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A new journal for historians: [Review of the first issue of The Journal of African History, edited by Ronald Anthony Oliver and J.D. Page]

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BOOKS REVIEWED

A new Journal for historians.



The Journal of African History (Edited by R. A. Oliver and J. D. Fage). Vol. 1, No. 1. (C.U.P.).

The vigorous revival of interest in Africa's rich historic past, marked by the appearance recently of such intriguing books as Basil Davidson's "Old Africa Rediscovered", has very fittingly resulted in the appearance of this new journal (20/- per issue, or 30/- per annual volume of two parts), the first purely historical magazine on Africa.

It contains scholarly, and very readable, articles by world experts on such subjects as the classical origins of the name of Nigeria, the methods of recording the oral history of the Bakuba, the part played by pressures from inside Africa itself on the partition of the continent, and it also includes an excellent survey of the archives of tropical Africa and reviews of all the main books on African history published during the last three years. There is a detailed and devastating condemnation, by Professor C. R. Boxer, of Dr. S. R. Welch's contributions to our knowledge of Africa during the Portuguese era. A magnificently illustrated article on patterned walling in African folk-building, by James Walton of the Basutoland Education Department, drives yet another nail into the coffin of what we might call the "Queen of Sheba" school of thought about the origins of Zimbabwe. The articles are full of unexpected fascinations — the weird details of the annual ritual exhumation of the skeletons of the Ashanti kings, the rise of the lowly Negro slave-soldiers of Mulay Ismail of Morocco to a position where they made and unmade Sultans, the unexpected cropping up of Mongol coins on the coast of East Africa.

A Kuba proverb quoted in one of the articles says "Listen to the smith, don't listen to the one who works the bellows"; in other words, listen to the experts. The contributors, British, American, French, Belgian and South African, are all experts in their fields. No one interested in African history can be anything but grateful for the decision of the Cambridge University Press to launch this journal.

C.T.G.

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Today's educational bases.

The Function of Teaching by A. V. Judges. (Faber).



During the last quarter of a century many attempts have been made to identify the spiritual essentials that understrut our rapidly changing social structure. Most serious teachers are very much aware that an armoury of techniques, methods and machines is of little use to the educationist who hasn't decided to what purpose he teaches. In a period in which goals are confused, **"The Function of Teaching"** by A. V. Judges (Faber) may serve a very helpful purpose. Professor Judges lectures in the History of Education at London University, and his survey includes T. S. Eliot, Karl Mannheim, Jacques Maritain, Martin Buber, Sigmund Freud, William James and William Temple. Each essay is written by a specialist. The contributors include Lord James of Rusholme, Jean Floud, and the former Bishop of London, J. C. W. Wand.

To read this quite excellent anthology is to be subjected to immediate thought, for it must rank as one of the most lucid and provoking of recent publications. It quite rightly offers no central formula, merely presenting with fine clarity the views of seven great modern thinkers. The collapse of the intellectual, the confusion of the humanist, the loss of a consensus of opinion and the absence of any clear sense of direction are all outlined in essay after essay. Each writer has his own solution. Each redefines goal and journey. One does wish that Professor Judge has added as an eighth an essay on some prominent existentialist, for it would have helped the reader to perspective in appreciating the existentialist tendencies in Maritain and Buber.

A member of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England) which has just brought out its report on the Adolescent (under the single title: 15 to 18) Professor Judges has already published two other notable books on education.

B.W.R.

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Linking Education to Life.



Education and the Good Life by Frederick Mayer. (Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C.).

This book is one of a series from the prolific and aphoristic pen of Dr. Mayer. Other titles in the series are **Education for Maturity** and **Education for Survival.** Dr. Mayer writes well and convincingly, and unlike many American educationists is not committed entirely to a philosophy of pragmatism which he shows may degenerate into a philosophy of power. Rather he is an anti-authoritarian. He emphasises again the suffocating effect of totalitarian philosophies and the cult of uniformity, whether it be that of Sparta, St. Bernard, Calvin, Nazi Germany, or, may we add, the latest edict from a local education office.

In a penetrating analysis of the teachings of Dewey on the one hand and on the other of Robert Hutchings (the vigorous opponent of utilitarianism to whom college courses in typing and home economics were anathema; who abolished football and compulsory attendance at lectures when he was head of Chicago University; and who was influential in the Great Books Movement), Mayer shows that both philosophers had taken up extreme positions, and sums up his argument briefly in these words: "Knowledge without action leads to intellectual isolation; action without knowledge leads to social sterility."