

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From GERHARD KUBIK, Namugunga Catholic Mission, Uganda.

. . . I reached Uganda on the 23rd of November. From this time up to now I have already done a lot of work, both theoretically and practically, concentrating this month in Buganda. I recorded music here and in Busoga too. But the most important thing to happen was that I found a teacher for the *Amadinda* and other instruments (drum, flute, harp, etc.) in Mr. Muyinda, who is teaching me at the Uganda Museum, Kampala, three times a week. Indeed, by playing with other musicians together and by learning exactly the melodic and rhythmic lines of all voices of a tune, I get a closer approach to Kiganda music than I could get by mere recording and listening and transcribing from the tapes. In this month I learned three tunes perfectly for the *Amadinda* and six for the *Akadinda* besides some *Bakisimba* rhythm patterns for *Embutu* drum. As soon as I am sure to have found out the true shape of the musical lines of a tune, I write it down with our note symbols — this is possible with instrumental music, where only fixed steps are used. It was interesting for me to see that my transcriptions of the tunes I learned directly from the teacher (after having played each part with him many times in *unisono*) are rather different from those made of the same tunes by Joseph Kyagambiddwa in his book "African Music from the Source of the Nile". Especially the rhythm of the *Okeukonera* parts, which consists melodically only of two notes, is in reality much more elaborated than what Kyagambiddwa's transcriptions resemble.

It is a pity that for three weeks now my tape recorder is out of order, but I hope it can be repaired now within a week. The end of this month I hope to visit Teso, Karamoja and the Western Province in order to record. I shall stay in Uganda up to the 22nd of March — the next country to visit is Tanganyika.

\* \* \* \* \*

From CH. v. RYTHOVEN, W. F., Mulilansolo Mission, Isoka, N. Rhodesia.

. . . The books of the Rev. A. M. Jones were only a fortnight in my hands, and in those days I had so plenty of other work at the Mission here that I could hardly spare a few hours to devote to it. So very sorry. The mail comes and goes here only on Saturdays. What I saw of the books I found excellent. What I miss in Jones' 'Studies in African Music' is — a better analysis of the melody. I found out myself that these African melodies follow the most exacting rules laid down in books about 'form in music' in all European languages. The antecedent and casual contrasts, the steps in melody, the division of the different parts of the "phrase"; it is all wonderfully well done. Of course, all this does not go independently of the rhythm. But both rhythm and melody are inseparable in African music as it is (or should be) in European music. Well, even now time is too short to go on about it.

I only have here a precious experience in this Mission. There is here made up a 'Lenshina' Church, and the founder, a woman, is a *composer*! And that is why she is considered as a real High Spirit. The services of this National African Church are very simple and very African. She makes songs on African tunes ('*Mpukumo*', '*Mfinkutu*', etc.) and the 'Deacons' and 'Catechists' explain them every time. But the music is . . . African, throughout, with very interesting rhythms. The choirs are singing nearly every evening, rehearsing new songs made by the foundress, Lenshina, every two or three weeks other songs. And because of this attraction many Catholics as well have joined her. But all Protestants and all pagans of this region are her followers. This movement teaches us Christian Preachers again a very serious lesson. Any way, I do what I can to form choirs and sing as much African as possible. The contents of her religion; a 'Wagnerian' like mixture of Gospel and Witchcraft. I am very often on safari now (this is our main work) and have much to do with it.

Catholic Schools send me teachers here to 'teach' them application of African Music to Church services. They stay here every time for a week or so. But I am more and more convinced that we need the help of the '*Ngomba*'. These are the African composers of the bush. They are still found in this region but they are all real pagans. Plenty of work therefore. And my curate is working to build up a very nice Museum of African customs. With all possible African Bemba music instruments included. So we have many European visitors . . . My tape recorder is in repair but I don't need it so much as I am most listening in the bush to the living reality of the African music. There are some very good '*Kalimba*' players as well.

\* \* \* \* \*

From FATHER K. CARROLL, Catholic Mission, Ijebu Igbo, Nigeria.

. . . I hope to make a major effort soon to develop the music and to get it sung in schools and church. We continue, however, to get plenty of work — traditional and Christianized — for our carvers. We now have five carvers working.

(An example of the work done by the Nigerian course under the direction of Father Carroll appears on the front cover of this Journal—Editor.)