifications in order to furnish a background for the general reader.

II.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

By G. H. FISHLAY, Esq., *Acting Chief Commissioner, Southern Provinces.*

The Southern Provinces, including the southern portion of the Cameroons under British Mandate, cover an area of about 90,000 square miles enclosed roughly by the parallels of latitude three degrees and nine degrees North and the meridians of longitude three degrees and three degrees East. Topographically, this area may be divided into three main zones, a coastal belt of swamp and mangrove forest varying from ten to sixty miles in width, a middle belt of secondary forest and savannah. Administratively, it is divided into eleven provinces, comprising one or more divisions and districts. Each province is in charge of a Resident with a staff of District Officers and Assistant District Officers, while the administration of the whole group is vested in a Chief Commissioner, responsible to the Governor of Nigeria.

2. Politically, the Southern Provinces may be roughly divided into two main groups: the western group, west of the Niger, comprising the Yoruba tribe and its affinities, where the sub-tribal stage of political development has been reached and more or less highly organised communities, such as Abeokuta and Benin, have emerged; and the eastern group, embracing the Sobo, Ibo, Ibibio, and lesser tribes where political evolution has not advanced beyond the clan and family stage, and the idea of chieftainship has made little headway, except in the northern part of the Cameroons Province.

3. Historically, the Southern Provinces of Nigeria apart from the mandated territory of the Cameroons, came into being on 1st January, 1914, when the Colony of Lagos and the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were amalgamated with the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. Prior to that date the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was divided into three Provinces, Western, Central and Eastern, each under a Provincial Commissioner who was directly responsible to the Governor, with much the same system of divisions and districts as obtains to-day. In the West the policy had been to interfere as little as possible with the native system, executive or judicial. Such political change as occurred was mainly in imitation of European ideas, and at Abeokuta, for example, then in treaty relations with the Government, an artificial form of constitution, modelled somewhat on Crown Colony lines, was established. In the East owing to the primitive state of most of the communities of the hinterland a more direct form of rule was devised and applied, and in the circumstances of the time no other course appears to have been practicable. It is true that in implementing this direct system the people were accorded a large share inasmuch as Native Courts were established everywhere, but it failed ultimately because it took insufficient account of the clan and tribal affinities and of the indigenous organisation; created Native Courts on too unrepresentative and arbitrary a basis which led to the assumption by individuals of unwarranted powers and to corruption; and so failed to win the genuine support of the mass of the people.

4. From 1914 onwards the definite objective was the development and extension of indirect rule on the basis of native institutions and its essential corollary, direct taxation, throughout the Southern Provinces, but progress was severely handicapped by the War. In the West the Obies and people of the Oyo Province, where the custom of paying tribute in one form or another still prevailed, were the first to accept direct taxation in 1918, followed by the Egbas, the Ijebus and the other smaller Yoruba communities: Benin and the communities akin to it followed suit by coming in 1921, and in all these areas Native Administrations based for the most part on the native system were constituted. On the other hand the Eastern Provinces including the Warri Province, but excluding the Cameroons where the direct taxation instituted by the Germans had been continued from 1916 onwards, showed no signs of conversion to the idea of direct taxation in return for the abolition of forced labour on road maintenance, and the time for introducing it was not held to be ripe till 1927-28. In the Eastern Provinces in contrast with the Western Provinces there had been no customary tribute and the organisation for applying direct taxation was to a large extent lacking. Intermittent efforts had been made after 1914 to discover and revive in some degree the native administrative system by a partial reorganisation of the Native Courts, but it was not until the beginning of 1928 that any systematic attempt was made to investigate the native social structure and to interest the people in a whole-hearted scheme of reform rooted in their own institutions. The disturbances at the end of 1927 in the Warri Province showed how tenacious the people were of their indigenous system and gave the stimulus to an intensive inquiry into its past and its future possibilities. Across the Niger the start came later, and it was not until the middle of 1929 that similar inquiries were generally set on foot. At the end of that year occurred the disastrous fall in prices and the disturbances beginning with the Ala riots and directed against taxation and the now discredited Native Court system. As in the Warri Province however they served to emphasise the general dissatisfaction with the existing method of direct rule and the need for the energetic pursuit of the inquiries, and the elaboration of schemes of reform in consonance, as far as modern conditions permit, with the native system and the people's desires. The years 1930 and 1931 were mainly years of inquiry, of trial and error, and few schemes outside the Warri Province were put into effect. In 1932 however the general line of policy became clearer and there was very marked advance, which was more than maintained during 1933 and 1934. The Warri Province, having started first, was the first to complete its scheme of reorganisation in 1934 after nearly seven years patient and intensive study; and this province affords as good an example as any of the passing of the old order with its somewhat arbitrary administrative boundaries and its 'chiefs' appointed with scant regard to native custom, and of the introduction of the new, with the administrative units formed according to tribal and clan distribution, and native councils and courts established on a wide democratic basis in conformity with local tradition. During 1935 the establishment of fifty-nine new native authorities has brought near to completion the work of reorganisation in the Southern Provinces.

5. In the Western or Yoruba speaking Provinces considerable progress has been made among the smaller chiefdoms in the Ilaro Division of the Abeokuta Province, in the outlying villages of the Ijebu Province and throughout the Ondo Province. In these areas the tendency has been towards decentralisation. Intelligence reports show more and more that the people through their councils have played a greater part in their political affairs than has hitherto been recognised and whereas it has been customary to consider the Oba or a federation of Obas as the sole Native Authority and to support the authority of the individual chief, it is now recognised that the Oba, by custom, derives his power from his council of chiefs without whose authority he has no right to speak for his people. The result has been a breaking up of the artificial federation previously established by Government and the recognition of the councils as an essential part of Native Authority. In the Ilaro Division where the Native Authority hitherto has been a federation

of thirteen Obas, four of these during the year with their councils have formed separate Native Authorities with their own Courts and with limited control of their own Native Administration Funds. In the Ondo Province also, particularly in the Ekiti Country, the example has been set by the hitherto somewhat reactionary Dept of Akure of recognising the authority of the subordinate village councils and admitting Village Heads as of right to sit as members of his Council.

6. The Oba of Benin, in the second year of his reign, is showing himself a progressive leader with respect for native constitution and the conventions of his office. He also is reforming his council by abolishing the old Judicial Council and District Hraags, introduced some twenty years ago, and returning to a Council constituted on traditional lines. Visits to his towns and villages have proved extremely popular and have brought him into closer contact with his people than has hitherto been customary. In the Warri Province, which was the first to be reorganised, the Jekri Chiefs and people have received the title of Olu, which has been dormant for a hundred years and selected a grandson of the last Olu to fill the hereditary position. The Soko people have shown administrative ability by consolidating their Councils and taking steps towards the establishment of their own separate Native Administration and Treasury. Their example is now being followed by the Ijaw people who have hitherto been handicapped by the inaccessibility of their villages among the creeks of the Niger Delta.

7. In the Ibo Provinces, where Native Authority consists of Village Heads and representatives in Councils of varying sizes, reorganisation has been almost completed. In the Ouitsha Province the number of Native Authorities has increased from thirty-five to sixty-three during the year and whilst the majority of them have not yet realised the nature of their obligations or opportunities and have not advanced beyond the idea of a common native court some have progressed in a remarkable manner. The Clan Council of Eungu Ezike, for example, in the Nsukka Division of Ouitsha Province, which consists of thirty-two villages and 27,000 people, was entirely responsible for tax during the year and collected and paid the whole of it amounting to £1,700, into the central Treasury within a period of four days. The Ngwa Clan of the Aha Division in the Owerri Province, which contains twenty-four village groups and a population of 11,000, has organised a Council capable of executive control which carried out successfully the collection of its taxes.

8. In the Calabar Province, where conditions for the establishment of Native Authorities on a clan basis are more favourable than elsewhere in the Eastern Provinces, progress has continued. Three separate clans in the Ikot-Ekpene and Abak Districts were granted their own Treasuries during the year with custody of their money sufficient to meet their monthly requirements, and more will follow in the new year. Only in Calabar itself jealousy between the old "houses" had retarded progress.

9. The general rise in the price of produce, palm oil, and kernels, cocco and cotton, has relieved the people of financial anxiety and left them free to turn their attention to the improvement of their conditions, both material and political. The Native Authorities already established are consolidating their positions and everywhere the people are anxious to try the experiment of local government. The Progressive Unions and Youngmen's Improvement Societies, which were mentioned in last year's report, have been possibly not so impatient of native custom and the traditional social conventions of native village life, and are more inclined to work through their native authorities, using their weight in the councils to good effect. The older and pagan element still prevails but it is only in a few exceptional places that the Christian and literate members of the community do not have their share both in the council of the clan and in the perquisites of office.

10. The Cameroons Province, being mandated territory, has its own peculiar history. Taken over by the civil administration in 1916 its system of rule under the Germans had been direct, more direct than in the Eastern

Provinces of Nigeria, and direct taxation had been in force for a number of years. Certain chiefs had been given minor judicial powers but there were no formal Native Courts regulated by law. After 1916 Native Courts were established under the Native Courts Ordinance, and Native Authorities were appointed; and in 1921 there began a close investigation of the history, affinities and customs of the various clans with a view to establishing native administration on a surer foundation. The ensuing reforms were to a large extent successful, but mistakes were made, particularly in the Kumba Division where an artificial system of District Heads has conspicuously failed. In the last five years the situation has been reviewed and administrative progress made particularly among the Banyangs of the Mamfe Division and the Bansas of the Bamenda Division, and during the past year in the Victoria Division, formerly administered by Direct Heads, the Bakweri and Balong Clans have formed their own Native Administrations on lines suitable to their customs and requirements.

11. The Cameroons Province is peculiar also in respect of the thirty European owned plantations in the Victoria and Kumba Divisions, running into some quarter of a million acres. These estates are a legacy of the German Administration and the alienation of such vast tracts of land has reacted adversely on the native institutions and on the development of the policy of indirect rule, but the difficulties are being gradually overcome. It is a tribute to the good management of these estates that the German managers and their assistants numbering about 200 with over 12,000 labourers from all parts work side by side with the Native Administrations with the minimum amount of friction.

JUDICIAL.

12. The Protectorate Courts, established under the Protectorate Courts Ordinance of 1934, came into operation on the 1st of April, 1934, as did also the Native Courts established under the Native Courts Ordinance of 1934. For the Southern Provinces judicial divisions of the High Court were formed with Judges at Calabar, Ikot-Ekpene, Enugu, Oritsha, Warri and Ibadan and Magisterial Areas for Calabar, Enugu, Oritsha, Benin and Ibadan. In places where Magistrates were not always available full or limited powers were conferred on District Officers and Assistant District Officers.

13. To what extent the new courts have proved a popular innovation it is difficult to say. The people in most provinces are inclined to be litigious and would take their cases before any tribunal, and with the increased circulation of money there has been a similar rise in the amount of litigation in all courts. Residents and District Officers, who formerly sat as Commissioners of the Provincial Courts, have been relieved of a large burden of judicial work but Assistant District Officers who are appointed Magistrates with limited powers have more to do, particularly in regard to inquests and committals for the High Court.

14. Reorganisation has brought about a complete change in the Native Court system. There are few left now of the old "warrant chief" courts. These have been replaced by the new clan and village courts, the benches of which consist of chiefs, elders or village representatives entitled by native custom to settle disputes and punish offenders. This has led, particularly in the Eastern Provinces, to massed benches and occasional confusion, but representation on them is popular and the councils themselves have begun to see the expediency of reducing their numbers to practical working bodies and are restricting them accordingly. The number of native courts has increased considerably and also, during the year, the amount of litigation. In the Calabar Province alone, civil cases increased by 50% and criminal by 10% to a total of approximately 45,000. Appeals lie for the most part to the District Officer and from him to the Resident. In a few courts only appeals lie to the Magistrates. The "review" by the District Officer which costs a nominal fee, usually 1s., is the popular resort of the unsuccessful litigant and criminal cases involving a sentence of imprisonment are automatically reviewed by the District Officers. In 207,922 cases heard by

the Native Courts in Southern Provinces last year there were 27,358 applications for review and 1,347 for appeal. Of the cases reviewed the judgment or sentence in 15,343 of them was modified in some way or other. It is the considered opinion of Residents and District Officers that the standard of justice dispensed by the Native Courts under the new Ordinance is higher than under the old, while opportunities for redress are now so widely known that injustice is more speedily detected and remedied.

NATIVE TREASURIES.

15. The year has been a notable one for the Native Treasuries. More money has been in circulation. Tax has been collected with greater ease than formerly and the reorganised councils have taken a greater part in tax collection. In the Calabar Province, several of the more advanced Councils have been appointed District Heads under the Native Revenue Ordinance and have taken over the collection and payment of tax of their clan. Three new Native Treasuries have been established with strong rooms and offices at clan headquarters. The Councils have selected those who are to hold the strong room keys and have appointed finance committees which will organise the work of revising nominal rolls of tax payers and of collecting the taxes. This progress is by no means universal, but on the whole the District Officers have been relieved of a large burden of trouble and responsibility in this respect. The majority of the Native Administration units have their own subsidiary estimates of revenue and expenditure to which they work, keeping their funds at the central Divisional Treasury in the custody of the District Officer. Eleven new Treasuries in all were formed and will appear in the printed Native Administration Estimates. Of these six are in the Calabar Province, two in the Cameroons, one in Ogoja and two in the Ondo Province. Even the most advanced of the reorganised councils, however, still have much to learn before they can be said to understand their financial obligations or the limitations of their spending capacity, and they still expect roads, schools, and hospitals to be forthcoming from their Treasuries, irrespective of cost. The Yoruba Obas, the Oni of Ife, the Alake of Abeokuta, and the Oba of Benin, on the other hand, whose administration is more autocratic, have a considerable knowledge of their own finances and are inclined to resent the restrictions which will not allow them a free hand in regard to the adjustment of Native Administration expenditure.

Economic

16. Improved produce prices, which have brought with them a return of prosperity, are referred to in every provincial report. The oil producer has benefitted by the rise from 1s. 6d. a four gallon tin to 2s. 6d. or 3s. with a similar rise in kernels. This does not return to 1929 prices when oil was at 6s. to 7s. a tin, but it means the difference between producing merely in order to pay for bare necessities and producing for a small profit. Trade is therefore flourishing. The cocoa output increased considerably as is shown by the rapid expansion of Ondo as a buying centre for European exporters and prices were £2 per ton higher than last year. Co-operative Cocoa Marketing Societies increased their sales from 2,189 to 3,127 tons despite a severe set back in the Cameroons, where an attack of blackpod disease damaged the crop.

17. Cultivated oil palm plots are becoming recognised by the farmers as an improved and quicker method of production. The number of oil plot owners increased from 704 to 1,382 during the year and the acreage under cultivation from 1,457 to 2,499, the increase being mostly in the Benin Province, with Owerri and Onitsha Provinces close behind. Palm oil presses to the number of 180, as compared with 100 in 1931, were purchased by farmers or societies by means of loans from Native Administration funds. The Native Administrations keep nurseries for germinating selected oil palm seeds which are supplied to farmers at cost prices. The export of oranges, mostly from the Abeokuta Province, has increased from eight boxes in 1932

to 1,709 in 1935 and during the year farmers in that province have also bought from the Agricultural Department's nurseries all available stocks of grape fruits plants, with a view to future export.

18. During the year many of the Provinces, and particularly Calabar, were troubled with counterfeit coiners who made large quantities of spurious coins from moulds of cement or dried mud. Counterfeiting spread and became a menace to trading firms, banks, and the people themselves. In the Abakaliki Division of Ogoja Province two per cent of the shillings paid as tax were bad; and other places suffered also to a greater or lesser degree. One result of counterfeit shillings was a demand for nickel coins greater than could be supplied. In markets the women and traders would deal in nothing else, with the result that discounters were making 2d. in the shilling. Towards the end of the year counterfeiting received a check, due for the most part to propaganda, the turn of public opinion against counterfeiters and the severe measures taken against offenders. In Calabar Province twenty-three persons in one week were awarded sentences from four to ten years' imprisonment.

19. Illicit distilling is still carried on but not to the same extent as in the years of trade depression, when few could afford the much more popular imported gin.

20. General prosperity is also responsible for an increase in native food-stuff prices which have risen generally by about twenty-five per cent during the year.

EDUCATION AND MEDICAL.

21. The Native Administrations' educational efforts vary in accordance with the needs and means of the people. The Native Administrations in the Yoruba Provinces give financial assistance to Middle Schools established by the chiefs and people themselves at Ife, Ilesha and Ondo. In Benin the Native Administration is providing the money for the buildings of a Middle School, the teaching staff of which is to be supplied by Government. In the Eastern Provinces and in the Cameroons Province the Native Administrations are continuing their programmes for the establishment of elementary schools. In Warri also the Native Administrations have increased their schools but they are now clamouring for something more than elementary education and are anxious to pay for it themselves if the Government cannot provide. The Native Administration Centres at Uyo, Kake in the Cameroons, Warri and Ibadan, for the training of elementary teachers on lines suitable to their future life and work in the villages, have increased their numbers during the year and the products of the first year's course are now taking their places in newly established schools.

22. In medical work also the Native Administrations are increasing their activities. In the provinces boys who have been sent for training as Sanitary Inspectors are reported to be doing good work in the villages. 176 Native Administration dispensaries, an increase of fifteen over 1934, are at work. New wards for the hospitals at Emu and Onitsha have been built from Native Treasury funds and the Native Administration hospital at Ibadan is working to full capacity. The Native Administrations also provide support at treatment centres for pauper lepers and have given building grants to the centres at Ossomo in Benin Province, Oji River in Onitsha Province and Ekpene Obom in Calabar Province, all of which are managed by Mission doctors or are under Mission supervision. There is undoubtedly a growing interest taken in medicine and hygiene on the part of the people in many provinces and in this they are stimulated by the progressive unions and youth movements.

Public Works.

23. The new Abeokuta electric power station and waterworks was opened by the Alake last June and during the year the Egba Native Administration took over all Public Works within its administrative area. The Native

Administration is reimbursed by Government for all Government works and the Government provides the Provincial Engineer. This system which obviates the need for both Government and Native Administration works in the same Province is economical and prevents overlapping. It gives also to the Native Authorities more control over essential services in their own administration.

21. The Native Administrations maintain approximately 6,000 miles of roads at a cost of about £70,000 a year and although the demand for more roads is incessant many of them are already beginning to find the cost of maintenance too heavy a drain on their resources.

ABEOKUTA PROVINCE.

By A. E. F. MURRAY, Esquire, Resident.

1. Abeokuta, one of the smaller of the Southern Provinces, is divided into two divisions differing widely from each other in the character of their people and the stage of development of their Native Administrations. Prior to 1914, when the 1893 Treaty of Friendship and Commerce was annulled, Egba held a position approximating to that of a Native State. Under a Native Ruler termed the Alake, who acted on the advice of his Council, it regulated its own affairs, appointed Heads of Departments, levied tolls on merchandise and passed local legislation. Its judiciary consisted of Native Courts and a Mixed Court. Its revenue was derived from licences, fees and customs tolls. In 1914, as a result of the Ijemo rising, the 1893 Treaty was replaced by a new Agreement "placing the Egba Kingdom unreservedly under the Government of the Protectorate of Nigeria." The Egba United Government became the Egba Native Administration, a system of Native Courts was inaugurated which provided for review by Administrative Officers, tolls were abolished and, with the gradual introduction of income tax, paid labour took the place of *corvée*. Having for so many years modelled their institutions on western lines and managed their own affairs, it is not surprising that the Egba people should have developed a capacity for administration and an almost impatient anxiety that their country should maintain its reputation for progress. Although mainly agricultural, they have achieved remarkable success in the professions, commerce and politics. In consequence many of the leading men in the Capital of Nigeria and elsewhere are Egbas. The country, including the conquered and absorbed districts of Otta and Imala, is now administered by the Alake, an educated ruler, supported by a representative Council and advised by the Resident of the Province. This Council includes, in addition to the holders of certain titles, who are life members, twenty-four councillors, some of them leading barristers and commercial men, who are chosen triennially. It is probably the most completely organized Native Administration in the Southern Provinces to-day and a good type of indirect rule.

