

The African in Southern Rhodesia used to have a paper protection from legislative that would adversely affect him. Now under the Federation, even this protection, which has never been exercised, has been done away with.

The visit of the Colonial Minister, Mr. Hopkinson, did a lot to unite Africans of Central Africa. He was very arrogant, and further he said that there were many Africans who favoured Federation. This angered every African. A significant consequence of the visit was that the Governor of Nyasaland cabled to London saying that there was intimidation, or else the people would gladly accept the federal idea. The first reaction came from the Chiefs, who decided to have their own meeting, not a government sponsored one, at Lilongwe, where they passed eleven resolutions condemning the Minister of State and the Nyasaland Government. The conference of chiefs decided to send a deputation to the Queen to protest against this obnoxious idea. In London the delegates of this mission were snubbed and this made them see a new light in that it was the Congress that was fighting for their rights and they decided to join hands, and thus the Supreme Council of Nyasaland Chiefs and the people was formed to co-ordinate and direct the action of the people.

Chiefs in Northern Rhodesia have also been very active, and have not let their people down. And so begins an era of struggle in Central Africa.

Book Review:

MUSIC AND IDEAS

A New Approach

By W. B. NGAKANE.

Rarely are books on music written for the ordinary reader and with some other object than the exposition of its technique and structural forms. Here, however, within this compact little volume and within the limit of little more than a hundred pages, Mr. Finkelstein departs from the old beaten paths and views it from an entirely different perspective. The orthodox writer of music deals with its historical development, its technique and its structural forms. On the other hand, Mr. Finkelstein writes about music as a vehicle for expressing ideas, an explosive force which, while growing out of and with the people, giving pleasurable satisfaction to their aesthetic sense, nevertheless interprets their ideas of the status quo and their dissatisfaction with it.

Tracing the development of music from that of primitive man, the author of this book goes to great pains to demonstrate that at every stage, its forms were adequate to the needs of the people. Among primitive people a single melodic phrase repeated endlessly, sufficed as a song, for its purpose, apart from the satisfaction of the aesthetic sense, was to control the forces of nature with which they contended all their life. "It was a means for organising the tribe's collective labour in real activities such as hunting, sowing, and the beginning of an attempt to understand nature. There were rituals for hunting, war, sowing, harvest, festive initiation of the young into adulthood, and ceremonies over the burial of the dead. Each had its own dance and song." Two types of music are characteristic: ritual music at this stage, distinct but tending to combine, one based on pitch

and the other on rhythm. As man evolves and life becomes more differentiated, there is a corresponding growth in complexity in the structural forms and technique of music. During the slave-owning regimes of the city-owning civilisations a great advance was made in instrumental techniques and music ceased to serve as the product of all the people but was organised by the priests in the interests of the king and nobility. This process of the disinheritance of the submerged classes continued in an upward curve until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when chamber music and opera became the prerogatives of the nobility. But already at this time the contradictions of the capitalist economy showed itself, and great composers and musicians were treated as artisans and servants hardly above the status of cooks. This contradiction manifested itself in the contrast between the form and content of the music. The comic opera, however, was the first means by which, through ad-libbing and veiled satire, the first shafts were thrown at the ruling classes. The democratisation of music followed closely when through the symphonies, which were essentially concert-hall performances, the simple folk could now share their heritage with their former superiors. Great advances have since been made and not only has music been made accessible to the simple folks, but opportunities have been created for their artistic development in every sphere.

Just as among primitive folk music was an instrument for controlling the natural forces with which they had to contend, so in each stage along their road of social economic and political development, men have used music as an instrument for liberation from the forces that stood in the way of their freedom. Among the slave-owning communities, music was used to express their revulsion against their oppression. In the capitalistic society of the latter seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the labouring classes expressed their revulsion against their conditions through music.

Finkelstein has succeeded singularly by his little work in showing that music can be and has indeed been a dynamic force in the world of human affairs, at the same time influencing and being influenced by it and accelerating the tempo and intensity of man's struggle against the fetters that threaten his freedom.

How Music Expresses Ideas, by S. Finkelstein. London, Lawrence and Wishart.