2. The Iaro Division on the other hand is composed of thirteen small separate administrative units each under its own independent chieftain or Oba, supported by a Council of traditional chiefs. Prior to the introduction of Government control none of them had had any experience of organized rule and the principles of indirect rule and Native Administration are only just beginning to be realized. The people are intelligent but, having remained largely untouched by the influences of education and European civilisation, their interests are those of a contented agricultural community undisturbed by the restless ambition which characterises their Egba neighbours.

3. The evolution of the Egba Administration from the form of administration that preceded it has been largely due to the foresight and personality of the present Alake. An enlightened ruler and indefatigable worker during the fifteen years he has held office, he has devoted himself whole heartedly to

the advancement of his people without rest or holiday. To his efforts is due the development of the Egba Council in its present representative form. Sanitation, health, education, farming and trade have all engaged his attention and there are a few social services or Departments of the Administration that have not been advanced and improved owing to his keen interest and assiduous devotion to detail. The recognition of his services by His Majesty the King in graciously appointing him an Honorary Commander of the Order of the British Empire gave wide-spread satisfaction to his people when they witnessed the presentation in July.

4. There is still too great a tendency for Egba Quarter Heads to spend too much time in their houses in the Capital instead of identifying themselves as closely as they should with their people in the country. Apart from the Alake himself, the Oshile of the Oke Ona Quarter is the only Quarter Head who has systematically visited his people in their villages, a change which they appear to appreciate. These Quarters represent the four groups into which Egbaland is divided, each of which has its traditional Head and slightly different dialect. Just over a hundred years ago pressure from enemies further north caused them to seek a common refuge among the cluster of rocky hills which forms the present site of Abeokuta town. Here, under the leadership of the Alake, the Head of the Egba Alake Group which was the first to arrive, they founded the four Quarters of the town. At first tribal wars confined the population to the town, the literal meaning of which is "under the rock", but, with the advent of peace, the inevitable migration into the country began. Every Egba, wherever he is, still retains his group identity and it is therefore desirable that the Group or Quarter Head should maintain the customary contact.

5. Proposals for the reorganization of the Otta district in the Egba Division are under consideration. This area, which comprises a section of the Awoi tribe conquered by the Egbas, has for some years suffered from internal dissensions owing mainly to the negative characteristics of the Head Chief who is lacking in administrative ability. Tactful intervention by the Alake and careful investigation of local customs and institutions by Administrative Officers have had the effect of improving the relations between the Olotta and his chiefs.

6. The peaceful aspect of the Imala district, which comprises a section of the Egbado tribe absorbed by the Egbas, living under the benign and patriarchal headship of the Amala, has been ruffled by the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. This Society predicts the overthrow by divine providence of organised religion, established Government and the existing state of society. Its activities at Imala, under the leadership of a shoemaker, were directed against the Church Missionary Society school and were greatly resented by the Amala and his chiefs. The school had to be closed temporarily but has since been reopened. The position has improved.

7. In the Ilaro Division the work of the year has been to put into practice the recommendations made in Intelligence Reports on four out of a total of thirteen administrative units previously grouped together under a Council of Head Chiefs which met occasionally at Ilaro. The reorganisation has been enthusiastically welcomed by the people. Each of the four groups has now become a separate Native Administration with administrative and judicial independence. Each has its own sub-treasury and subsidiary estimates but makes contributions towards central services. Checking and banking transactions are carried out by the central treasury at Ilaro.

8. Administratively the effect of this reorganization has been to reinvest the local councils with some of the responsibilities that devolved upon them before the creation under Government influence of an artificial council at Ilaro. The judiciary has been widened so as to give the Bale of every village an opportunity of sitting as one of the native court judges in cases in which any of his villagers are concerned. In the financial sphere the result has been to stimulate the tax payers to watch the rise and fall in revenue and to take a keen interest in the way in which the money is spent.

9. The old Council of Head Chiefs meeting at Iloro, still constitutes the Native Authority for the rest of the division which has not been reorganized. Intelligence reports will gradually show the geographical distribution of these people under their natural rulers and will indicate the degree of independence to be given to each. The separation of a number of small sections of the Yoruba people into petty Native Administrations cannot be expected at once to lead to any greater efficiency, especially in cases in which the revenue only just exceeds essential expenditure. The effect, however, where the process has begun, has been to create administrative consciousness, a sense of responsibility and an interest that was lacking before, which in course of time should lay the foundation of a healthy confederacy.

10. The financial position has been well maintained in the Iloro Division, which is likely to increase its surplus at the end of the year from £13,800 to £14,700. Tax has been readily paid and the four reorganized areas have already shown an increase of £190 over last year's collection. An increase of £141 in bicycle licences reflects the general improvement in trade. On the other hand no expensive schemes have been undertaken. In the Egha Division, in spite of an increase of £500 in tax, which came in with greater alacrity than usual, the position is not so good. Apart from a probable shortfall of £1,800 in Native Court and other revenue, this can only be attributed to the initial heavy expenditure incidental to the installation of a large electricity and water undertaking. As a result of this, which includes contributions to a renewals fund and part repayment of principal, the surplus at the end of the year will be reduced from £22,000 to £18,000 and at the end of the following year to £16,000. In view, however, of the subsequent return which the scheme may be expected to yield there is little ground for alarm.

11. There does not appear to be any lack of confidence in the Native Courts and the volume of work in the higher grade courts is as heavy as ever. In the Egha Division the new Ordinance provides for a channel of appeal from the minor courts to the Ake Grade "A" Native Court of Appeal and thence to the Egha Native Court of Appeal (the Ahke's Council) and the High Court. Prior to each appeal a dissatisfied litigant has the right to demand a free review by the District Officer, and the Resident which cannot be refused. In the majority of cases the litigant has naturally eschewed this inexpensive method of redress before paying his fee of one pound and venturing on the second. The Ordinance provides for a repetition of this procedure each time the case is heard by one of the Native Courts of Appeal. The grades of the Native Courts in the Iloro Division are lower and there is no Native Court of Appeal. Dissatisfied litigants can apply without payment for review by the District Officer and the Resident, to whom appeal on payment of an appeal fee also lies, with a final appeal to the Governor. Here too experience has shown that litigants prefer to apply for review.

12. In the Egha Division twelve of the Native Courts have literate Presidents, one of whom is a barrister. In addition the Egha Native Court of Appeal has on its roll two Egha barristers and one merchant. The Native Court of Ake "A", which is the highest court of original jurisdiction in the Province, has full powers in land and civil cases and power to try all classes of criminal cases, except those involving murder or manslaughter or offences connected with Government revenue. Jurisdiction to try motor offences has been conferred upon it during the year.

13. On the whole the courts have worked well and satisfactorily. There have been no serious accusations of judicial corruption, though I am not satisfied that it does not exist in certain quarters. Generally speaking, however, it is confidently believed that the people are obtaining justice and are free from oppression. The almost entire absence of that desire to become a court member, which was once so noticeable, is a fairly reliable indication of this. Apart from the legal safeguards afforded by review and the existence of three courts of appeal, frequent visits to the native courts by the Administrative Officers, the ubiquity of letter writers and letter writing

agencies and the literacy of many of the litigants themselves are factors calculated to ensure the ventilation of any genuine injustice. In addition to this the touring of the province by Administrative Officers is, as far as possible, performed on foot in order that they shall come into personal contact with the people in every village, however remote it may be. In criminal matters every convicted prisoner has an opportunity to complain to the Administrative Officer against his sentence.

14. An endeavour has been made during the year to frame suggestions in connexion with marriage and divorce cases for the guidance of the Egba Native Courts with a view to reducing the number of frivolous divorce suits and bringing the old law on the subject more into line with modern conditions.

15. The legislation passed recently which prevents the sale by Native Courts of land, houses and growing crops for debt has removed a source of grave abuse and oppression and been one of the greatest blessings to the people in recent years. Up to the latter part of 1935 the Egba Native Courts exercised the widest powers of distraint. Writs of *fi fa* in respect of property, movable or immovable, had been issued as a matter of course since 1914. Moneylending at usurious rates of interest and mortgage transactions were innumerable, while, the old native pawning system, under which the pawner could always redeem the pledge, began to be misinterpreted by the courts into terms of mortgage with a right of foreclosure.

Agricultural and other land was rapidly getting into the hands of a ring, auction scandals, more difficult to prove in Nigeria than they are even in England, occurred frequently and the number of complaints in connection with these sales exceeded all others. A significant aspect of the sales was the somewhat remarkable fact that the property distrained on and sold seldom realized more than the amount of judgment and the expenses of the sale.

16. The province, which depends entirely on its crops, has derived the full benefit of the better prices paid for produce. Approximately £166,000 more was paid out to the people this year than last. This has been reflected in a 25%–50% rise in the price of market food-stuffs and an intensified interest in agriculture. The demand for improved palm seedlings and budded grapefruit trees has increased so rapidly that it has been found impossible to cope with it. The main feature in the trade revival has been the resumption of the trade in palm oil, which rose from £5 to £10 per ton. This alone represents an increase of about £36,000. The export of oranges from the Province doubled that of last season. There was a decided improvement in the sale of cassava starch and ginger. One of the surest indications of this increased prosperity is the exceptional building activity which is generally noticeable. The Native Administrations have done all they can to help. The Farm Centre at Abeokuta has enlarged its nurseries of selected oil palms and budded citrus and the Alake has co-operated by allowing his private palm plantation to be administered in conjunction with the Farm Centre. In Ifara agricultural plots have been established at six centres. A gratifying sign of progress is the growing popularity of the village poultry improvement scheme, under which villages co-operate to kill off their native cockerels and subscribe money for the purchase of pure bred stock. An experiment in dairying is being made by the Egba Native Administration as a result of which fresh milk will be obtainable in Abeokuta next year at a reasonable price.

17. Social services have been creditably maintained. The eight permanent dispensaries and two welfare centres in the Province have been well attended. The Infant Welfare Centre at Abeokuta in charge of Miss Jane McFotter, M.B.E., is of special interest. She has so won the confidence of the Egba mothers that she seems to be waging a successful campaign against a noxious native drug called "Agbo", which is one of the principal causes of infant mortality. The daily average attendance, which rose to 506 last year, has again increased to 546.

18. The Native Administration school at Ipokia, which was open in 1934, is progressing well and has forty-nine pupils. One of its features is the parents' club which was instituted when it was founded. Each parent contributes a sum of five shillings which is deposited with the Native Administration. Should a child be removed without good cause the deposit is forfeited and a fresh contribution is called for. The system has successfully maintained the interest of the parents in their children's education, ensured the payment of fees and, with the exception of one boy, who was found unsuitable and removed, secured regular attendance. The institution with its attractive buildings, excellent equipment and bright and cheerful pupils will undoubtedly evoke emulation in other administrative areas.
19. One of the most interesting educational ventures in the Egba Capital, is a small school opened in his grounds last year by the Alake for the education of the children of his dependents and other poor children. The Alake pays all expenses and no fees are charged. The school is run on excellent lines and may one day be taken over by the Native Administration.
20. The most far reaching improvement during the year was the installation of the new electric power station which was opened by the Alake on the 1st of June. The whole scheme, including the water extension and the electrically driven water pumps, cost just over £51,000. It will have the effect of putting an end finally to guinea worm and other water-borne diseases, which were once rife in the town, reducing crime and raising the standard of life of the people. The number of consumers during the year has been encouraging but it will take some time before the undertaking begins to pay for itself.
21. An experiment of some magnitude was made in April when the Government Public Works Department organization was withdrawn from the Province and absorbed by the Native Administration. All works, which would have been undertaken by Government, are now performed by the Native Administration on reimbursement. So far the experiment has proved satisfactory.
22. So far as funds at their disposal will allow the Native Administrations have co-operated actively in health and sanitary measures. House to house inspections by Ward Heads and inspection of animals and meat and bake houses by Native Administration Sanitary Inspectors are carried out. 29,560 houses and compounds were inspected during the year. Unfortunately the adequate disposal of nightsoil and rubbish in the Capital presents a major problem which is at present beyond the means of the Egba Native Administration.
23. The Egba Forestry Department has planted up twenty-eight acres in the ten year rotation Fuel Plantation. The Native Administration police and prisons have been well maintained. The police prosecuted successfully two counterfeiting of coin and nineteen burglary cases. A special enclosure is provided for bad characters in the prison. Facilities for training in carpentry are given.
24. The social side of life has not been neglected. The educated youth is taking an increasing interest in sport, especially football and tennis. A number of keenly contested league football matches were played in Abeokuta earlier in the year and ended in a victory for the Egba Native Administration team. Abeokuta beat the neighbouring Province of Ijebu Ode in the competition for the Lieutenant-Governor's Tennis Cup but were ultimately defeated by a team from Benin City. Festivals have been attended better than ever owing to a noticeable influx of people from the country attracted by the amenities of light and a better water supply. Modern dances and entertainments in the Abeokuta Centenary Hall have been frequent and well conducted. The Egba Native Administration police band, which has been in request on most occasions, has greatly improved and arrangements have been made for it to play on certain evenings in the more populous parts of

the town. There is much to be done, however, if Abeokuta is to take its place among other progressive towns in the future and to afford proper scope for the activities of its educated youth. One of its greatest needs is the development of open spaces and recreation grounds. The town which winds chaotically in and out of rocky sun-scoured hills, is almost entirely devoid of shade and, like all old towns which from lack of design and rapid growth have been unable to adapt themselves to modern conditions, is so congested that open spaces are few and far between. Where they do occur it must be regretfully observed that they are usually polluted. An endeavour is being made to develop small parks in the congested areas, planted with grass and trees, where the hand can play and people can sit, to regulate the general lay-out of the town, to secure recreation grounds, where possible, and to encourage some form of social and athletic Club life amongst the educated youth. In so large a town with a depleted revenue the chief hope of sanitary improvement must lie at present in education and the inculcation of better ideas.

BENIN PROVINCE.

By H. F. M. WHITE, ESQUIRE, *Resident.*

There are two main tribes in the Benin Province. To one of them belong the Bin people who form the Benin Division and, closely allied to them, the Ishan and Ora people who occupy the greater part of the adjoining Ishan Division. Many of the clans in the southern half of the Kukuru Division also trace their origin to Benin. The other is the Ibo-speaking Ika tribe which occupies the Asaba Division. The origin of the villages in the east of the Ishan Division, near the Niger, is not definitely known but they are probably of Igarras stock. Yoruba-speaking people are found in the west of the Kukuru Division and the north and north-west are occupied by fragments of Igarras, Ighirras and other tribes with a few scattered Nupe settlements which were left behind by the Nupe invasion.

2. At one time all, or nearly all the people of this Province were subject to Benin and the minor head chiefs rendered tribute to the Oba. The Enogies of the Ishan clans had their appointments ratified by the Oba and the same is generally true of the Obas of the Ika clans. Only in the northern and eastern fringes of the Province is the influence of Benin less noticeable. Elsewhere the native organisation—there are no towns outside Benin—follows much the same pattern. The internal affairs of the village were managed by the senior age-grade. The affairs of the clan were in the hands of the Enogie or Oba, who was advised by a council of titled men. The details vary from one clan to another, but in its main outlines the system was generally the same. Above them all was the Oba of Benin who kept himself in touch with his domains through a system of fiefs which were allotted to his nobles and the titled classes. To-day the Oba's authority is limited to the boundaries of the Benin Division, but his position as overlord is still recognised beyond the divisional boundaries and over a large part of the Province his pronouncements would still carry weight. An instance of this occurred during the year when a long-standing dispute between two claimants to the position of Enogie of Ewu, in the Ishan Division, was submitted to the arbitration of the Oba and an Administrative Officer whose decision has been generally accepted. In December when the Oba paid a visit to Enugu at the Chief Commissioner's invitation the various addresses which were presented to him there and *en route* showed the regard in which his position is still widely held.

3. The Benin Native Administration which was established in 1916 has the Oba as Native Authority and a Judicial Council of seven members. The Division has been divided into districts and the town into wards, each in the charge of a district and a ward head respectively. The members of the Judicial Council or Appeal Court, were also the Executive Council but in 1934 this council was extended by the inclusion of the district

heads and ward heads. Even so, however, the composition of the council does not sufficiently conform with the traditional organisation and it is doubtless for this reason that it has never recognised itself as a council. Its meetings, during last year at least, have been dull and fruitless affairs and it has placed the burden of responsibility almost entirely on the *Obi*. For the same reason the district head system has not been a success. The district heads have no traditional connection with their districts, which are themselves artificial areas, and in consequence they lack authority. The failure of the system was illustrated during the year by a change in the method of tax collection which in former years had been the responsibility of the district heads and had dragged on well into the following financial year. Collection for 1935-36 was left in the hands of the village councils who compiled their own nominal rolls and were permitted to pay direct to the Native Treasury at Benin. As a result—making all allowance for the improvement in prices—the assessment and collection were completed within four months and showed an increase of £1,600.

4. With a view to reorganising the Benin Native Administration intelligence enquiries were begun in August and were still proceeding at the close of the year. All that can be said now is that these enquiries have aroused much local interest and that the true meaning of Native Administration is beginning to be understood and appreciated.

5. Intelligence reports on several of the *Ishan* clans were written some time ago but in only two cases as yet have the proposals been formally approved. The others should receive approval very shortly. To these people reorganisation has hitherto meant little more than the establishment of clan courts with a representative membership but something has been done during the year to inaugurate clan councils and to get them into the habit of holding regular meetings. The members of these councils are the titled class and the senior age-grade of each village with the *Enogie* as president. The *Irrua* clan shows the most promise, due mainly to the intelligence of the *Enogie*, and should make good progress. Though subsidiary estimates have been prepared for these clans, they have still to be instructed in a knowledge of their finances.

6. The attitude of the *Ika* clans of the *Ogwashi* and *Aghor* districts towards reorganisation has undergone a change. Whereas two years ago they strongly opposed it they are now either asking for it, or at least ready to try it. The *Asabo* clan is preparing to start its own administration and has decided that its council shall be formed exactly in accordance with tradition, i.e., of the second senior age-grade. Members of the *Asaba* *Union*, the educated element, are content to have their traditional council, although for some time to come they will have no place on it, for they know that they will have opportunities of expressing their views. In the south of the *Ogwashi* district a group of clans, headed by their *Obis*, which have for long attended the same native court, have decided to form a common administration with a federal council, and these clans have had the foresight to risk some loss of their individual independence and to accept the federal council as their Native Authority. Three *Ika* clans in the *Aghor* district were reported on two years ago but only during the last few months have they begun to realise that reorganisation means something more than a clan court. Their *Obis* and Councils took an intelligent interest in the preparation of their clan estimates and are now holding regular clan meetings. Proposals for an *Aghor* clan administration have now been approved and will shortly begin to operate.

7. The year saw the beginning of reorganisation in the *Kukuruku* Division, the *Jattu* clan being the first to be given its own local administration. The members of the clan council are working well together, despite signs of jealousy when the proposals were under discussion, but the people are almost entirely illiterate and progress is likely to be slow. Elsewhere in the *Kukuruku* Division the district head system has still survived but it may be said to have expired with the close of the year. Everywhere the

clans are asking for reorganisation, mainly with a view to having their own courts, but with only one Administrative Officer in the Division it is impossible to satisfy them quickly enough.

8. In the matter of reorganisation the Benin Province is behind the times. Throughout a large part of the Province administration has been still conducted either through district heads or through native courts whose complement of members has diminished in some cases almost to nothing. In the matter of tax collection, however, the native organisation is used and herein some progress can be recorded. The tax is collected by the village councils, or the extended families when the villages are large, and when possible it is received by an Administrative Officer in the presence of the clan head at the clan headquarters. In this way it is hoped that the clan head with his council will in time be able to undertake the collection. With the possible exception of the Ishan Division, which has been inadequately staffed, the current year's tax will be completed well within the financial year, a refreshing change for those Native Administrations, notably Ogwashi-Uku, which have frequently failed in the past to complete the collection by the proper time.

9. The reorganised courts of the Ishan and Ika clans and the Jattu court in Kukuruku are popular because they afford adequate representation to the villages. The number of sitting members varies from fifteen to twenty or in some cases rather more. A few of the large clans have village courts as well and it seems that a demand for village courts arises when the villages are scattered and when their confidence in their Enojie or Oba is not complete. One Ika clan after trying village courts for a year has decided that the clan court serves their needs well enough and has been glad to see the village courts go. The warrant chief type of court is still the most numerous in the province but though these courts do not fully serve the needs of the people, for they are too few and far between and their membership is inadequate, there is no reason to criticise their work. The returns show that a retrial has been ordered or the judgment has been annulled or modified in seven per cent of the cases heard, a reasonably low figure. There are two perennial problems which confront the native courts: the question of divorce and the enforcement of judgment debts. They still baffle solution.

10. On the first of April an arrangement came into force whereby the Benin Native Administration assumed control of the forests, including the existing Government Reserves, in the Benin Division on condition that an additional 1,000 square miles of forest reserves were constituted. All expenditure including the salaries of two seconded forestry officers is borne by the Native Administration and timber fees are divided equally between the Native Administration and Government who has agreed to indemnify the Native Administration for an adverse balance taken over a period of three years. Although the scheme is in force the Native Administration has still to complete its side of the bargain. Areas for the additional reserves have been selected and enquiries have been made with a view to establishing the rights of occupiers of the land but the reserves have still to be constituted. Public opposition to these new reserves has been steadily growing, due to a fear that they will prevent the further establishment and extension of oil palm plantations, at which the Benin people have made such progress. But there does not seem to be good reason for these fears for protection of the high forests will still leave plenty of room for farming activities in a division where the density of population is only twenty-seven to the square mile. A propaganda campaign, which is being conducted, should lead to a better understanding of the position and it is hoped that the new reserves will be constituted early in 1936. Meanwhile the Native Administration forestry department, with which the Oba is constantly in touch, is working smoothly. It exploits timber itself and has started a timber depot with the object, as the Conservator writes, of making the people more aware of the value of their heritage of woodlands. As a means of advertising the depot, which is already

arousing some interest, a carpenter's shop is run in connection with it. Besides making furniture of good quality and attractive articles from planks carved in the Benin Arts and Crafts School, its products include such varied items as an ornamental arch for a mission school and a coffin (ordered for himself by a chief). It is hoped too that this shop will improve the very low standard of carpentry in Benin. The present apprentices, when they have attained sufficient skill, will be encouraged to start a shop of their own, the Native Administration continuing to afford them advice, and new apprentices of good class carpenters should gradually be formed. Considering the abundance of fine timber available, Benin, as the Conservator says, should be a city of carpenters with a wide reputation for first class work.

11 The Native Administration estimates for the year were prepared at a time of falling revenue and consequently there has been little provision for material development. Expenditure, therefore, has been largely confined to maintenance of existing services. However new buildings for the Government Schools at Auchi and Uromi have been or are being constructed by the Kukuruku and Ishan Native Administrations and the number of permanent market sheds, which are always welcome, has been increased in the Aghor district. In Benin the waterworks extension scheme, paid for largely by Government, has been practically completed and a twenty-four hour supply of water will be turned on as soon as a rating scheme has been approved. A Native Administration institution which is doing good work under the management of a lady doctor and three lady assistants is the Ossion Leper Settlement. It is maintained by contributions from the Native Administrations of the Benin and Warri Provinces and now has over 200 patients who derive much benefit, both medically and morally, from their stay there. But the relative cost of their maintenance is high it works out at over £7 per leper—and financially the settlement is a cause of some anxiety. Another Native Administration undertaking is the construction of buildings for a Middle School at Benin but this, for various reasons, has been delayed and was not started before the end of the year. The financial condition of the Native Administrations is sound and each one has adequate reserves. An impetus to development will be given when the people are better able to express their wishes in regard to the expenditure of their funds.

12 In the Benin Province where land is sufficiently plentiful and the people are mostly farmers, the economic depression of 1933-34 must have been felt less acutely than in more densely populated areas. But the recovery has been none the less welcome and has induced a feeling of contentment and optimism. It has given an added impetus to palm plantations, wherein the Benin people still lead the field. There are 174 new plantation owners as compared with 110 in 1934 and the total acreage has increased 233 to 370. The Ishan people follow them but are still a long way behind. The Benin farmers societies are taking more definite shape and should develop into co-operative selling societies when the plantations come into full bearing. Generally, however, the Benin people have progressed slowly. Benin City itself, a town of some 8,500 inhabitants, hardly, in appearance, comes up to its name and the countless villages where the Benin people mostly reside have little to commend them. But if there has been little incentive to progress in the past, there is no doubt that amongst the younger generation the desire for progress is steadily increasing. The numerous and well-filled schools in Benin testify to the demand for education and there is a crying need for group schools for the villages. A maternity home started by the Church Missionary Society has been quickly gaining the people's confidence. Another example of an opportunity readily accepted is the making of a public football ground and the institution of a football league in Benin. The league was an instant success and the ground is a godsend to the boys of the town who play there every evening.

13 The Ishan people have benefited in that their villages have never been the appendages of a central town. The people have life and intelligence and they have taken full advantage of their good fortune in having many

Government schools established in their country some thirty years ago. There is eager competition—and there are many successes—amongst the boys of these schools for entrance into the Government College at Ibadan. But far from being satisfied with the educational facilities they have, they are constantly asking for more. The same spirit and enterprise is shown by the neighbouring Ora (Sabongida) people many of whom, like the Ishans, go and seek their fortunes abroad. The Kukuruku Division presents a different picture. Its seclusion has hindered its progress. But if the older people are content, the younger generation are demanding a wider life. They want schools, which they lack, and more and better roads. It may be noted that an appeal for funds for a mission school at Agenebode met with an immediate response from the clan concerned. These people show signs that given opportunities, they will be ready enough to put themselves on the map. The Ika people too are anxious to improve themselves, and though they are fairly well served with schools they could do with more. Here and there they build better types of houses, especially at Asaba where a number of neatly built houses have lately gone up. Asaba indeed, mindful of its former glory as a centre of Government, is particularly jealous of itself and it has in the "Asaba Union" a society of young men who are eager for the cultural advancement of their country.

14. Administratively, 1935 has been a year rather of beginnings, but it has been refreshing to see how these people who have been given the chance have responded to their first lessons in local government and how Benin City which to a newcomer seemed politically asleep, could very quickly wake up. And the economic improvement is showing that so far as they have the means, the people will strive for their social and material betterment.

CALABAR PROVINCE.

By G. G. SMUTE, ESQUIRE, *Resident*.

The year 1935 was one of all-round recovery. The price of first-grade palm oil, which had reached a low record of £3 a ton in July, 1934, rose sharply from £8 a ton in January to over £14 in February. Between March and July there was an inevitable and seasonal reaction to £8 a ton, but from that time the price has steadily risen and at the close of the year it stood at over £12 a ton. A similar but less spectacular improvement was shown in the price of palm kernels, which rose from £5 a ton at the beginning of the year to over £8 at its close, with only a slight set-back between July and September. These prices do not, of course, compare with those obtaining in the boom years but none the less they mean that the native producers, who form the great bulk of the population of Calabar Province, are assured of their livelihood. The full effect of this providential improvement has not yet been felt, but it is strikingly apparent that a load has been lifted from the minds of the people, who have recaptured their normal cheerfulness and contentment.

2. The year has not been without its troubles, however. An outbreak of counterfeiting on a scale never before approached swept through the province, paralysing trade and shattering confidence. It appears that the originators of the outbreak, having discovered a simple method of counterfeiting by means of cement moulds, decided to sell their secret at a price to anyone who cared to pay for the knowledge. The native, who had for so many years suffered from shortage of cash, thought that there was no harm in making more, and proceeded to do so. Counterfeiting became a village industry. Public opinion was for a long time on the side of the counterfeiters. The situation was saved only by most vigorous measures on the part of the Police, coupled with the exemplary sentences imposed on convicted persons. By the end of the year the native had discovered that the game was not worth

the candle and it may be said that counterfeiting, though far from being suppressed, has been held in check. Simultaneously with the distrust of alloy coinage, and partly as a result of it, there has arisen an unprecedented demand for nickel coinage, which it is impossible at present to satisfy. Nickel pennies are being bought and sold at ten for a shilling to the prejudice of small wage-earners who have to buy their daily needs with alloy coins. Such nickel as the Treasury has been able to supply to the Banks has been absorbed instantly without apparent effect on the universal demand.

3. From the point of view of administration the year has been marked by a severe shortage of staff. The average duty strength has been four short of the normal. The inevitable effect has been that hard-pressed Administrative Officers have been unable to maintain that close touch with the great masses of the people which is essential to the well-being of Native Administration in an early stage of development. In the following review of the year's working it will be seen that many of our troubles spring from this root cause.

4. The population of Calabar Province numbers nearly a million. It comprises five main tribes, the Ibibios (410,000), the Annang (290,000), the Ogonis (80,000), the Ekks of Calabar (50,000) and the Andonis (15,000), as well as a number of small miscellaneous sub-tribes. These main tribes are composed of upwards of seventy clans, which are the units on which the system of Native Administration is based. With the exception of certain Annang Groups in the Abak and Opobo Districts, and some fragments of the Aro District, the whole province is now re-organised. Each unit has its central Executive in the shape of the Clan Council, which has in most cases been gazetted Native Authority for the area, its Clan Court or Courts, and its individual funds, which are separately administered either as distinct Native Treasuries or through the medium of subsidiary estimates. Membership of the councils and courts includes accredited representatives of every village.

5. The system aims at evoking the interest of the people as a whole in local affairs and inducing them to take increasing responsibility, through the councils which represent them, for local administration. I have heard it criticised by intelligent, but not always disinterested, Africans on the ground that it promotes a parochial outlook and tends to impede rather than foster tribal unity. My reply has been that the people of this province have a long way to go before they can be described as fully competent to administer the local affairs of the units to which they belong; and that until they have acquired local administrative experience they are not ripe for tribal administration. The following review deals briefly with the successes and failures that have attended the efforts of the various councils to administer local affairs.

6. Perhaps the most important development during the year was the institution of three separate Native Treasuries to serve the Ikono Clan (40,000) of the Ikot-Ekpem District, the Obong Clan (6,500) of the Abak Division, and a federation of seven Ibibio Groups (54,000) in the Opobo District. Strong rooms and offices have been constructed in their respective Council houses. Keyholders appointed by the councils hold the keys of the strong rooms. The bulk of the liquid funds is kept in a safe (of which the District Officer holds the key) cemented inside the strong room, the balance, sufficient to meet current requirements, being stored on shelves. The councils have appointed their own Treasurers to keep the accounts and small financial committees to assist the keyholders. The District Officers report that the system works satisfactorily and that the people appreciate the trust reposed in their leaders. Separate Treasuries will shortly be opened for four more clans in the Opobo, Uyo, Calabar and Itu Districts. Elsewhere certain councils will become responsible for the custody of a part of their funds (an experiment which has been made with success in the Otoro Clan of the Ikot-Ekpem District). It is confidently hoped that the grant of such

financial responsibility in selected areas will promote the authority of the councils and quicken their interest and understanding. It may also be expected to lead to future financial federations among neighbouring clans for the common good.

7. A further development of outstanding interest during the year was concerned with tax collection. Hitherto tax had been collected, as a general rule, by the District Officer and his agents. In 1935 the Clan councils were invited to assume responsibility for the whole process of collection. Many accepted the task and were appointed District Heads under the Native Revenue Ordinance. Conspicuous among those that declined this duty were the Ibibio councils of the Itu District, to whom public service appeals less than personal profit. Elsewhere successes and failures were often striking and generally unexpected. The Ibibio Groups of the Opobo Division proved quite incapable of revising their nominal rolls. But once the District Officer had done it for them they collected the whole of their tax quota, amounting to nearly £3,000, unaided. The neighbouring Annang Clans with a population of 43,000, who have previously been the lowest of the slow, themselves collected and paid in ninety-six per cent of their assessment by the end of the year. The District Officer, Mr. J. S. Smith, describes a picturesque but typical incident:—

"At the height of the tax-collection the Native Administration lorry was fully occupied plying between Council Houses and the station carrying representatives of the councils and federations with their tax. One day the lorry dashed up to the door and the Abak-Midim Tax Committee descended with a massive trunk containing over £700 tied up in dozens of little bags. The quota of each village had been put in a separate bag in order that the responsibility for counterfeit coin might be allocated."

8. In the Eke Division the councils successfully revised the nominal rolls of taxpayers and actually added nearly 1,000 names to their number. They have, with two or three exceptions, been able to collect only half their tax quota. The councils of the Uyo Division, of whom much was expected, listened to false prophets and conspicuously failed (with one notable exception) in the early stages. The failure was directly due to the grievous shortage of staff. The officer in charge was single-handed for over a year. Only in November was it possible to give him assistance, and from that moment touch with the people has been re-established and matters have much improved, four-fifths of the District quota having been collected by the end of the year. Among the Annangs of the Abak District, where the District Officer is again single-handed, the councils have failed to revise their obsolete nominal rolls but in the re-organised areas at least have been quite successful in collecting their tax. Progress in the large Ikot-Ekpene Division has been handicapped by shortage of staff and two-thirds of the amount due is still to seek. In the Itu and Aro Districts, where tax collection is to a great extent carried out under the District Officer's direct authority, the improved economic conditions resulted in prompt and full payment. In the Calabar Division the councils of the hinterland, notably the Okoyon Clan, have been more successful than the Calabar Council, which—I say it with regret—has yet to show that it can exert any real influence in this direction.

9. If emphasis has been laid, perhaps at undue length, on the progress of provincial tax collection it is because this process indicates accurately the degree and quality of the authority exercised by the various councils. In face of the menace of counterfeit coin and in spite of a serious shortage of staff the councils have, as a whole, achieved successes far greater than were ever expected, and have justified the faith of those who believe, with the writer, that the best way to awaken a sense of public duty in the mind of the African is to entrust him with responsibility.

10. The councils are the mirror and not the mould of public opinion. They are not as yet competent to deal with any movement, however pernicious, which has popular support. They have never made head against illicit

distillation and they gave little or no help to the administration in the matter of counterfeiting. A similar weakness was shown by the councils of the Ito, Eyo and Abak Districts early in the year when the people resisted the progress of the Topographical Survey under the impression that Government had designs on their land. With this reservation, however, the new Native Authorities have, as a whole, preserved the peace among their people and have administered their affairs to the best of their ability.

11. With the improvement in trade the new Native Courts have, as was predicted, come into their own. All have now been formally constituted under the Native Courts Ordinance, 1933, and appeals from their decisions are almost universally in land cases to the Magistrate and in other appealable cases to the Administrative Officer. There has been a prodigious increase in the business and revenue of the courts. Civil cases have increased by over fifty per cent to 35,000, and criminal cases by ten per cent to over 10,000. The total revenue has risen by nearly forty per cent to over £15,000. This increase must of course be attributed in large part to the greater spending power and increased leisure of the people, which make for heavier litigation. But it may also be fairly ascribed in part to the greater confidence reposed by the people in the reorganised Native Courts. This view is confirmed by the fact that the number of appeals from their decisions has been negligible while the number of decisions modified on review by Administrative Officers is no more than three per cent of the total cases heard. The considered opinion of the District Officers, which I share, is that the standard of justice dispensed by the Native Courts under the new order is higher than of old, while the opportunities for redress are now so widely known and used that occasional injustice is speedily detected and remedied. It is an established fact that the few unsatisfactory courts in the province are those where, as at Abak, the old "Warrant Chief" tradition still lingers.

12. The Native Administration Estimates for the year 1935-36 were compiled at a time when the economic depression had reached its most acute stage. Expenditure programmes were therefore curtailed to the bare minimum. The subsequent recovery has as yet affected the general revenue but little and the substantial increase in Native Court revenue has been offset to some extent by extra expenditure on staff salaries and sitting fees, which had previously been drastically cut in an effort to make both ends meet. The tax rate of four shillings per adult male was left unchanged in order to give the people a breathing space after the hard times they had weathered. As a result the year has been one of consolidation rather than development. Progress has continued, however, in those directions which most benefit the people—Capital works, education and health—as far as funds have permitted. Capital works including council and court houses, bridges, schools and dispensaries to a value of some £1,000 have been carried out, the more important under the capable supervision of the seconded Inspectors of Works, Messrs. Fraser and Wadsworth.

13. The eight existing Native Administration schools have developed by the addition of one class in accordance with the provincial plan, and will shortly receive additional teachers who have completed their three-year course. Three new schools have been opened during the year and three more are ready to begin. There have been forty-six students in training at the Eyo Training Centre, and a constant supply of trained teachers is thus assured for the Native Administration schools, existing and projected, as they gradually develop to their full extent. Under the guidance of Messrs. Iloh and Day, Superintendents of Education, the centre continues to earn well-deserved tributes from inspecting officers. The demand for education in this province is insatiable and the Native Administration schools are a source of great pride and interest to the people. Finally, material progress has been made in the direction of public health. The number of Native Administration dispensaries has been increased to twenty-five, and four more are ready to begin. Staffed by trained Native Administration dispensers and closely supervised by the Medical Officers these dispensaries have carried out a great volume of beneficent work. The District Officers report a general

increase in attendance. Some idea of the work done may be conveyed by the attendance figures for the Ikot-Ekpene and Eket Districts, in each of which there are four dispensaries. In the former there were 52,000 attendances as against 35,000 in the previous year, and in the latter 51,000 as against 43,000. It is not too much, perhaps, to hope that the cumulative effect of health treatment at these centres will profoundly influence the native attitude towards dirt and disease. Signs of such a tendency are already apparent in an expressed desire for better sanitation, to meet which several Native Authorities, including the Calabar and Aro Councils, have sent lads to be trained as Sanitary Apprentices at Umuahia. The movement is likely to be extended in the coming year when the cost will be more easily met.

14. Progress in the extension of oil palm plantations has been slow and difficult. Only eighty-four acres have been added, bringing the total to 197 native-owned palm plots comprising 280 acres. On the other hand there has been a brisk demand for oil presses, sixty of which are now in use throughout the province. It must be added that the Calabar and Aro Councils are about to undertake Forest Reservation on a large scale and that the Calabar and Oron Councils have prepared experimental rice plots which will be planted next season.

15. The past year has marked the interval between the ebb of depression and the rising tide of prosperity. If existing conditions continue the people are assured of better things to come. Their Native Authorities have gained experience, their Native Court system is now firmly established, and with the enhanced revenue that may be expected in coming years their funds will be adequate for schemes of material and social development. The administrative staff is once more at normal strength and is expected to remain so. The outlook is brighter than it has been for many years.

CAMEROONS PROVINCE.

By O. W. FIRTH, ESQUIRE, *Senior Resident.*

The Cameroons Province comprises an area of 16,581 square miles with a population of approximately 400,000.

2. The year has been one of tranquility and steady progress. The people are remarkably contented and law abiding. Serious crime and disturbances are rare.

3. The improvement in trade has not affected the people of the Cameroons as much as those of other provinces due to the fact that but little palm oil is exported. The principal native-grown crops which are exported are cocoa and palm kernels. The cocoa season was an excellent one from the point of view of production, but unfortunately black pod disease took an unusually heavy toll of the crop. The average price of cocoa was £14 10s. a ton which is rather less than in 1934. There was a phenomenal increase in the export of bananas, but as practically all the banana plantations are owned by European firms, this did not affect the local inhabitants save in so far as it increased employment.

4. An outstanding feature of the province is the success of the movement for co-operative marketing of cocoa. The main organisation is in Kumba Division where the Kumba Co-operative Marketing Union continues to flourish. During the year the village societies increased from eighty-two to ninety-two and the total number of members of societies in the division now exceeds 2,000. It was unfortunate that it was necessary for the Union to turn away large quantities of cocoa offered by members which did not come up to the required standard owing to black pod disease. Permission, however, was given to members to sell inferior cocoa direct to the German firms who can find a market for it and offer reasonably high

prices. The co-operative movement for the marketing of cocoa has continued in Mandé Division where a number of village societies and a central committee exist. The organisation, however, has not yet reached the stage found in Kumba where the societies have the advantage of the advice and guidance of an officer of the Agricultural Department.

5. The Cameroons Province exhibits wide differences in physical features. The country varies from dense low-lying forests to grasslands six and seven thousand feet above sea level. Correspondingly the characteristics of the people and the indigenous organisation show considerable variation. In the forest area the people are lazy and apathetic and their organisation is largely conciliar. In the hills on the other hand the people are more virile and industrious and there is a greater tendency towards rule by individual chiefs.

6. Throughout the year the administrative staff has been largely occupied in continuing the study of the indigenous organisation with a view to introducing administrative and judicial reforms and also in carefully consolidating the reforms already introduced. Enquiries have shown that in many areas but little change in the present system is required.

VICTORIA DIVISION

7. The organisation of the Victoria Division must perforce remain distinct from that found in the other divisions of the province owing to the fact that more than half the available area of good land is in the hands of plantation companies. The consequent control of large areas by unofficial Europeans, in most cases of German nationality and the existence on the plantations of a large body of labourers, chiefly strangers to the division, has led to the development of a Native Administration which is in contrast to that found elsewhere, but which nevertheless has served its purpose with a fair measure of success.

8. The division is divided into three Native Authority Areas: Victoria, Bakweri (Buen) and Balong.

9. *The Victoria Native Authority Area* comprises eight village groups. The Native Authority is Chief J. Manga Williams, a descendant of King Williams of Bimbia. He is assisted by a council representing the various village groups.

10. During the year enquiries have been made into the organisation and customs of the Bakole village group, but the report has not yet been completed.

11. *The Bakweri Native Authority Area* comprises sixty-three village groups. The Native Authority is a council representative of all the village groups under the chairmanship of the District Head. The council meets regularly and is evincing great interest in the management of the affairs of the area. The Bakweri Native Authority is now entirely divorced from Victoria and has its own Treasury and separate estimates.

12. *The Balong Native Authority Area* comprises a group of four villages separated from the main portion of the clan which is found in Kumba Division and in the area under French Mandate. During the year proposals were submitted for the reorganisation of the area, but approval has been withheld pending further enquiries on certain points.

NATIVE COURTS

13. There are in all seven Native Courts in the division including the Victoria Divisional Appeal Court which exercises appellate jurisdiction over the Native Courts of Victoria, Tiko and Balong. There is no Native Court of Appeal in the Bakweri Native Authority Area.

14. The work of the courts has been satisfactory and adequate supervision has been exercised. The number of cases heard in all the courts during the year was 1,003 compared with 1,660 in 1934.

FINANCIAL.

15. The financial position remains approximately the same as last year and is satisfactory. The Victoria Native Administration Treasury possesses fixed deposits amounting to £4,000 and the recently opened Bakweri Treasury similar deposits to the amount of £500.

16. Consequent on the reorganisation of the Balong Area separate estimates have been prepared for 1936-37 in respect of Victoria, Bakweri and Balong Native Authority Areas, each of which will have an independent Treasury in the coming financial year.

CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC.

17. Owing to their closer association with civilisation the people of Victoria exhibit a higher degree of culture than is found in other parts of the province. The increase in prosperity due to better trade conditions has led to improved housing conditions near the coast.

18. Education is sought after and the schools are well attended. The Government schools at Victoria and Buea are remarkable for the unusually high percentage of girl pupils. Education of girls is also specially catered for by the Basel and Roman Catholic Missions.

19. The Native Administration maintains dispensaries at Tiko and Muyuka which are well attended. A baby clinic is held weekly at Buea, under the supervision of voluntary European helpers and is most popular.

KUMBA DIVISION.

20. Kumba Division with its primitive people and lack of communications presents considerable difficulty in the matter of administration. During the year economic conditions improved slightly and the Native Administration revenue was well maintained. With this encouragement and with adequate funds in reserve, it has been possible to push forward with the improvement of communications which is the greatest need of the division. An experienced African Road Overseer was brought round from the Oyo Province and has done excellent work. Present efforts are directed towards opening the road from Kumba to Mlonge and eight miles of dry season road were added during the year whilst the construction of a permanent bridge over the River Kombone is proceeding. Meanwhile the motorable section of the Mamfe road has been extended to forty miles which is as far as the Native Administration can go pending a survey by the Public Works Department.

21. In matters of reorganisation 1935 has seen modest but sustained progress. Proposals relating to the five clans of Elung, Ninong, Nkha, Basosi and Bambuko have received His Excellency's approval during the year and have been happily put into practice. An Intelligence Report on the Balong clan was submitted and the field work for two further reports was completed by the end of the year.

22. In one respect 1935 witnessed a set-back. The reorganisation of the Bakossi clan which was the first to be undertaken has faltered in operation. Until 1932 the Native Authority for the clan was a single District Head who in that year committed suicide rather than face his trial for mis-appropriating clan funds. As a result of enquiries which were then made a form of organisation was established based on family groups and instead of a single Authority there appeared eight Kindred Courts and eight Native Authority Councils. This worked well for a time but as early as 1934 a reaction set in and throughout 1935 the current has been running strongly in favour of a more centralised form of administration. This change of opinion is partly accounted for by the scattered distribution of the various kindreds which are in no sense geographical units and there is also a move-

ment against rule by councils and in favour of the old system of Village and District Heads. Nevertheless, while it is clear that some changes are required it is equally necessary to proceed with caution as the real wishes of the people have still to be made known. Meanwhile the Kindred Courts continue to function.

24. Altogether including the eight Bakossi Councils there are nineteen Native Authorities in the division, mostly of a conciliar nature, and it is pleasant to record the success they have achieved in maintaining order in their areas. The year has been remarkably free from crime or disturbance.

NATIVE COURTS

24. There are twenty Native Courts in the division. 2,929 cases were heard during the year compared with 2,711 in 1934. The increase is entirely in civil cases, the criminal cases having dropped from 1,036 in 1934 to 913 in 1935.

25. As at present constituted the Bakossi Kindred Courts are not courts of record and this has been an added cause of their unpopularity by giving rise to a suspicion of inferiority. Moreover, the experiment has not been a very happy one from the point of view of the administrative staff as the absence of any record of proceedings places hindrances in the way of review and makes supervision difficult.

26. There are two Appeal Courts. Their work has still further diminished during the year, only forty cases having come before them compared with sixty-five in 1934. Taken in conjunction with the fact that few cases are brought to Administrative Officers for review this is a tribute to the adequacy of the work of the Native Courts. It may be said with confidence that justice is available to all who seek it and that oppression in any appreciable degree does not exist.

FINANCIAL

27. The Native Administration funds for all the clans in the division continue to be concentrated at a central Treasury at Divisional Headquarters. Each Native Authority unit, however, works as far as possible to its own estimates. The Native Treasury is in a sound financial position, the surplus balance amounting to £6,418. The adequacy of the funds now held in reserve has made it possible to increase expenditure development.

28. Tax continues to be collected by the Village Heads of whom there are over four hundred and is paid by them individually and directly to the Native Treasury. The approved rates of tax are 8/- and 6/- according to locality.

CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC

29. Kumba Division contains some of the most primitive people in the whole province and cultural development is slow. In spite of this the co-operative movement already referred to continues to advance. It is, however, confined to the cocoa growing area.

30. Four schools are maintained by the Native Administration. They are well distributed and there were 329 children on the rolls at the end of the year.

MAMFE DIVISION.

31. A general picture of Mamfe Division is a large area sparsely populated, its very geographical features forming a natural barrier to the incursions of modern civilising influences. The larger part of the division is low-lying and covered with thick forest whilst fringing the whole edge from the North and round to the East runs a mountain range whose highest peaks rise to some 8,000 feet. The division is honey-combed with rivets which descend in torrents from these hills and eventually drain into the Cross River, the trade high way to Calabar.

32. There is a marked difference between the social structure of the forest and hill people. In the case of the former, rule is entirely by Council and the Village Head is nothing more than *primus inter pares*. In the hills, on the other hand, the Village Head lives like a feudal lord and is often almost an autocrat.

33. For administrative purposes the division is divided into eight Native Authority Areas. Prior to 1935 only one of these areas had been reorganised—Banyang. This is a forest clan and by far the largest in the division. Each village council—of which there are forty-eight—is a Native Authority and there is no superior Native Authority for the whole clan. During 1935 approval was received of the proposals which had been submitted in 1934 for the reorganisation of the Mundani clan, a small unit with a population of 3,500. This unit now has its own clan Native Court the panel of which consists of the Heads of the eight village groups which comprise the clan. The Native Authority is a council composed of the village area heads with their councils. The clan spirit is strong and the new organisation should have a bright future.

34. An interesting Intelligence Report has just been completed on the Assumbo area in the extreme north of the division and the recommendations are under consideration. This large area probably contains the most primitive people in the whole province. To it neither missions nor schools have yet penetrated and it is said that amongst its population no one can be found who can speak a word of English.

35. The remainder of the division is classified as unreorganised. This statement, however, is not strictly accurate as the present system is based on reports written some years ago and is in most cases satisfactory, though slight modifications may be found necessary.

NATIVE COURTS.

36. There are twenty-two Native Courts in the division, of these fourteen are Village Group Courts in the Banyang area which have jurisdiction in civil cases only. The Banyang Clan Court is a Court of first instance and also a Court of Appeal for the Village Group Courts. There is a Divisional Court of Appeal at Mamfe which has appellate jurisdiction over all the Courts in the division except the Banyang area. In all 1,781 cases were heard in the Native Courts as against 1,489 in 1934. The increase is chiefly in respect of civil cases. The Mamfe Divisional Appeal Court heard seventy-eight appeals during the year. In practice this Court does not hear appeals in criminal cases as these are reviewed by the District Officer.

FINANCIAL.

37. There is one Native Treasury for the whole division situated at the Divisional Headquarters. The funds are administered by the District Officer in consultation with the Native Authorities. The Treasury is a poor one and it is with difficulty that the budget can be balanced. As a result of rigid economy it was possible to increase the surplus balance by £500, but there is no margin for schemes of development which involve additional recurrent expenditure.

38. Aided by improved trade conditions tax collection presented no difficulties. Nominal rolls were first introduced in 1934 and have been revised during 1935. The rate of tax varies from two shillings to six shillings according to locality.

CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC.

39. The people of Mamfe Division are extremely primitive and cultural advance is hardly noticeable. The total average attendance at the three Native Administration schools was only sixty and a fourth school which existed in 1934 was closed during the year.

BAMENDA DIVISION.

40. Bamenda is a beautiful division of rolling hills and grass-land. The people are mostly of Tikar origin as the result of migrations from a north-easterly direction several centuries ago. The pioneers of these migrations are said to have been of Kanuri stock and to have originated from Bornu.

41. For administrative purposes the division is divided into sixteen Native Authority areas. The form of Native Authority varies in the different areas. In four, namely, Bansa, Bali, Nkom and Bum authority is in the hands of a single chieft, whilst in the remainder administration is mainly by the composite type of Native Authority consisting either of clan heads or the heads of a number of homogeneous though not necessarily inter-related units, sitting in council.

42. During the year considerable progress has been made in reorganisation. Proposals submitted in respect of the Batut, Nsungli, Kaka-Ntem and Ngi areas have been approved and put into practice. In each case progress has been most encouraging particularly in the Kaka-Ntem area, hitherto the most primitive in the division. Intelligence reports have also been written on the Ngenba and Wum areas, but definite proposals have not yet been submitted.

NATIVE COURTS.

43. During the year fourteen new Native Courts have been opened with the result that there are now twenty-seven in the division. They are all of "D" Grade. The courts are popular and on the whole the cases are well decided, though there is still room for improvement in the Nlop, Mbenbe, Mogamo and Ngoni Courts. During the year 2,233 cases were decided against 1,910 in 1934. There was an increase of 278 in the criminal cases. This is attributed to the opening of the new courts and criminal actions for the enforcing of judgments rather than being indicative of a general increase in crime.

FINANCIAL.

44. There are two Native Treasuries in the division, one at Bansa for the Bansa Native Authority area and one at Divisional Headquarters for the rest of the division. Since 1933 subsidiary estimates have been prepared for all areas in the division—excluding Bansa which has its own estimates—and every opportunity is taken of making the Native Authorities familiar with the estimates of their area. Most Native Authorities appear to have grasped the underlying principles but it is feared that it will be some years before they all understand them thoroughly.

45. Both the Divisional and Bansa Native Treasuries are in a sound financial position. The Divisional Treasury has a surplus balance of over £6,000 and has been able to make a valuable contribution towards the construction of the Public Works Department road from Bamenda to Manife.

46. Tax was collected smoothly and without difficulty. The rate varies from one shilling in the poorest parts to six shillings which is paid by Hausa strangers. Nominal tolls were revised during the year.

CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC.

47. It will be some time before there is any noticeable cultural advance in Bamenda Division. Education is popular, but at present the number of children receiving education is exceedingly low compared with the total non-adult population. There are four Native Administration schools at which the total average attendance was 232 boys and twelve girls; the parents generally not being able as yet to see any advantage in female education.

48. The people of Bamenda have to work hard for their living. It is there that most of the industries are found, in particular wood carving, pottery making, basket weaving, and iron work.

IJEBU PROVINCE.

By MAJOR J. WANN, *Acting Resident*.

The province of Ijebu for the purpose of administration consisted of six artificially created district areas, each under the charge of the most important local Oba, all under the Head Oba, the Awujale, a first class Chief and Native Authority for the whole province.

2. As a result of investigations into the indigenous village area organisations, three Intelligence Reports have been rendered.

3. The first report, compiled by Mr. A. F. Abell, Assistant District Officer, dealt with the Ago Village Area and was approved on general lines by the Governor. The proposals, which are shortly set out below, were inaugurated in May, 1935, and have given the greatest satisfaction both to the inhabitants and to the Administrative Officers.

4. The second Intelligence Report, compiled by Mr. E. G. Hawkesworth, M.C., District Officer, dealt with the village area of Ijebu Ife. The Lieutenant-Governor commented upon this report as a model of the type of report required, a view with which the Governor concurred. Whilst the inauguration did not rouse similar enthusiasm to that of Ago owing to the implied curtailment of the autocratic power of the Chiefs contained in the proposals, there is no apprehension felt as to its success. The particular innovation in this report was the Massed Bench which, it is gratifying to note, works satisfactorily.

5. The third Intelligence Report, compiled by Mr. A. F. Abell, Assistant District Officer, dealt with what can properly be described as the district of Ijebu Remo. The proposals were inaugurated by the Acting Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. W. E. Hunt, M.C., C.M.G., in May, 1935. Here the enthusiasm was a trifle misplaced and the proposals of sub-estimates and the constitution of an Ijebu Remo District Council were read as divisional estimates and complete independence from the Awujale and the rest of the province, a position which the Intelligence Report conclusively proved had never existed. Its members are composed of representatives of the various Town Councils of the district, together with the Obas of the five important towns of Ijebu Remo, under the Presidency of the Akarigbo of Shagamu. This District Council meets monthly and its minutes disclose a keen interest in local matters. The only criticism is that those members accustomed to public speaking are inclined to take too large a part in the proceedings.

6. Shortly, the proposals which have been applied to the reorganised areas consist of the institution of Town Councils and Courts on traditional lines with modifications to meet the ever increasing urge of the literate section of the community for self expression, and the desires of Christians and Moslems to be represented. This replaces the artificial and autocratic system of District Heads and Warrant Chiefs. In the Ijebu Remo District, the Awujale agreed that a greater delegation of authority would not prejudice his own supreme authority, and in addition to the inauguration of the Ijebu Remo District Council, he agreed to an increase in jurisdiction of the Ijebu Remo Appeal Court to all cases, previously confined to land cases.

7. Town Councils are generally composed of members appointed by the quarter people from each quarter of the town. Exceptions are the towns of Ipara and Ishara in Ijebu Remo District. Members in Ipara are selected by the Age Grades and in Ishara by the Trade Guilds. It had previously been thought that such popular representation might exclude the literate element, but events have proved that not only is the literate element amply represented but in the case of the Ijebu Remo District Council, they are apt to hold the floor to the exclusion of the Chiefs. The majority of the Town Councils hold regular meetings usually on market days and keep a record of their discussions. The subjects for discussion are usually for the betterment of the town, new roads, improvement of existing town roads,

demands for dispensaries, etc., increased pay to their Chiefs, appointment of members to assist health and tribute staffs. A valuable sub-committee which is chosen by the Town Council is the Assessment Committee which assists the assessment clerks in bringing forward new names for both Tribute and Income Tax collection. These existed before, but are not now nominees of the Chief. On the whole, definite and satisfactory progress has been made but there is no question that far more nursing is required by Administrative Officers than has been possible with the present staff. It is too early yet to say whether alterations or improvements are necessary but it seems that the lines upon which reorganisation proceeds are in accordance with the wishes of the people.

8. The administration also includes Treasury, Assessment, Police, Prison, Forestry, Medical, Sanitary, and Public Works Departments, all of which, especially on the financial side, have required the closest supervision by the Administrative Staff. After Ibadan and Abeokuta, Ijebu is the largest Native Administration in the Southern Provinces.

NATIVE COURTS.

9. There are twenty-two Native Courts in the province. In the reorganised areas the judges are chosen by the Town or Quarter Councils but little interest has been shown in judicial matters and the pre-organisation members have been generally returned together with others who by their rank in the societies are entitled to sit. In Ijebu Remo the existing Appeal Court, which only heard appeals on land cases, was given full jurisdiction to hear all appeals, with a further appeal to the Ijebu Judicial Council, with the Akarigbo, the senior Chief of Ijebu Remo District, sitting as Vice President.

10. A promise was given in 1934 that all Courts with the exception of the Waterside Courts would be visited each month by an Administrative Officer. This has been loyally kept throughout the year in spite of acute shortage of staff. For a period of some weeks the Acting Resident, Mr. Hawkesworth, was the only available touring officer. The Waterside Courts, three in number, have been visited once a quarter. This has been made possible by the provision by the Director of Marine of a launch once a quarter for a week and this facility has been greatly appreciated.

11. Applications for review are frequent but represent only a small percentage of the total cases. An apparent unjust decision upon the written evidence is usually explained satisfactorily and whilst the right to appeal to the Ijebu Judicial Council still exists after review, this right is rarely exercised. It has been the custom since the inception of the Protectorate Courts Ordinance to explain after each review the rights of an aggrieved party, and these are now generally known. The Resident sits once a week in the Judicial Council for the purpose of hearing reviews therefrom.

12. Whilst the work of the Native Courts cannot be said to be perfect, it is abundantly clear that the intensive travelling by the Administrative Officers has not only improved their working but has made the position of an aggrieved party secure.

13. The percentage of administrative travelling for the year was 23.2

FINANCE AND TAXATION.

14. It is satisfactory to report that the financial position of the Native Administration remains increasingly sound, the total surplus funds at 31st March, 1935, being £16,008 as compared to £13,347 at 31st March, 1934.

15. The nominal roll of taxpayers was completed in October, 1935, including the waterside, and little opposition was met with. Nominal rolls were instituted in 1918 but fell into desuetude with the result that the method of collection which has been in existence for many years, that of demanding production of receipts from taxpayers, and prosecution in the event of non-production, was not only a dangerous but an inefficient one.

The more peaceful methods of collection by nominal rolls and not by visitations by police and Assessment Clerks met with some opposition on the part of the District Chiefs responsible for collection. Their contention was that the people were used to the "demand system" and payment would never be made unless a show of force was used. Happily their apprehensions were to some extent unfounded and whilst prosecutions for failure to pay tax are still numerous, the nominal rolls show where evasion exists and evasion can be checked by a visit of the Chief's representative with an Assessment Clerk. The employment of police, except for the service of processes, has been definitely prohibited. The position of the Administrative Officer is one of supervision and not of direct contact, the province being "fully organised" since April, 1929.

16. That the Ijebu does not pay readily is admitted and though the tax collected shows an increase of £2,731 over the corresponding period for 1934, this is attributed to improved financial conditions and to the improved methods of collection the advantages of which are now being realised. Collection proceeds throughout the year and is not "seasonal", i.e., a taxpayer is expected to pay at the beginning of the year and not wait for the palm oil or cocoa season. Prosecutions however are not instituted until the end of the year except in special cases where the returns show a marked falling off in collection as compared with the previous year.

17. The problem of "double residence", i.e., where a taxpayer lives for part of a year in one province, and part in another, has been largely solved during the year by comparison of nominal rolls between Ijebu and neighbouring divisions by the respective District Officers and returns have been made as a result. A policy of give and take has been adopted in what is admittedly a difficult state of affairs, and the fact that women are not taxed in the Colony and men are taxed six shillings instead of five shillings as in Ijebu-Ode, has frequently led to correspondence between the respective Administrative Officers. It has been agreed that residence for six months or over should be the criterion as to payment to the respective province.

18. The Native Administration accounts were again audited by Messrs. Cassleton Elliott and Company at a cost of £147, and this Report again discloses how strict the Administrative Officer's supervision must be as to collection of revenue.

19. The departmental activities of the Native Administration call for few comments during the year.

20. The Public Works Department has been confined to maintenance of existing buildings and roads with the exception of two new Court Houses of an improved pattern at Irouhin and Odoghulu erected during the year. The total mileage of roads maintained by the administration is 14½ miles and the largest number of labourers employed, 388 in October.

21. The Ijebu-Ode waterworks, owing to reduction of the fuel bill, shows an excess of receipts over expenditure of £502. A major overhaul has been carried out to the pumping plant during the year and by making use of the sources to the north-east of the present supply, an output capable of meeting double the existing demand is assured.

22. A scheme for the supply of water to the towns of Iperu and Shagamu from bore holes is under consideration, the administration having agreed to expend the total cost of £5,500 from surplus funds.

23. Town planning in Ijebu-Ode Town has been continued on simple lines and the main features of future development fixed. The public has shown appreciation of the lay-out and there has been marked development of building on the new roads constructed.

24. The Public Works Department is under the supervision of the Divisional Engineer, Public Works Department

25. The daily average of prisoners in the Native Administration prison was 66.5 as opposed to 89.4 in 1934 and 121.7 in 1933. The prison is visited constantly by the Medical Officer and health is good. Only one death occurred during the year. Prison rations are in accordance with the approved Government ration scale and are supplied by contract at fourpence per day.

26. It is satisfactory to record a further increase in the amount of forest fees collected during the year.

GENERAL.

27. Whilst no attempt has been made yet to reorganise the province as a whole, other than those districts mentioned, there is a general desire amongst the remainder to fall into line. "We want our Town Councils like Ago" is a general cry. Whilst the Ijebu is not a person to suffer oppression by his Chiefs with quietude, and no cases have been brought to the notice of or observed by the Administrative Staff, the Town Council is undoubtedly a further check.

28. That the work of the Native Courts has continued to improve is beyond doubt and this is largely attributed to constant travelling and supervision by the Administrative Staff, the members of which are constantly available.

29. The Acting Lieutenant-Governor in his comments upon the Annual Report for 1934, congratulated the Awujale upon his admirable conduct during the crisis in Ijebu history following his attempted assassination, but prophesied that the coming years of administration might provide an even more searching test of character and capacity. It was not anticipated that the test would come so quickly, or that the Awujale would emerge with such flying colours. His conduct throughout the second trying political crisis was admirable and his position amongst his people has been made stronger than ever. That his action in agreeing to the return of the alleged conspirators and their subsequent reinstatement puzzled his Chiefs and people, is clear, and in some quarters was naturally taken as a sign of weakness. Both his Chiefs and people however have accepted the position but it cannot be said that in any way the political situation was improved. A small minority has persisted in their efforts and can readily find useful tools to their hand. In Ijebu-Ode the Awujale has the backing of the majority of the people including the women. There is no doubt however that the bad old days of corruption and bribery are regretted by many of his Chiefs whose activities in that respect are now curtailed. In the districts he is solidly supported and with perhaps the exception to some extent of the Akarigbo of Ijebu Remo who has the bee of independence in his bonnet, his District Chiefs have supported him during a period which would have broken the resolution of a man of less character and diverted him to the easier path. The fact that in spite of opposition and intrigue the administration in its many spheres of activities continued its normal tenor bears out the view that its foundations are sound. Whether it has progressed or not is a matter of different view points. If progress is calculated by increased commitments it has progressed, if by financial responsibility then it remains the same.

OGOJA PROVINCE.

By K. A. B. COCHRANE, Esquire, Deputy Resident.

Enquiries into the indigenous organisation of the people have elicited interesting and valuable information during the year. Considerable progress has been made in the reorganisation of the administrative and judicial systems but the task has been hampered by lack of staff. The number of Administrative Officers on duty this year was only sufficient to fill seventy-two per cent of the approved number of posts.

2. In his report on Aro origin Mr. H. F. Matthews, Government Anthropologist, shows that the valley of the Cross River must be included in the area affected by the upheaval which extended to Idah and the hill tribes of Bauchi and led to the break up of the Jukun hegemony towards the end of the eighteenth century. This year it has been disclosed by the Utanga, Ukpe, Otukwang, Aterike and Ubang clans of the Ogoja Division that the disturbance was caused by people armed with guns. The Utanga and Ukpe do not mention guns but call the people Ugenyi, a term now used to denote white-men. There is evidence to show that Ugenyi is a compound word originally used to describe a gun, the white-men's weapon. During the same period an upheaval occurred in Aro, also caused by the people armed with guns, and emigrants from Aro formed the Ahiho, Eddy and Amaseri clans in the Afikpo Division.

3. Mr. Matthews adduces evidence showing that blunderbusses in large quantities were probably imported at Calabar late in the 18th century. The great upheaval that occurred some 250 years ago is better accounted for by the tortuous spread of firearms than by the incursion of invaders who have since miraculously disappeared. Traditional history dates from the appearance of the new weapon and covers the subsequent reign of anarchy.

4. The Ogoja, Ikom and Obubra Divisions are inhabited by Semi-Bantu speaking people. These can be divided into two types; the Ekoï, originally a Sudanic speaking people for their customs prove their Jukun origin, and people who say they came from Idoma. The Ekoï have no knowledge of their relationship with the Jukuns, their earliest traditions describe their flight from the South. The Idomas joined in this flight but say their first habitat was Idoma, now a division of the Northern Provinces. But originally Idoma was not a place name, it was a term used by the Jukun to describe subject races. It is interesting to observe that there are several examples in this province of an Idoma people who still regard their Ekoï (Jukun) neighbours as masters.

5. The general lines of administration in clans of Jukun and Idoma origin appear to be the same. At the head of each clan there is a divine king who controls the fertility of the land and people. In ancient days he was kept in strict seclusion, not interfering directly in mundane affairs, but all decisions of importance were referred to him for approval. In many clans there is a hierarchy of priests that exercises considerable authority, and in all clans there is a secular body, comprising a representative from each basic unit into which the clan can be divided, that controls administrative and judicial affairs, subject to the edicts of religious authority.

6. A striking difference between the systems in the Ekoï and Idoma clans appears in their method of dividing a clan for administrative purposes. In the Idoma clans descent is patrilineal and the kindred is the basic unit; but the Ekoï practise matrilineal descent, family ties are less definite and the village is the unit.

7. The Ikom-Obokun-Nkum village groups and the Akparabong clan in the Ikom Division were reorganised on traditional lines during the year Nkum is an example of an Idoma community with dominant Ekoï neighbours.—Ikom and Obokun.

8. The reorganisation of the clans in the Ikom Division has been completed; the Etang, Otutop, Nde, Boki, Ikom-Nkum-Obokun and Akparabong clans come under the Ikom Native Treasury. There are two small villages in the Obubra area inhabited by people of the Osopong clan (Obubra Division) whose fate has still to be considered. They are living too far from the other Osopong villages to be included in the organisation of that clan, and are not on friendly terms with their Obubra neighbours. They have a court of their own with 'D' grade powers reduced to a fine of £5 or one month in criminal matters.

9. The divine kings of the Ikou clans have maintained their sacred position; they keep aloof from the native courts but take an active part in the affairs of the Native Authority. The people are well satisfied with their Native Administrations and Courts.

10. In past years the divine kings of many clans of the Ogoja Division forsook their exalted position; they sat as members of the judicial tribunals and, in order to do so, broke numerous tabus. Early in the year the people expressed their belief that the recent lack of prosperity was due to breaches of tabus and religious customs by their divine kings. The divine kings, then, on their own initiative, retired from the courts.

11. The Ukelle clan (Ekor) was reorganised on traditional lines towards the end of the year. The Iyahu, Bette-Bendi, Obanliku and six sub-clans of the Boki clan had previously been reorganised. Apart from the position accorded the clan heads in the Native Courts the approved systems of administration appear to have given the people satisfaction.

12. The Native Authorities of the Obanliku area are now taking a greater interest in the management of their affairs but generally in the Ogoja Division the Native Authorities and people are apathetic.

13. The reorganisation of the Adun clan in the Obubra Division, which took place in 1932, has undoubtedly met with success. The clan head is supported by a council of village heads, a body which is both administrative and judicial and commands the confidence and respect of the people. It is interesting to observe that in the case of this clan just before the scheme of reorganisation was put into effect the people brought forward a man of great personality to replace the divine king who had hitherto been regarded as their head. It is possible that they did not wish their divine king to be directly concerned with worldly affairs.

14. Proposals to reorganise the Osopong clan, partly in the Obubra and partly in the Abakaliki Division, were submitted and have since been approved. The clan contains two communities each under a divine king.

15. In all the other clans of the Obubra Division the religious organisation has broken down; the core, provided by the divine king in the traditional system, no longer exists and so far no way has been found of resuscitating the old form of administration in a manner acceptable to the people. For this reason although the clans are small there is a lack of cohesion, and progress in Native Administration is slow. The Native Courts appear to be giving satisfaction however, and very rarely has it been found necessary to reverse a decision.

16. Schemes for the reorganisation of two small clans in the Abakaliki Division, Mtezi and Okpoto, of Idoma origin, were approved late in December. The people are degenerate and take little interest in the management of their own affairs. It is probable that at one time these people were allied and subservient to Ukelle, the Ekor clan in Ogoja Division, but now they are surrounded by Ibus.

17. Apart from these two clans and some Osopong communities which in future will be administered from Obubra, the entire population of the Abakaliki Division is Ibo, and nearly all the people belong to one of four clans—Ezza, Izi, Ngbo and Ikwo.

18. The Ezza Native Administration possesses its own Treasury and the clan council takes an increasing interest in the control of its affairs. This year the clan council was constituted a superior Native Authority for the district. About twenty years ago a number of Ezzas settled in the inhabitants-Efikum area, in the north of the division, by invitation of the Ibis. The Ezza who were then in danger of being overwhelmed by the Ibis. The Ezza settlers have so increased in numbers that they now form eighty per cent of the population. Friendly relations exist between the Ezzas and the original inhabitants, and this year all the people of the Efikum area demanded financial federation with the main Ezza clan. The wishes of the people are being carried out.

19. A scheme of Native Administration for the Izi clan was approved during the year. Provisional approval of the judicial proposals was given in 1933. The clan council has been constituted the superior Native Authority and the councils of the ten sub-clans and two mother towns, from which they sprang, have been constituted subordinate Native Authorities. The composition of the sub-clan councils may require alteration but the Izi reorganisation is developing most promisingly. A separate Treasury for Izi has been approved.

20. The Ngbo clan is composed of the Ngbo and Ezengbo sub-clans. The clan was reorganised in 1932 and the council of each sub-clan was appointed a Native Authority for the area under its control. During the year the joint councils were constituted the Native Authority for the clan. This year a strong-room was built in Ngbo for the custody of clan funds, but the Native Authorities have not yet shown great interest in financial affairs.

21. The council forming the Native Authority for Ikwo is not sufficiently representative and has made no progress in local government. Proposals for the reform of the judicial and executive councils have been under consideration.

22. The Native Courts of the Abakaliki Division are popular and the judgments given sound, but the sentences imposed on thieves are unusually severe. In Ibo clans it is usual for a thief, if caught, to be so ashamed of facing his relatives that he leaves the community until his disgrace has been forgotten. The Ibo thieves of the Abakaliki Division are more brazen, and in order to get rid of them the Native Courts sentence them to long terms of imprisonment.

23. In the Afikpo Division the successful reorganisation of the Afikpo clan still presents an administrative problem. Interesting information which may lead to a satisfactory solution has been obtained during the year. It appears that in the Afikpo clan two tribes are intermingled. One called Amadi, an Ibo term applied to original settlers, the other Unumbeyi, a term applied to people who follow. The Amadi practise patrilineal descent and have the kindred as their basic unit, the Unumbeyi practise matrilineal descent and their unit is the village. According to the Amadi organisation the community now called Afikpo comprises two clans, Afikpo and Ozizza, each with its own founder. The Amadi are the dominant partners but in the scheme of reorganisation the village was taken as the unit and three village group minor courts were established under the Afikpo Clan Court. The minor court for Ozizza, which is a separate clan, has been a success but the other two minor courts never functioned and were suspended by the Lieutenant-Governor in 1933. It is now easy to understand why they failed.

24. It is interesting to observe that in Afikpo the people who practise patrilineal descent are in a dominant position, an exception to the usual rule in this province; it can be accounted for as follows. The Afikpo are of Aro origin and according to tradition the principal figure in the capture of Aro was a man of Edda, a clan in the Afikpo Division practising patrilineal descent, who called in Ekoi (then known as Akpa) mercenaries to help in the conquest. The Amadis of Afikpo may be of Edda origin and the Unumbeyi are probably descendants of the Ekoi mercenaries.

25. The Anuseri village group has been reorganised during the year. These people were the war cap makers for the Eddas and Ekois during the invasion of Aro. They speak Ibo but appear to be of Ekoi origin. The scheme approved for their administration gives them satisfaction. The group contains five villages and each village sends five representatives to the Native Tribunal for the group. At present the village council is the highest Native Authority but no doubt these councils will soon coalesce to form one authority for the area.

26. A scheme of Native Administration for the Okposi clan was approved in June. The people are Ibo and the organisation is based on the kindred. The introduction of the full scheme for the clan's reorganisation was delayed until the end of the year owing to a dispute which broke out between the kindred over the ownership of a salt lake.

27. The Edda, Ake-Eze, Unwana, Okpala, Ishingo and Ugulangu clans have been reorganised in the Afikpo Division during past years; they make little progress but the people are content.

28. The clan courts are popular throughout the province, but the village courts that have been constituted for some clans of the Ogoja and Ikom Divisions do not appear to be well liked and the Native Authorities have recommended that these courts should be closed. Such a multiplicity of courts is not required and small disputes in a village can be settled at less cost and more happily by the villagers themselves.

29. The Afikpo Government school has maintained its popularity and now has an average attendance of 237 children. There are two assisted schools, one at Ikom, the other at Ishihori near Ogoja; both have increased their average attendances during the year. The Roman Catholic Mission at Ogoja has opened a number of schools in the Beki area but generally the people of the Ogoja Province do not take an active interest in education.

30. There has been a welcome revival of trade during the year and in December the prices paid for palm products were almost double the prices paid in the corresponding period on the previous year. The average of the prices paid in 1935 is considerably over twice the average paid in 1934. Traders on the Cross River reaped a rich harvest, for prices rose steadily as they drifted towards Calabar with their produce. Farmers were the last to suffer from the trade depression and they have been the last to benefit from the improved economic conditions. But even so they have received in 1935 twenty-five per cent more for their yams than in 1934. Traders selling yams in the palm oil producing areas of Ohabra, white yams have been scarce owing to poor harvest, have been able to obtain double the price paid in 1934.

31. Money has been plentiful, but unfortunately there has been a large influx of counterfeit coin.

32. The improvement in trade has led to an increased demand for nickel pennies, much used in the small transactions between producer and middle-man. During the lean years over £3,000 in pennies were remitted from the province and now that better times have come it has not been possible to obtain sufficient nickel for the requirements of the people.

33. The Native Administration dispensaries continue to be popular, but their value would be enhanced if shortage of medical staff did not preclude frequent visits by a Medical Officer.

34. The financial position of the Native Treasuries is satisfactory and is shown by the following figures:—

Treasury	Surplus 1935	Revised Estimated Revenue 1935-36	Revised Estimated Expenditure 1935-36	Estimated Surplus 1935-36
	£	£	£	£
Alakuliki	5,112*	4,618	3,856	5,204
Afikpo	6,289	5,617	4,100	7,836
Bate-Bendi	600	186	347	539
Ezza	2,657	2,349	2,171	2,535
Ikom	1,793	2,103	2,136	1,760
Ngho	738	620	572	796
Obubra	2,873	3,140	3,501	2,509
Obudu	1,488	917	920	1,485
Ogoja	3,446	3,173	3,140	5,179
Olulumu	56	111	105	62

* Excludes £7.50 transferred to Ngho Native Treasury on 1/1/35

ONDO PROVINCE.

By F. B. CURR, ESQUIRE, *Acting Resident*.

In the course of 1935 the Ondo Province has seen so many changes in administrative, judicial and financial organisation that it may almost be said that it has passed through a bloodless revolution. At the close of 1934 the proposals for future organisation contained in seven intelligence reports had been approved by His Excellency and preparation was already being made for their institution; the early months of 1935 saw them in operation. The proposals contained in three more intelligence reports submitted during 1934 were approved by the Governor and instituted as were those in three reports submitted in the course of 1935.

2. Statistically the number of Native Authorities has increased from thirty-one to thirty-five and 102 new subordinate Native Authorities have been approved. Native Courts at the close of the year numbered seventy-nine as opposed to thirty-five at the beginning. Completely separate Native Treasuries have increased from four to eight and in addition there is one sub-treasury under the control of the Deji of Akure.

3. It can be said that the changes which have been made have met with a considerable degree of success and there seems very little doubt that there is greater contentment in all the areas in which the proposals approved for future organisation are in operation. The Okas have now readily accepted the position and their attitude towards the outlying villages is far more accommodating. Interest in Native Administration has greatly increased everywhere especially in matters financial. Rapidly dying, if not dead, is the idea that Native Administration funds are unlimited except by the whims of Administrative Officers and a very healthy regard for the peace is quickly awakening.

4. It is, of course, early days to talk of success but the newly formed councils have shown a greater appreciation of the situation than was expected. In some, if not all areas encouragement is still very necessary but on the whole council meetings are well attended and a lively interest is displayed in the proceedings. But few meetings have so far been convened without the intervention of the District Officer and more subjects for discussion have been suggested by him than by the council members, yet a very promising beginning has been made. For so long have the outlying villages and junior Chiefs been excluded from the councils of the Native Administrations that it cannot be expected that they can blossom into ardent debaters in a few months. Much more patient encouragement will be needed even to persuade many of the councillors that they really are integral parts of the machinery of Native Administration with minds and opinions of their own which, although this is probably still more surprising to them, they can and are expected to express.

5. The activities in each administrative division and events worthy of record may now be examined.

6. In the Ekiti Division reorganisation proposals have been applied to eight districts out of sixteen. The councils have perhaps not taken that hold on affairs which has been evinced elsewhere but the recognition of village councils in the larger districts such as Ado and Akure has already led to a better feeling between the headquarter town and the outlying villages. Particularly is this so in the Akure district where the Deji has encouraged co-operation and yet agreed to decentralisation. Claims for independence from outlying villages which were becoming prominent have dwindled and only one in the reorganised areas is actively pressing claims for complete separation. This is the village of Ilawe which, in consequence, has been administered directly for the greater part of the year. Two villages, Iddo Irappa in the Efon district and Osi in the Ado district are passive and fail to co-operate but adequate facilities for representation on the district councils are open to them and it is hoped that in time they will avail themselves of their opportunities.

7. Work on compiling intelligence reports continues and three reports were submitted early in 1936. Once the division has been completely covered it will be possible to devote more time to educating the councils in their duties and to consider the question of some form of organised central administration to preserve the federation of the Ekiti peoples of which they are rightly proud. During the year the sixteen Obas have met on occasions for discussion of affairs of general interest.

8. The long dispute concerning the appointment of an Olovo of Oye was brought to an end in July when Adeoha received the recognition of Government. Active opposition to the appointment appears to have subsided although the outlying villages still decline to co-operate. An intelligence report is now being compiled and it is hoped that the proposals for reorganisation will prove satisfactory to all and solve the remaining difficulties of the situation.

9. The principal event in the Okitipupa Division was the institution of the Ikaile Native Administration separate from that of the remainder of the division. This has caused great satisfaction among the Ikailes who as a united people under the leadership of the Abadi have adopted the new organisation with enthusiasm. The re-institution of the Iyamo titles which was necessitated by the revival of the indigenous organisation has given rise to some apprehension on account of the number being indefinite and the actual adoption of the titles being spread over a considerable period. The question was under review at the close of the year but no serious difficulty is anticipated. The council has worked well and its keenness and enthusiasm cannot be denied.

10. Elsewhere in the division the position is not so happy and reorganisation is badly needed. It has, unfortunately, proved impossible, on account of pressure of other work and shortage of staff, to undertake further enquiries during the year. The Amapetu of Mahin has proved energetic and enthusiastic but the steady effect of an organised council should prove beneficial.

11. The delimitation of the Ondo-Ikaile boundary was undertaken under the Inter-Tribal Boundaries Settlement Ordinance, No. 49 of 1933, by Captain P. R. Faulkes-Robert, etc., District Officer. He recorded a decision which was not acceptable to the Ikailes who applied for a review by the Resident. As a result of this review the decision was referred back for further inquiry in certain places and this inquiry was not completed at the close of the year.

12. In the Ondo Division a Native Administration separate from that of the Ondo district was approved for the Idanre district. This was to the great satisfaction of the Owa, Chiefs and people of Idanre whose interest and enthusiasm were quickly kindled. The building of a new council hall and Native Administration offices added fuel to the fire and the Owa and his council readily assumed their new responsibilities.

13. In the Ondo district matters did not go so smoothly and the framing of proposals for future organisation which would be satisfactory to all proved extremely difficult. Dissatisfaction with the treatment meted to them by the Chiefs of Ondo town had led to claims to independence by some of the outlying villages and as some justification for complaint existed it was necessary to safeguard their interests. Finally agreement was reached and claims for independence were dropped by all but the Oloja and people of Odigho who proved obdurate. After the most searching inquiry and after proposals had been framed to provide adequate safeguards the Governor declined to approve the independence of Odigho.

14. Since the institution of the proposals for reorganisation which include a fully representative council, great improvement all round has been in evidence although the village of Odigho has, so far, failed to co-operate.

15. Regular council meetings are held now both at Ondo and Idanre; items of agenda are published beforehand and minutes are carefully recorded.

16. A new Oshemowe was installed and formally recognised by the Acting Lieutenant-Governor on the 30th of June, 1935.

17. The Owo Divisional Native Administration was divided into three separate Native Administrations, the Owo, Akoko and Oka Native Administrations. The Owo Native Administration comprises three groups, the Owo, Ifon and Sobe groups with six Native Authorities. All, however, meet on occasions to discuss matters of general interest. These meetings are always well attended as also are those of the group councils. The new organisation is proving satisfactory and particular improvement is to be found in Ifon where a dispute concerning the appointment of an Oloja was brought to a close by the recognition of one Oyinbo Makinwa in July, 1935.

18. The desire of the Olubaka and people of Oka to withdraw from the proposed Akoko Native Administration which was mentioned in the report for 1934 was approved. This necessitated the formation of two Native Administrations instead of one.

19. The new Akoko Native Administration has proved highly satisfactory and interest and enthusiasm are great; the new council hall and Native Administration offices are a source of great pride. Regular meetings of the Akoko council are held and are very well attended indeed. Meetings of the councils of the seven groups into which the district is divided are also held and are growing in popularity. Discussions are well conducted and reasonable and the councils are rapidly acquiring opinions of their own.

20. The position in the Oka Native Administration area is not so happy and internal dissension has lent colour to a number of the council meetings which are liable to become noisy and the scenes of bitter wrangles. However, a settlement of internal troubles should bring about an improvement. The building of the new Native Administration offices is being taken in hand shortly.

21. The number of Native Courts has increased during the year from thirty-five to seventy-nine. The increase is due to reorganisation which has provided for village group courts to supplement the district courts in certain cases. Native Courts of Appeal are now in existence in the Ado and Akure districts of the Ekiti Division, the Ikale district of the Okitipupa Division, the Ondo and Idanre districts of the Ondo Division, the Owo village group area and the Akoko district of the Owo Division. Appeals from Native Courts outside these areas lie direct to the District Officer. Appeals from the Ondo Native Court of Appeal lie to the Magistrate's Court and from other Native Courts of Appeal to the District Officer.

22. The membership of all reorganised Native Courts has been enlarged and made far more representative. These reforms have been welcomed by the people but intentions to extend largely the number of members actually sitting at one time have generally not been fulfilled. Members sitting have been increased in some degree but it is the general wish that there should be some limitation. These wishes have not been opposed.

23. All Native Courts have operated satisfactorily and it is considered that the people obtain justice therein. If injustice is suspected the people readily avail themselves of the avenues of redress open to them and these, especially the right to apply for review, are well-known universally. Appeals have been few but requests for review have been fairly numerous; there has however been a welcome decrease in the Ondo district since reorganisation. All criminal cases involving a sentence of imprisonment are examined by District Officers and all criminal returns are closely scrutinised by the Resident.

24. The total number of civil cases heard was 6,387 as opposed to 4,861 in 1934. 5,669 persons were dealt with in criminal cases as opposed to 5,180 in 1934. Adultery cases numbered 626 as against 485 in 1934. Of these 331 cases were criminal as against 242 in 1934.

25. The institution of separate Native Treasuries has proved very popular and this together with the system of subsidiary estimates has quickened the interest in financial matters very considerably. The understanding of finance is still rudimentary and the desire to expend money on objects persists as also does the wish to extend the road system regardless of costs of subsequent maintenance. It is, however, being realised that expenditure must be kept within the bounds of revenue and a desire in some cases has been expressed to accumulate savings for general improvements in the future.

26. Special reference may be made to the new Native Treasury at Idanre for the Idanre Native Administration and to the sub-treasury at Akure for the Akure district of the Ekiti Division. In the case of the former custom the Treasurer and in the case of the latter the Deji is the custodian of the money. Both chiefs are illiterate but each is a diligent custodian of the money. The second key in each case is held by the Treasury clerk.

27. Revenue generally has appreciated slightly and it is anticipated that each Native Administration will achieve a balanced budget at the end of the financial year. In spite of improved conditions, however, it has been necessary to continue to exercise every possible economy particularly in those new Native Administrations which had in the past benefited by federation in the former divisional Native Treasuries.

28. There have been no changes in the rates of taxation in the Okitipupa and Owo Divisions. In the Ekiti Division the system of individual assessment which involved the use of nineteen rates varying from 5s. 6d. to 14s. 6d. was simplified and the number of rates was reduced to five varying from 6s. to 14s. Subsequently each individual was re-assessed by the village councils acting under the guidance of the District Officer. The work was performed conscientiously by the councils and the new system has proved a great improvement on the old.

29. In the Oyo Division the flat rate supplemented by rates applicable to certain trades and callings was replaced by a sliding scale of income tax in which the original flat rate of 7s. was retained in respect of all incomes of less than £50. Assessments were made by town and village assessment committees specially constituted for the purpose.

30. Harvests of the principal crops have generally been normal although in the Owo Division it is reported that the size of yams was smaller than is usual. This accounted partially for a rise in the average price of from fifteen per cent to twenty per cent. A similar rise in price is reported from the Ekiti Division which is, however, not adversely affected thereby on account of a considerable local export trade in this commodity. Production of cocoa has shown a steady increase and prices have been favourable as also have those for palm products. Cotton is grown but is used very largely locally. The crop in the Owo Division increased but the increase was insufficient to set-off a growing export of locally made cotton goods to the Eastern Provinces and prices rose accordingly.

31. The Infant Welfare Clinics which were started by the Government Medical Officer, Dr. J. S. Robinson, at Akure, Ondo and Owo in 1934 have gained both in popularity and value during 1935. Each of the Native Administrations concerned has provided funds for a midwife; local girls were selected by the Native Authorities and trained by the Medical Officer in the hospital at Akure to the standard required by the regulations made under the Midwives Ordinance, No. 24 of 1930.

32. The daily average of prisoners in the sole Native Administration Prison of the province at Okitipupa was 34.2 as opposed to 64.6 in 1934. There were no deaths and the health of the prisoners was generally good. Again the expense of maintenance proved a heavy tax on the resources of the Ikale and Okitipupa Divisional Native Administrations and the application to Government to take over the prison was renewed. It is still under consideration.

33. Two new Native Administration dispensaries were opened in the course of the year one at Idante and one at Arigidi in the Akoko district. These together with the nine dispensaries already in existence treated in all 16,770 cases as opposed to 13,391 cases in 1934.

34. The Native Administration school at Hutitun in the Ikale Native Administration has, unfortunately, not maintained its standard. Numbers attending have declined and attendance has not been as good as it should have been.

35. The Ekiti Native Administration completed a new road of some nineteen miles in length between Akure and Ikerre. The road was formally opened on the 11th of October, 1935. The road is proving valuable for it joins two large villages with the main road system and shortens the journey from Akure to Ado-Ekiti by seventeen miles.

36. Generally there appears no doubt that the many changes which have been made in the administrative, judicial and financial organisation have brought satisfaction to the Chiefs and people of the province. Doubtless adjustments will prove necessary as time goes on but it is hoped that a good foundation has been laid based on indigenous organisation.

ONITSHA PROVINCE.

By W. H. LLOYD, ESQUIRE, *Resident*.

At the end of 1934 the general economic depression showed signs of lifting and conditions steadily improved during 1935. Prices for palm produce, though fluctuating at times, maintained a steady rise throughout the year, which was reflected in the Native markets where staple foodstuffs increased in value. The gloom of 1933 and 1934 has gone and the people now show signs of recovery from the trying period they have passed through.

2. The reorganisation of the Province continued during the year, but the promise of completion held out in the 1934 report has not been realised. The whole Province however has now been covered by reports with the exception of a small group in the Nsukka Division and a larger area in the Awka Division. The latter presents difficulties as the people appear to be undecided as to their requirements and owing to a depleted staff it was not possible to give them the attention they required.

3. At the end of 1934 there were thirty-five newly organised Native Administrations in being, which have been increased during the year to sixty-three in number. Throughout the year these have been in the process of consolidation, and though progress is necessarily slow there are signs which give promise for the future. Increased interest is being shown by the Councils generally and a deeper appreciation of their responsibilities. Naturally there are disappointments here and there, where the personal jealousies of individual members of the Councils continue in prominence, with the result that cohesion is lacking and progress retarded.

4. In last year's report comment was made that the Councils showed little interest in their executive duties and waited for the Administrative Officer to instruct. The position is the same to a great extent, but there is a definite improvement and there are signs that some of the Councils are beginning to appreciate the position and are taking the initiative in issuing

executive orders. They still give too great a prominence to the judicial side and this is likely to continue for some years, owing to the fact that the simple requirements of the people in most areas are not a strain on the executive, while the glamour of the Court absorbs the attention and energies of the elders, at the expense of the less obtrusive administrative aspect. In addition to the improvement manifested in the Administration, there is no doubt that reorganisation has brought about a more public handling of affairs. Authority is no longer vested in a few favoured ones and the fact that the Councils are now fully representative gives the people a feeling of confidence. There is a greater sense of personal freedom and in a number of cases the units concerned have elected a comparatively young man as their representatives on the Council. This may mitigate to some extent against the respect for and subservience to the elder men, but on the whole it is found that they work together with little friction and the younger members assist with their more progressive ideas.

5. It may now be said that the Councils are settling down and beginning to realise their responsibilities. Petty disputes over the appointment of a member of the native staff, which at one time was apt to disrupt some of them, are now rare and they are beginning to attain a broader outlook. It is noticeable however that the new Native Administrations in the more backward areas show more progress and cohesion than those of the more enlightened ones, but throughout the Province it is obvious that the present régime is popular with the people who are now satisfied that having full representation on the Courts they can confidently appeal to them.

6. In some of the areas, notably Onitsha itself, the younger and more enlightened men have formed unions for the general improvement of their villages. These unions are in no way antagonistic to the local Councils. They meet periodically and afterwards put forward any views they may have for the consideration of the Council, as one of the members remarked "as a son would to his father". They are recognised by and remain on good terms with the Native Authority and as long as they continue in their present attitude, they can be of great assistance towards the progress of the administration.

7. The Province is divided into five Administrative Divisions namely Awka, Nsukka, Onitsha and Ebi and the inhabitants are entirely Ibo, with the exception of the Ogboli and Ete groups in the Nsukka Division, who are of mixed Igara and Ibo extraction.

The Awka Division is populated by some of the most backward people in the Province and reorganisation was completed during the year. The Councils are keen and though particularly interested in their judicial duties, they also give due thought to the executive side. Questions such as depredations by wandering cattle and the advantages of roads and education are discussed at Council meetings and suggestions brought before the District Officer in a manner that indicates they are sensible of their responsibilities. In one area the group Council ordered that an oath should be taken by all their people against theft of railway keys which had been prevalent.

8. In the Awka Division reorganisation has not progressed as satisfactorily as in the remainder of the province. Nine new Native Administrations are in operation and have proved extremely popular with the people. Investigation is now being made in regard to the remainder of the Division, the reorganisation of which has been delayed owing to shortage of Administrative staff.

9. The Nsukka Division merges with the Northern Provinces and evidence is seen of Igara invasions in the past which have left their traces. Although the people have had little connection with the Igaras for generations, the Senior Councillors in a number of the villages are still the holders of titles which are of Igara extraction, and the Ogboli group situated at the north-west end of the Division still speak Igara, though most of them

have also acquired a knowledge of the Ibo language. The people of this Division are generally backward, but do not lack intelligence. The Councils generally are virile and alive to their responsibilities. They also maintain good control and exact willing obedience from their people. With one or two exceptions these infant Native Administrations show great promise for the future. One of the most promising groups in the Division is that of Enugu Ezike. It is a distinct clan consisting of thirty-two villages spread over an area of ninety-five square miles, with a total population of 27,919. The central Council meets frequently and functions smoothly. This Council was entirely responsible for the collection of tax throughout the area and the total amount approximating to £1,700 was paid into the central treasury within a period of four days. The people are ridden with superstition and in the past it has been difficult to break them of their custom of dedicating children to particular shrines. The Council has recently prohibited this practice and there is every reason to expect this edict will be obeyed.

10. In the Onitsha Division the inhabitants are more enlightened and a great number of them have a degree of education. There are backward areas such as Anam and Ayamelum and it is noticeable that the Native Administrations of these areas show more cohesion and greater promise than those of the more enlightened areas. In the latter personal jealousies among individual members of the Councils are prominent, with the result that cohesion is lacking and progress retarded. Reorganisation in this Division is now complete and on the whole may be said to be satisfactory.

11. The Udi Division falls into two natural and distinct areas of almost equal dimensions and population, the escarpment forming the boundary between the two. The western half occupying the hills above the escarpment is inhabited by a group of six sub-clans bearing the common name of Abaja. The eastern half is inhabited by a loose confederation of village groups known collectively as Nkannu and occupy the plain below the escarpment. Each area has its own Native Administration treasury, the Abaja at Udi, and the Nkannu at Agbani. The Abajas have been operating on reorganised lines for some years and are now taking an increasingly active part in affairs.

12. In the Nkannu area, which is populated by a more backward people, reorganisation was completed early in 1935. The early promise of these groups has been fulfilled and progress has been steady. These Councils are now taking interest in their administrative duties and meet together frequently. A number of disputes which before reorganisation would have required investigation by an Administrative Officer have been amicably settled by the group Councils. The popularity of reorganisation in this area is striking.

13. The Native Administrations generally are eager to obtain medical benefits for their people, as far as funds permit. Wards have been built for the Government hospitals at Enugu and Onitsha, and there are ten Native Administration dispensaries operating in the Province. These dispensaries are supervised by Government Medical Officers, and the staff, drugs, etc., are provided by the Native Administrations. Interest in sanitation is gradually arising, and a number of incinerators have been erected in the village markets for the disposal of refuse. In co-operation with the Church Missionary Society construction was commenced late in the year on buildings for a leper Colony at Oji River. This should be completed early in 1936 and will be in charge of the Church Missionary Society who will be responsible for the Medical staff. The Native Administrations have assumed financial responsibility for the construction of the buildings to house the lepers, together with their annual maintenance and the necessary drugs, etc.

14. The oil palm plantations assisted and encouraged by the Native Administrations show most satisfactory results. At the close of 1934 there were eighty-nine of these privately owned plots in the province which have increased to 219 during 1935, with a total acreage of 266.2 under cultivation.

The Superintendent of Agriculture has given great assistance and visits the plots periodically to advise the farmers. He reports that the growth and survival rate at the end of December was satisfactory in most areas. In addition to the oil palm nursery maintained by the Agriculture Department at Nkwelle, fourteen others are maintained by the Native Administrations throughout the Province and during the year 5,700 selected seedlings were sold to the farmers from these nurseries either for new plantations or to supply vacancies due to deaths in the older plantations. On December 31st, the number of selected seedlings alive in all nurseries was 14,109 of which about 1,200 will be ready for planting in 1936. This number will be sufficient for a further 210 acres. Under the hire purchase system instituted by the Native Administrations thirty-two palm oil presses were bought by private individuals during the year, making a total of sixty-four in the province. Of this number fifty-three are in use in the Onitsha Division.

15. Education receives the attention of the Native Administrations and though funds do not yet permit them to maintain their own schools, yearly scholarships are provided by them for the Government College at Umuahia. They also provide for the maintenance of the Government School buildings at Awka, Ajali and Udi.

Communications between the villages and markets are very popular requests and during the year forty-two miles of new motor roads have been constructed. In addition to this a major bridge over the Atafor River at Amagunze was completed by the Nkannu Native Administration of the Udi Division and a similar bridge to cross the Mfumu River at Nemele is now in the course of construction.

NATIVE COURTS.

16. With the exception of five in the Awka Division, all the Native Courts in the province have been reorganised. There are ninety-five in number, sixty-three Group Courts, and thirty-two Village Courts. The former have 'D' Grade powers and the latter Civil powers only. The combined village Councils are all members of the Group Courts, though in practice they do not all attend, but arrange to send a few delegates, realising that a crowded bench is not conducive to the easy working of the Court. In certain cases however the full Council continue to attend. The work of the Courts has been satisfactory and their constitution has already been fully justified. The number of applications for review was considerable but many of them were frivolous and on the whole it is found that the decisions given by the Courts are just ones. Close supervision has been exercised by the Administrative staff and generally every Court has been visited at least once a month, when applications for review have been dealt with. The native generally appears quite satisfied with having his case reviewed by an Administrative Officer and in only a few cases during the year has he exercised his right to a judicial appeal.

17. During the year 18,819 cases were heard in the Native Courts, an increase of over 4,000 from 1934. This may be attributed generally to the confidence in the reorganised Courts and to the improvement in economic conditions. 4,556 applications for review were received and of these the judgment of the Native Court was confirmed in 2,109 cases. In 664 cases the judgments were quashed and in the remainder they were modified.

FINANCE.

18. The Revenue of the Native Administrations is solely derived from tax and Native Court receipts. All the tax has been collected through the indigenous institutions and has proceeded smoothly with the result that the full estimate of tax revenue will be realised within the financial year. No change has been made in the tax incidence. The Native Treasuries are all in a sound financial position due to a sound conservative policy in the past. With the exception of the Abaji and Nkannu treasuries of the Udi Division, all funds are administered from a central treasury at each Administrative

Headquarters. The group Councils are not yet confident of their ability to control their own funds, but a few of the more progressive are now seriously considering the question. Arrangements will be made to give them their own treasuries as soon as they are willing to have them. At the moment each group works on its own estimates, which are framed after full consultation with the respective Councils.

The financial position of the various Native Administrations is shown by the following figures.

Treasury	Surplus 1957	Estimated Revenue 1958-59	Estimated Expenditure 1958-59	Estimated Surplus 1958-59
	£	£	£	£
Awgu	2,877	2,390	2,277	3,377
Awka	6,741	5,733	5,645	6,735
Nsukka	6,772	8,220	6,870	2,227
Onitsha... ..	8,838	8,889	8,287	10,161
Udi Abaja	3,059	3,576	3,675	3,250
.. Nkanu	3,273	2,685	2,453	3,824

OWERRI PROVINCE.

By MAJOR H. C. STEVENSON, O.C.B., M.C., *Resident*.

Returning prosperity during the year has had a marked effect on the lives of the people and, looking back over the period under review, the tranquillity enjoyed provides a pleasing contrast with the feeling of unsettlement and unrest caused by increasing trade depression in the preceding few years.

2. Reorganisation was continued on the lines of which the general principle had previously been approved and which seem best suited to modern conditions. There are now few areas on the Provincial map which are not coloured pink and in these areas, although formal approval has not yet been given for the establishment of Native Administrations, the Native Courts have been reorganised on the approved lines and the combined village councils are consulted about the affairs of the clans and about proposals for the establishment of Native Administrations.

3. It was never intended that the constitution of the newly formed Native Administrations should be fixed and unalterable. Before proposals for reorganisation were submitted for approval they had all been discussed at length with the people concerned, but these could not grasp all the implications of the schemes suggested and they were unable to offer constructive criticism before they had practical experience of the working of the new administrations. The administrative staff indicated the broad outlines on which the Native Administration should be organised and the proposals approved were purposely left sufficiently elastic to allow of modification in points of detail being effected by the people themselves. It may be claimed that in most areas which have been reorganised for a year or more the people are beginning to understand the significance of Native Administration and to take sufficient interest to effect or suggest changes which experience seems to show would be desirable. There can be no doubt that initially the younger and more progressive elements imagined, in spite of all assurances to the contrary, that Native Administration was synonymous with gerontocracy; this mistaken idea at first caused some apathy towards the reforms effected, and later gave a fillip to the progressive unions which have sprung up in the Owerri Province as in other parts of Nigeria. Happily, as far as can be foreseen, the danger of a cleavage between two sections of

the community has been avoided, many of the prominent and older men, who have always played a leading part in public affairs, belong to one or other of the unions, and the younger men with some degree of education are finding their way in increasing numbers on to the clan councils. In most parts of the province these councils are becoming more widely representative of all classes.

4. Experience gained during the year has shown that the system of Native Administration adopted can be improved in points of detail, and it is to the clan councils that we must look to propose whatever reforms may be necessary. These councils are the representatives of the people who know where the shoe pinches, they are in the best position to realise any defects in the present constitution of the Native Administrations and to devise remedies within the framework which has been provided.

5. The clans of which the Abu Division is comprised had been split up into their component village groups, each with its own council and court. The creation of a large number of petty administrations was open to obvious objections, but it was considered preferable to begin with units which were in some degree organised, and from them to build up a clan organisation, rather than to attempt to make a Native Administration of a clan which had never existed as a cohesive administrative entity. The group councils during the year began to take an interest in local affairs; they assumed responsibility for the collection of tax, selected their own assessment clerks and paid them from their administrative salaries; they also supervised the expenditure connected with the courts. The first result of the practical application of the proposals for reorganisation was to crystallise the divisions within the clans and tend to make the group councils rather too intent on matters of purely local interest, but some progress has been made towards the federation of the groups comprising the respective clans; combined meetings of the group councils have been held, and the idea of constituting clan councils is beginning to take shape in the minds of the people concerned.

6. The subdivision of the clans mentioned in the preceding paragraph resulted in the creation of a large number of Native Courts, and it seems probable that, owing to the accessibility of the courts, a number of disputes which were formerly settled at home are now brought before the Native Court. Much of the litigation is said to have been frivolous; with a court at his door-step the hot-headed Ibo undoubtedly rushes into litigation about trifles. The increased number of the cases has added to the work of the administrative staff.

7. In the Abouba Division after patient propaganda the villages have been persuaded to send representatives to periodic meetings of their clan councils. Minutes are kept and although these records do not often contain proposals of practical constructive value, they indicate an awakening interest in public affairs. The Abu and Ekpeya clan councils are the most progressive, the former has the headmaster of a Government assisted school as Secretary and four young men, who have had some education, act as a financial committee. Both these councils have of their own accord suggested the separation of the council from the court, the members of the former bodies to confine their connexion with the courts to advising as to the appointment of members and to the weeding out of those who prove venal or incompetent.

8. In the Bende Division as much attention as possible has been paid to the administrative side of reorganisation and to encouraging the natural representatives of the people to attend the meetings of the clan councils and take an interest in local politics. In this division there had been in force a system of paying forty-five per cent of the clan revenue as a lump sum to the clan councils to defray expenses under Heads I to IV of the estimates. This system, which was devised to give experience in the management of the clans' finances, was correct in theory but failed because the councils were not sufficiently widely representative. In practice the money got into the hands of a few men and the system, which proved unpopular and led to misunder-

standing and minor disturbances, was discontinued early in the year. The failure of the attempt to give the people some measure of control over the Native Administration funds emphasised the necessity for popularising the clan councils and by the end of the year progress had been made in the task of convincing the leaders of the villages that their co-operation is essential to the success of their Native Administration.

9. The Degema Division is divided into three parts, namely the Ijaw clans in the West, the Nembe clan in the centre, and the Kalanari clan with Bonny and Okrika in the East. The western division comprises a large number of petty clans which consist of scattered villages dotted about the intricate maze of waterways which cover the area. Each clan has its own court, the members of which also form the clan council. The revenue of the individual clans is small and, owing to the natural features of the country, it is difficult to do much for the people. Marked cultural advancement cannot be expected in this area for many years.

10. The Nembe clan council have worked together more harmoniously than they did in the past; the death of one of the most intransigent opponents of the Amanyanabo caused a pause in the senseless bickering among the factions, and it may be hoped that the prevailing better feeling will continue. The council are able to discuss their finances intelligently, and it is to be regretted that their resources are so limited.

11. The large Kalabari clan has not yet been reorganised; an intelligence report was written after most painstaking investigation, but the final proposals had not been discussed with the people concerned by the end of the year. The clan has an indigenous organisation which might well be adapted to suit modern conditions, but the organisation has not been utilised as a means of administration since the repeal of the House Rule Ordinance and there is now considerable dissension regarding points of detail. Experience in this province has proved that endless trouble is caused if the indigenous system of administration is revived when there is an opposition of any magnitude. The intelligence report therefore was not submitted for approval and efforts were still being made at the end of the year to formulate proposals which will prove acceptable to the majority of the people.

12. The Okrika Native Administration progresses well and the council takes a keen interest in the administration. At Bonny the individual members of the council, who live in the neighbourhood, take an interest in local affairs, but unfortunately the two factions, into which the council is split, will not forget their differences and consequently every question is apt to be considered from a party point of view rather than on its merits. There is a distinct danger that the cleavage, which formerly affected only the council, may spread to the Houses; if these units become divided against themselves the foundation on which native society and the Native Administration rests will be destroyed. Proposals for widening the basis of representation are under consideration in the hope that the good sense of the majority of the people if given more scope will prevent the threatened wreck of their administration.

13. In the Okigwi Division investigations into the indigenous social structure were continued and by the end of the year sufficient information had been collected to form the basis of reports on all those areas which had not been reorganised. The Native Administrations already established are finding their feet and beginning to gain some idea of their duties and responsibilities. When the clan councils were established their composition was left entirely to the people in order to emphasise the fact that the members were in no sense government nominees; as a result of this policy the councils are apt to be too large to be entirely satisfactory and the uncertainty as to who is eligible to sit causes at times some confusion. The people have been encouraged to suggest methods of limiting the number of members and retaining those best qualified to administer the affairs of the clan.

14. No Native Administration in the Okigwi Division has as yet a separate Treasury, but subsidiary estimates are prepared for each clan and discussed with the councils. Copies of the estimates are posted in the council house so that any literate person can see at a glance how much tax is collected and how the clan revenue is expended.

15. In the Owerri Division, Native Administrations were established during the year for those areas which had not already been reorganised. This is the first division in the province to be entirely reorganised. Sub-treasuries were formed for six of the previously established Native Administrations and give every promise of being a success. Tax and Court revenue are paid into the Clan Treasuries and local payments are made therefrom by the Native Treasury clerk. This system is undoubtedly appreciated and has done much to allay the suspicions of the more sceptical members of the community as to the ultimate destination and disbursement of Native Administration funds.

16. Tax collection was begun in the Umukpa area in October and in the rest of the Owerri Division in November, and except for negligible amounts was completely paid before the end of the latter month. It is true that the taxpayers were favourably treated, seeing that the reduced rates sanctioned at the time of the acute trade depression remained in force during the more prosperous year of 1935; nevertheless the fact that more than a hundred thousand taxpayers, paying through their family heads to a Native Administration Treasury, completed payment within one month reflects credit on the Native Administration system and the Native Administration Staff and it encourages the belief that the system has been introduced on the right lines.

17. Reorganisation and the subdivision of administrative areas into their component clans has resulted in an increase in the number of Native Courts and returning prosperity, with money circulating more freely, has increased the business of the Courts, particularly in the Ala Division where 15,856 cases were heard in 1935 compared with 7,851 in 1934. The Native Courts perform most useful service by dealing with the less serious forms of crime and with civil claims (mostly matrimonial causes). 45,458 cases in all were heard in the province during the year and it is quite obvious that the local benches are required to deal with such a volume of litigation. The Native Courts are, on the whole, popular, but it is useless to pretend that they are incapable of improvement; when the system of filling the benches with government nominees was abandoned, the selection of court members was left entirely to the people with the result that some of the courts have an excessive number of members and many representatives have been chosen who are not altogether suited to the work. Informed criticism of the Native Courts, as at present constituted, is directed not against corruption but against the confusion caused by an excessive number of judges and against the ineptitude of some of the members who have found their way on to the bench. These disadvantages cause delay and vexation but not necessarily faulty judgments. The people in general now realise the drawback of unbridled numbers and in nearly all courts some scheme of voluntary limitation of numbers has been devised. It may be hoped that the less suitable members will gradually be weeded out by popular suffrage. The guidance and advice of the administrative staff will be required to assist the councils to perfect their judicial organisation, but direct interference must be avoided as much as possible if the Native Administrations are to develop on lines best suited to local conditions.

18. Adequate safeguards against injustice or oppression are provided by the right of review or appeal provided by the Native Courts Ordinance. In practice all criminal cases involving a sentence of imprisonment are scrutinised by the Administrative Officers. Little advantage has been taken of the right to appeal, as litigants prefer to seek redress by way of

review. During the year 45,458 cases were heard in the Native Courts in the province and applications for review were made in 9,817 cases. Only 1,437 judgments were quashed; a figure representing approximately three per cent of the total number of cases heard. The partiality for proceeding by way of review is not surprising; for a small search fee the dissatisfied litigant can have his case reviewed by an officer whom he probably respects and trusts and whom he certainly knows to be incorruptible and impartial, the whole proceedings being conducted in familiar surroundings and in a simple manner. In the great majority of cases litigants are content to accept the finding of the reviewing officer, comparatively few exercising their right to make further application to the Resident.

19. All the Native Administrations in the province continue to provide facilities for medical treatment in the shape of dispensaries which have proved as popular as ever. In addition to the patients maintained free of charge at the Native Administration Lepet Settlement at Uzuakoli, eighty-five who were able to contribute £2 towards the cost of their upkeep and treatment were admitted during the year.

20. The youths who had been trained as Sanitary Inspectors under the Medical Officer of Health at Umu-dike assumed duty during the year in their clan areas in the Bende and Aboada Divisions. There had been some doubt as to whether the desire for the appointment of Sanitary Inspectors, which had been voiced by the clan councils, was not due to the wish to find employment for their boys rather than to a yearning for better sanitation. It appears, however, that the experiment has been successful and the work which is being done is genuinely appreciated, the people co-operating in the attempt to improve sanitary conditions in the villages.

21. The only Native Administration School in the province, that at Nembe in the Degema Division, earned very favourable reports from visiting officers. Some of the youths who had been sent by Native Administrations in the Okigwi and Aboada Divisions to the training College at Uyo finished their courses of instruction during the year and preparations were made to open four Native Administration schools in the ensuing year. Twenty-six scholarships tenable at the Government College are provided by different Native Administrations in the province.

22. The Native Administrations maintain about 1,300 miles of good all-weather roads in the Owerri Province. No buildings of any magnitude have been erected, but a number of small courts, sub-treasury offices and similar minor works have been built by Native Administrations.

23. No change in the rate of tax was made during the year. The rate, which had been reduced in the Owerri, Bende and Okigwi Divisions in 1934, in consequence of the slump, remained unaltered when prices improved, in order to give the taxpayers in these populous areas a chance to recoup themselves after a series of bad years. The collection of tax throughout the province proceeded more smoothly and expeditiously than it had ever done in the past; improving trade and better circulation of money no doubt helped to bring about this gratifying improvement, but credit must also be given to better methods of collection and to the closer co-operation of the Native Authorities.

24. The financial position of the Native Administrations is satisfactory and although progress in this respect is not rapid the Native Authorities are being encouraged to take an intelligent interest in the expenditure of their funds. In those clans in which the councils have begun to function properly, sub-treasuries are established if the people desire them; it is hoped that the actual physical custody of their liquid resources will do much towards teaching the Native Authorities to Administer the finances of their clans. In all cases estimates or subsidiary estimates are prepared for each clan and are given the widest publicity.

OYO PROVINCE.

By H. L. WARD PRICE, Esquire, Resident.

The Yoruba speaking people are divided into numerous sections, all of which claim descent from the ancient city of Ife in the Oyo Province. From this town, which is conjectured by experts to have been a centre of civilisation between 1,000 and 3,000 B.C., emigrants set out to establish branches of the race; among these were sons of the reigning house, who themselves became crowned heads in their respective areas.

2. There are five Native Administrations in the Oyo Province, four of whom are ruled by crowned chiefs descended from the ancient house of Ife; the remaining one, Ibadan, is a confederation of large cities which put themselves under the protection of the vast town of Ibadan during the times of danger in the early part of the nineteenth century.

3. Though the conditions in these five administrations are all similar, and their hopes and fears are very much the same, they have little to do with one another. One reason is that any matters which need co-operation are always dealt with through the Administrative Officers stationed in each division. Another is that old tradition forbade the crowned heads to meet each other, as disaster was thought likely to follow; and this superstition, which still subsists to a small extent, coupled with, possibly, a slight mistrust or jealousy, tends to keep them apart.

4. The system of administration is based on the ancient one which has been handed down for hundreds of years, and which is admirable in structure. The difficulties arise from the introduction of European ideas, and methods, and law. These things have descended upon the illiterate, but by no means unintelligent, leaders of the people like a flood; and they are at times bewildered. For example, some innocent thing which has been done for generations can no longer be done now because it is contrary to the law, and the chiefs sometimes feel they are losing their grip.

5. It cannot be said that they are always pleased at the restriction of their powers, which they consider may undermine their status and authority as chiefs; that is to say, as those who were formerly responsible for the discipline of the people, and for their progress on lines suitable to their characters, their abilities, and their inherited instincts.

6. In the four areas which are under crowned chiefs called Obas the Oba is carefully selected by a group of leading chiefs from certain families and approved by Ifa, the oracle of divination. He thus becomes a semi-sacred person. But he should not act without his Council's advice, the members of which, male and female, represent all sections of the people. It is a democratic administration, not monarchical. The humblest member of the community knows the channel by which he can petition the Oba and his Council, and if the principal figures were always men of character and integrity the administration could not help proceeding with smoothness and efficiency.

7. The system is different in the Ibadan Division. There, all the towns and villages have joined together into a confederation, with Ibadan as the leader, a position earned and willingly recognised by all the rest. They comprise nearly a million people, and are not all merely peasants, humbly contented with the bare necessities of life, as the people in the Oyo Division seem to be. A large number of them are very much alive; seeking progress both economic and cultural. For example, they would prefer to see improved efficiency in the Native Courts, rather than an extension of Protectorate Court influence, which they fear may change the outlook of the Native to the detriment of administration by the traditional leaders of the people.

8. The Native Authority, that is to say, the Council which is at the head of affairs, is composed of the Bale of Ibadan as President, the three chiefs in Ibadan next in order of seniority, and five heads of large towns

other than Ibadan. They can bring to Council what advisers they like; it being undesirable that the conduct of affairs should be placed in the hands of only a few men. There are specially-appointed persons of education on some of the Town Councils.

9. The great problem in Ibadan Division is the government of the city of Ibadan. The census of 1931 stated that its inhabitants number 487,000, and they are scattered over an area of about 800 square miles. Some of the systems which are successful in smaller places do not work well at Ibadan, owing to its huge size. A further complication is that it is not divided up territorially; so that it is not possible to administer it in sections. It is run on the lines of the old war camp. There are some thirty chiefs, to one of whom every man must owe allegiance. He can select which leader he will follow, and can change him at will, and he can live where he chooses. Thus, instructions to cover any given area cannot be given because there is no one with the authority to command all the people living in that area. It seems, fortunately, to be the rule that all the members of a family owe allegiance to the same chief; but as the large families are now breaking up into small units, each acting individually, so the difficulty increases; and the task of controlling and organising the people grows more complicated. The District Officer and his assistants at Ibadan have no easy task.

10. The revenue of these administrations are derived from direct taxes, fines and fees of court, and licences. The treasury work is done by clerks, who are all local natives; and they follow the system well. The Ibadan Native Administration Treasury is a busy office, and is run on Government lines, but with a low-paid staff. The accounts are audited to the smallest detail annually, and rarely are serious mistakes discovered or losses of money.

11. 1935 has been a comparatively satisfactory year from a trade point of view, and the revenue received is correspondingly larger. The taxes have been paid with surprising readiness, though much of the credit must be given to the Administrative Officers especially at Ibadan and Oshogbo. A great deal of revenue has unfortunately to be foregone, as the system of collection is not yet up to the standard it should eventually attain. To impose income tax on the adult males of Ibadan Town for example, who number some 80,000, scattered over a large area, and constantly moving their domiciles, is a formidable task, and can only be undertaken either very gradually or by means of an increased European staff.

12. The onus of collecting the tax is theoretically on the chiefs; but though they are anxious to increase the revenue, partly in view of their own salaries, they nevertheless feel that the tax is a Government tax, and that to press hard for its collection, especially the income tax, is liable to make them unpopular.

13. The funds of all the Native Administrations are healthy except Ila, which can only just pay its way. It is feared that the road that was with difficulty constructed from Ila to the Ekiti country, eighteen miles long, will have to be abandoned.

14. It is constantly in the minds of the Administrative Officers to urge the Native Authorities to take a more detailed interest in the revenue and expenditure. At Ibadan, Ife and Ilesha, the chiefs are keenly concerned about their funds; but here comes in the dual authority, as Government may not approve of certain expenditure which they wish to incur; and at times they express disappointment that they are not allowed more responsibility. This, however, is a part of the policy of indirect rule and it will be many years before they can reach the Government standard of efficiency in financial matters.

15. Apart from salaries to chiefs and staffs, the principal items of expenditure are on public works. In this sphere, the five Native Administrations of Oyo Province have the invaluable advice and expert help of Mr. R. Jones, M.I.STRUCT.E., the Ibadan Native Administration Engineer. Mr. Jones, in addition to his heavy work in the Ibadan Division, designs and

carries out major public works for the Ife and Oyo Divisions. He does this voluntarily and without any additional emoluments. He has accomplished remarkable work, and shown outstanding versatility and energy. During the year the Ife Waterworks, his own design and achievement, which supplies 40,000 people, was opened, and has proved more successful than was anticipated. As usual, the cost of Mr. Jones' work is so low that it causes general surprise.

16. The Hesiin Council Hall was completed to the great satisfaction of the people. The Iseyin (Oyo Division) Waterworks scheme was started for 17,000 inhabitants.

17. Plans for a small water supply at Ogbomoso are being prepared, from the original suggestion of Mr. Jones, by the Public Works Department.

18. New streets are under construction in Ibadan, which will improve the town immensely. Sundry new roads and bridges have been completed. A new Court House has been designed for Ibadan on modern lines.

19. The long-standing proposals to supply Ibadan with water and electricity is not yet approved. The Ibadan people agreed to pay a rate of four shillings per adult male which would produce over £13,000 per annum.

20. The Native Administration hospital at Ibadan continues to be full to overflowing and more wards are needed. Over a thousand operations are performed in an up-to-date theatre, with electricity and X-ray apparatus. A Government doctor (Dr. W. C. Dale) is in charge, assisted by a Nursing Sister. The small dispensaries or dressing stations scattered over the province attract only a fair number of clients, even though the treatment is free. There were 175,000 attendances. The health students completed their training and are out in the towns and villages, where they demonstrate to the people the benefits of good sanitary arrangements, clean water supplies, and healthy food.

21. In the sphere of commerce, the Co-operative societies scheme is steadily progressing, with Government assistance, but the Private Produce Inspection Scheme, though desired by the middlemen and the European firms, has not been sufficiently useful to be taken over by the Native Administration. Economic progress is noticeable in many of the large cities. Oyo still remains conservative in this respect.

22. The land tenure question is still under consideration. In the meantime, irregular dealing with land continues and is increasing. Sale of land is forbidden by Native Custom, but nevertheless it is going on. The Chiefs of Ibadan are concerned about wealthy strangers to the place, who may obtain the best plots of land to the detriment of the general owners—*i.e.*, the community. The land is not freehold land. It is owned by the community, for which the Council of Chiefs acts as trustees and managers; and they fear the advent of English law in this respect in case large areas become owned by capitalists and the peasants become wage earners instead of land holders. Nevertheless, when they hear of others acquiring land with a view to its possible appreciation in value, there is a temptation to adopt the same course themselves.

23. The Native Courts of Justice are popular on the whole, and do their work well, but it seems to be the fashion for some Europeans and a certain class of Africans to defy the judges as corrupt without producing evidence. Such talk is not helpful. It is often the dishonest litigant who seeks the Protectorate Court and the lawyer. He is able to make statements before a stranger Magistrate which it would be absurd to make before native judges, who are familiar with every detail of local life, and he hopes that some technical point may enable him to succeed.

24. Appeals, which go first to the Head Chief's Court, then to the District Officer, to the Resident, and to the Governor, in that order, are few. To get convincing evidence in land cases, seeing that documents are not used, is a difficult matter to one unfamiliar with the countryside and people.

25. One question which exercises the minds of Native Authorities is the attitude of stranger-natives, who refuse to attend the local Native Courts, or respect the chiefs. Their conduct sometimes sets others a bad example.

26. The Native Administration police forces are in fair order, but to keep them up to standard is the full time work of a European and there has been none available.

27. Several towns are endeavouring to provide themselves with recreation grounds. British field games are not played much, mainly for lack of grounds and competent organisers. They would be very popular if the facilities were available.

28. In the sphere of education, the small Native Administration schools, designed to increase in size annually, have been a marked success, and are very popular. The Ibadan Elementary Training Centre has continued its work, which is of a high standard. The new building of Oduduwa College at Ife has been occupied and over a hundred pupils are taught in this well conducted secondary school; as usual funds are low, and loans have been necessary, but the prospects are bright. A similar school at Ilesha is going through a period of financial difficulty, from which it will no doubt emerge successfully.

29. There are several more towns asking for libraries and reading rooms, and the Ibadan Native Administration Police Band is much appreciated wherever it goes.

30. The Native Administrations are active bodies, with a considerable amount of work on their hands, especially in the case of Ibadan. The treasury; the assessment and collection of taxes; the police; the staff of court messengers; the prisons; major public works; maintenance of buildings and a large mileage of roads; schools; land surveys; boundary disputes, many of them complicated; health propaganda and general sanitation; dressing stations; hospital; leper colony; vaccination; control of markets; forestry and agricultural problems; fuel plantations; and other such things, all take time and thought to keep working harmoniously and efficiently. A lot has been done, but many things obviously remain undone; and when fresh complications arise, as they do continually, so have existing systems to be varied to meet the new conditions.

31. Gradually the old Native Customs are being displaced by ideas imported from Europe, and how far it will be desirable for this to go on remains to be seen. It is probably inevitable.

WARRI PROVINCE.

By CAPTAIN E. A. MULLER, *Acting Resident.*

The Warri Province is administered through four divisions which contain the four main tribes, the Jekris, the Sobos, the Ijaws, and the Kwale and Aboh Ibos. In the Jekri-Sobo Division the Jekris and some of the Sobo clans find themselves placed together owing to inter-marriage and to their dwelling together in the same towns and villages. The Aboh Division contains two separate entities in the Kwale and the Aboh Ibos, though both speak a somewhat similar dialect of the Ibo language. The other two divisions contain the remainder of the Sobo clans and the Ijaws respectively. The system of government is generally speaking the same throughout the province and is based on the village or group of villages. The Ibi of Aboh remains the only individual Native Authority. Elsewhere the clan councils form the Native Authorities for their respective areas. Each of the tribes has its own native treasury, which has been created perhaps more for the sake

of convenience in the administration of funds than from any real understanding, by the people, of local finance. Such understanding is nevertheless growing rapidly and with it the desire to take a fuller part in management and development. This desire is exemplified by the formation of tribal union societies in the main centres throughout the province. These very popular societies are composed of the younger and literate sections of the community, and they take great interest in current problems, exercising at the same time considerable influence.

2. Now that the initial stages of reorganisation are complete, the year has been devoted to consolidation of the advances won. The Native Authorities are taking a keen interest in local affairs, and are beginning to realise the advisability of some adjustment of the old custom of government by the elders. They feel the need for the assistance of the younger and more educated men. Though in only a few cases have any definite steps been taken to secure such co-operation, the consciousness of this need marks an advance which will in time bear fruit, and will ensure that the Native Administrations keep abreast of modern progressive demands.

3. Administration by the Councils has been notably successful in the collection of tax which is arranged and carried out almost without help. It has its drawbacks from the judicial standpoint in that both parties to any dispute are almost sure to find members of their respective families amongst the judges. This is a point which is not being overlooked by the Councils themselves. Perhaps a most important aspect is that the Councils provide a very popular measure of local self-government which makes the people contented and happy.

JEKRI-SOBO DIVISION.

4. The division contains the Jekri sub-tribe and five Sobo clans, the chief of which is the Ukpe. There has been no advance, during the year, towards better relations between the Sobos and the Jekris. The arrangement whereby these two dissimilar peoples are served by one divisional treasury is still unsatisfactory, even though to all intents and purposes they are administered as separate units. The Sobos are growing more insistent in their requests for control of their own funds, and for the establishment of a native treasury on their own land, but the task of finding a basis of agreement acceptable to both the Jekris and themselves is proving more difficult than they had expected. An event of some importance has however taken place in Jekri land which marks a definite step towards the ultimate determination of the relations between these two peoples. The election of an Olu, a title which has been vacant for approximately a hundred years has occupied first importance in the minds of the Jekri chiefs and people. The growth of the desire to revive this hereditary office was stimulated by the reorganisation enquiries which commenced in 1927. In 1929, an Olotu or chief priest of the Olu was appointed. The death in 1932 of Chief Dore, who had been Olu in all but name, was followed by that of the Olotu early in 1935. These events led to further unity amongst the ruling classes, and the end of the disagreements between the Warri notables and those of Benin River, which had so long been a feature of Jekri domestic politics, was marked by the selection of an Olu-elect in the person of Emiko, a great grandson of the last Olu, in June of this year. Arrangements for his installation and coronation early in 1936 are already well in hand. These happenings have not passed unnoticed by the Sobo communities who are straining every nerve to gain Government approval of complete separation from the Jekris.

5. The Jekri Central Council met throughout the year but normal activities were overshadowed by the predominant question of the Olu, and there is little else of interest to record. It has encouraged, as far as possible, the rice-growing experiments which have recently been commenced. Good quality rice has been grown by several Jekri farmers in the mangrove swamps and it is clear that there is a potential source of food supply for local demands and possibly for export.

6. The Odogun, the Ukpe Native Authority, is a very live body, and was able to collect the tax for the whole area under its authority in just over a month. Unlike the Native Authorities of the other four Sobo clans, its representation, which embraces the ruling families of Ukpe, is firmly fixed, with the result that it has time to attend to the details of administration.

7. The work of the Native Courts has been on the whole satisfactory. Revision of the panel of court members was carried through to the general appreciation. Out of a total of 7,785 civil and criminal cases there were 22 criminal and 118 civil appeals to native courts of appeal, 8 criminal convictions and 31 civil awards being set aside. Similar figures in respect of appeals to the District Officer or Magistrate were 10 and 42. Requests for reviews numbered 432 in criminal cases and 131 in civil cases. Sentences and judgments annulled were 77 and 22 respectively. The number of reviews, approximately 1 to every 14 cases, is not unduly high. Adequate supervision of the courts has been exercised throughout the year and in addition the ubiquitous and popular letter-writer ensures that individual complaints receive attention.

8. Keen interest in education has been evinced by both Sobos and Jekris. The Sobo Council aspires to a rural middle school for its clansmen and has already intimated that it is prepared to construct and equip a school of this nature, by private subscription if native administration funds are not available. The question is being considered.

9. The two Sobo and two Jekri Native Administration schools have worked well. Particularly in the Sobo schools happy relations have been established with the local councils whose interest is increasing.

10. A weekly journal, the "West African Star", commenced publication in September. The editor is a local Jekri. It seems that it has already acquired a paying circulation and we may look for improvement in its scope and quality when experience of journalism has been gained.

SORO DIVISION

11. One divisional treasury serves the twenty-one clans and independent village groups of Sobos and Sobo Isokos, all of which have been reorganised. The conciliar Native Authorities are not perhaps very advanced but they in the main are composed of shrewd responsible men who are definitely interested in the well being of their people. Greater facilities for education are continually being demanded, and the councils have unanimously approved of the proposals for a Middle School which have been put forward by their kinsmen in the neighbouring Jekri-Sobo Division. The four Native Administration schools are popular features even though it has no longer been found possible to continue free education for pupils.

12. The enquiries into local institutions and organisations were centred round the village group, and at the commencement a native court was established in each of these groups. In consequence there are some 128 such courts. Such a large number was more than was required, but it was felt advisable to let the people themselves ask for amendment in their own way. Already one large group, the Jeremi Clan, with thirty-two courts, has requested reorganisation into four sub-clan areas with four courts instead of the original thirty-two.

13. The work of the courts has followed a normal course throughout the year and there have been 4,340 civil and criminal cases as against 3,849 in the previous year. The large panels of court members do much to ensure justice according to traditional native ideas and supervision by Administrative Officers brings those ideas into harmony with more progressive thought.

14. The new laws regarding appeals are popular since they are recognised as providing a method of appeal where judgments given in reviews are not deemed satisfactory, but reviews by the District Officer continue to afford the normal means of seeking redress. There have been 445 applications for review as against seven appeals.

15. Other activities of the councils include a dispensary at Ughelli at which free treatment is given. Patients average approximately thirty a day. Thirty-three lepers are maintained in the settlement at Ossimo in the Benin Province. There is noticeable a greater demand for cleanliness and sanitation, and occasional requests, hitherto unknown, have been received for assistance in planning sanitary arrangements in the local villages.

16. The Sobos have an excellent record in respect of payment of tax which they carry out entirely through their own organisation. Collection is usually complete in a very short time and this year nearly £9,000 was paid into the treasury in a period of three months.

17. The method of holding land by communities, instead of individually, coupled with the ineradicable belief that other interests are anxious to acquire its land, has once again prevented the Sobo people from making any advance towards improved methods of palm cultivation. This is disappointing but improvement can only come through education. Even now there are signs of a healthier spirit amongst the younger men.

WESTERN-IJO DIVISION

18. The division comprises the nine clans of Western Ijaws, and the Townships of Forcados and Burutu over whose mixed populations the Native Authority has no jurisdiction. Four villages of the Mein Clan are still administered through the Degema Division of the Owerri Province, but they have now put forward a request for incorporation with the other units of their clan in this division.

19. The outstanding event of the year has been the rapid growth of the realisation, both by the councils and by the people, of the disadvantages attendant on scattered and inharmonious units. The methods of more advanced administrations have obviously been closely observed and the Ijaw has determined that, whatever may have been his shortcomings in the past, he will now unite so as to gain for himself such advantages as there are to be got from education and other forms of progress. Younger and more advanced men are being appointed as spokesmen to the Clan Councils, and the councils themselves have found an artificial Native Administration with a common divisional treasury a quite inadequate means of voicing their opinions and providing for their needs. The result has been much closer co-operation between the clans and, in consequence, the growth of a spirit of tribal consciousness. A tribal council has been formed by the people themselves and they have also chosen their method of representation of members on a tribal native court. Certain details are still awaiting the decision of the Chief Commissioner, who has approved the erection of a council house and court.

20. Native Courts are established at all the Clan Centres and in certain areas there are also village courts. There has been a noticeable falling off in the number of cases brought before the village courts, but the clan courts have maintained their popularity. Cases have been very few where any type of oppression has been exercised by the courts and in the large majority the judgments have been fair and sensible. Appeals are infrequent but there are a number of applications for review due, in many cases, to the fact that the losing party to a dispute is always ready to test further opinion when he has nothing to lose by doing so. The system of referring cases for settlement by the 'juju' does not appear to be so prevalent as formerly.

21. The Operemor Clan school has maintained its popularity and has been conducted on successful lines. A committee of four members of the Ojoko Village Council has been informally appointed by the Council to manage the affairs of the school, and it is carrying out its duties carefully and conscientiously. Arrangements have been made for one of the dispensary attendants to visit the school twice a month and examine and attend to the children free of charge.

22. General interest in education is growing rapidly as is instanced by requests, which have been approved, for additional schools.

23. The two dispensaries at Ramos River and Akugbene have maintained their popularity. Fees were introduced in April but this measure has not lessened attendance in any way. On the contrary the tendency is for more people to come for treatment. A new dispensary is now being constructed for the Kabowe-Knabowe Clan at Sagbama. Supervision is exercised by the Medical Officer stationed at Forcados.

ABOH DIVISION.

24. In the Aboh Division there are three Native treasuries, the Aboh, the Kwale-Ibo and the Ndoni. The Aboh Native Administration consists of seven related clans and twelve village groups. The Council of each clan and village group is a Native Authority, subordinate to the Ohi of Aboh who is the Native Authority for the whole area. Outwardly the structure seems sound but a lack of real administrative machinery between the Ohi and his councils is becoming apparent. Liaison is carried out by titled men of the Aboh Clan and there is evidence to show that they are not able to keep in sufficiently close touch with the different councils. The trend of public opinion is being carefully studied. The Ohi also has an advisory council composed of one representative from each of the subordinate Native Authorities. With tax at a five shillings rate there has been sufficient revenue to maintain essential services only, and there has been practically nothing left over for development. In such circumstances the interest shown by the advisory council has not been as great as might be desired. The Ohi himself suffered a reduction in his salary of £96 per annum without which economy it would not have been possible to make adequate payments for executive services to the councils.

25. Every clan and village group has its court, appeal from which lie to the Ohi. Reviews by the District Officer are much more popular than appeals to the Ohi's court, but the former cost nothing whereas for the latter there is a charge of five shillings. The volume of work done is not large, in many instances the people preferring arbitration by families or quarters.

26. Besides the maintenance of some thirty miles of motor road, the school at Utchi and the dispensary at Aboh are the only amenities provided out of the treasury funds. In the past little advance was made in education and Aboh boys went far afield in search of it. The outlook changed with the establishment of a central mission school at Ashaka and considerably increased interest is being shown which will be translated into achievement when funds permit.

27. The accounts of this Native Administration are operated by the Ohi who has an office for the purpose at Ashaka.

28. During October and November the Niger rose to an unprecedented height and considerable damage was caused to road bridges and embankments. Similar damage was also caused in the area of the Kwale-Ibo Clans. Amongst these there is nothing of any outstanding importance, except perhaps their own doubts as to the efficiency of their councils. This healthy sign has led to further enquiries, which are not yet complete, into the basic structures of their society. The Native Authorities are composed almost entirely of elders, but the new movement will provide for the inclusion of younger men as the persons best fitted to do executive work. The work of these councils is far from perfect, but progress is being made on the right lines, and what is most important they are keeping the people happy and contented. This latter fact is illustrated by the Utgba-Ugo Village Group, which in 1934 appeared to be disintegrating rapidly, many of the quarters being practically unoccupied. Many families who had left the village during recent years and had migrated to Ogwashi-Uku and Benin farm lands are now returning to their former homes.

29. The small Ndom Administration, with its taxable population of 418 males, still maintains its independent position, though it has not progressed so far as to take over the custody of its own funds. The Council has not been idle and during the year the ancient title of 'Awok' has been revived for the Clan Head. It takes an intelligent interest in its own small affairs and understands its estimates and the state of its finances as well as an illiterate council can be expected to do. The Ndom Progressive Union, with headquarters at Onitsha, takes an active interest in the progress of the Clan.

GENERAL

NATIVE TREASURIES.

30. The financial position of the Native Treasuries is sound. With increasing revenue during the year it has been found possible to invest as much as £9,000. The following table shows the position:—

	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Balance</i>
Jekti-Sobo	£9,175	£7,487	£8,102
Sobo	6,551	5,443	8,438
Western-Ijo	3,811	2,200	4,562
Aboh	1,722	1,680	2,726
Kwale	3,677	3,352	4,481
Ndom	77	50	156
	<hr/> £25,013	<hr/> £20,212	<hr/> £28,165

The total of the balances compares with £22,320 at the end of 1934.

31. Prices of palm produce have been maintained at a very satisfactory level, oil averaging £8 8s 9d per ton and kernels £6 2s 9d. Similar figures for 1934 were oil £3 13s 4d, and kernels £3 12s 3d. These prices have resulted in an increased tonnage of products offered for sale. Harvest of local food crops have been uniformly good except perhaps in the Aboh Division where there was some falling off in the yam crop. In the oil producing areas the price of locally grown foodstuffs has been considerably higher than last year, the increases averaging from thirty-five to fifty per cent. When taken into consideration with the better price of oil these increases are very reasonable and provide a more satisfactory return for the farmer. The effect of these improved conditions is that more money is being circulated and the general feeling is that the immediate future is free from worry.

32. The difficulties in the way of a better and more progressive system of Native Administration are becoming obvious but the Native Authority Councils are making earnest endeavours to surmount them, and there is no doubt that they are gradually succeeding. The younger men are taking a keen interest in local matters and will soon be ready to take an active part. The people generally have had a successful year free from any kind of oppression and have recovered to a large extent from the deplorable economic conditions of 1934.