



### AFRICA'S NEW VOICE

WITH this special number we celebrate the independence of Nigeria, which since 1947 has been Britain's largest dependent territory. Like the ending of British rule in India in that year, the mere fact of an independent Nigeria will profoundly influence the affairs of Africa, the Commonwealth, and the world. In Africa its vast size and population will secure for it a leading part in the convulsive growth of the continent. In the Commonwealth, where a vacant chair awaits it, Nigeria will be the second black African country to become a full member, the first being Ghana, which has a population one sixth the size of Nigeria. In the United Nations Nigeria will be one among many, but only the delegates of twelve countries will represent more people. The burden of these international obligations will be heavy, for in a sense Nigeria has had greatness thrust upon it by its rather arbitrary creation. Occupied by the British chiefly to suppress the slave trade during last century, the country has existed in its present form for less than fifty years. Only if it is able to maintain a unity which is, in terms of race, religion, custom and traditional loyalties, unnatural, will Nigeria be able to take the opportunity that now lies awaiting. The Federal Prime Minister, ALHAJI SIR ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA, pointed the way early this year when he said that the greatest single contribution Nigeria could make to Africa, and to world peace generally, "will be to show how a country containing so many diverse elements can find a peaceful solution to its internal difficulties."

What these diversities and difficulties are is clearly brought out in a number of articles published in this number. More than 300 tribes and a multitude of religions separate the people. The boundaries of the country were not drawn up on any historical basis, and even the regions, which have now achieved a solid basis for unity, cut across tribal areas—Yorubas, for example, who are dominant in the Western Region, also have large groups living in the Muslim North. In the past such tribal minorities have been the focal point of much dissatisfaction, and have led to repeated demands either for the creation of more regions or for some other effective form of protection of minority rights. On top of this local interest and regional development a central government and federation were placed without strong roots. Until a few years ago it was uncertain whether they would stay together long enough to enable Nigeria to approach independence as a single entity. The turning-point in favour of federation came at the moment when the Northern Region, which now dominates the central Government but which had formerly lagged behind the political progress of the other two regions, decided that it, too, wanted self-government—a status it obtained only last year. By then it had also been agreed that the best protection for minorities lay in strengthening the authority of the central Government. In its political progress along the path to federation and independence, with pauses after each step to test the nature of the ground ahead, Nigeria has often seemed

slow in comparison with some other African countries. The next few years may well prove that the pace has in fact been well judged. Unlike the hares, the tortoise is unlikely to stop for a rest after independence under the impression that it has passed the winning post. By evolving its own system of government before independence, Nigeria can hope to avoid the chaos that has rent the Congo. The Federation tries in effect to steer between an imposed unity that does not exist, as in the Congo, and a loose system of alliance that breaks up without warning, like Mali.

The fact that Nigeria has moved peacefully to independence promises well for this attempt at a middle way, and its record of political stability, over the past ten years since the first general election was held, suggests that its leaders have a facility for compromise that will stand the country in good stead in the future. The work of the three party leaders, the SARDANA OF SOKOTO, of the Northern People's Congress, CHIEF AWOLowo, of the Action Group, and DR. AZIKIWE, of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, is examined in a special article on another page, but no assessment of Nigeria's present strength can fail to refer to them. The three leaders and their parties have fought in all the country's general elections. Their support has been based on regional loyalties, but in spite of this rivalry they have accepted the need for unity. Two of them have recently abandoned their regional premiership to serve at the centre—DR. AZIKIWE as President of the Senate, soon to be Governor-General, CHIEF AWOLowo as Leader of the Opposition in the House of Representatives—and their decision personally to enter the realm of federal politics at the last federal election undoubtedly added to the authority of the central Government. The third member of the trio, the SARDANA, remains Premier of the North, but his party has supplied, in SIR ABUBAKAR, the man who now will take into his own hands the power that the three regional leaders have formerly wielded.

Independence thus brings changes to Nigeria's political landscape. Although the familiar figures will be there they will be in unaccustomed places, and a new generation of politicians will soon be making its mark. No doubt new men will have new ideas. Possibly the younger politicians will have more of a sense of Nigeria as one nation than their elders. Possibly they may have been more affected by DR. NKRUHMAH's pan-African way of thinking, and will want to plunge into plans for surrendering sovereignty and arranging mergers with other West African states. The present Nigerian Government, consistent with its preparation for independence, has been cautious in its approach to such concepts of union, and its PRIME MINISTER has warned "certain territories" in West Africa against becoming too ambitious to dominate the others. But the fact that SIR ABUBAKAR is calling a conference of West African states soon suggests that Nigeria will not hesitate to make its voice heard in African counsels.

Fortified by an economy that has recently become more buoyant and by the added impetus that independence will bring to the authority of the Federal Government, Nigeria's voice should be firm and clear. The frank recognition of the country's difficulties by its leaders and the record of political compromise they have established suggest future stability. In a continent where turmoil is more common than harmony, the confidence that an independent and well-ordered Nigeria can bring is not only welcome but vital.

# WAS LORD LUGARD RIGHT?

By MARGERY PERHAM

THE characters of history, like figures on the stage upon whom the limelight directs successive rays of the spectrum, take on new colours from each age that looks back at them. How then, from the date of Nigeria's independence, do we see Lord Lugard, the man who did more than any other to shape the political structure of the region at its most plastic stage? Not many years ago he appeared in a golden light as one of the greatest, both in practice and in exposition, of Britain's colonial administrators. Today, with African nationalism using the rejection of foreign rule as its natural springboard, and with the theorists of economic imperialism building up their case against it book by book, the light thrown on the main architects of empire, turns almost lurid.

Before discussing how far Lugard's reputation deserves such a recoloration, we should consider whether the claim that he did most to form Nigeria as a state is just. He was concerned with its affairs four times, in different capacities. In 1894-95 he went out in the service of the Royal Niger Company on an arduous pioneering expedition to the French in Borgu and prevent them pushing their Dahomey frontier farther west. From 1897-99, with Joseph Chamberlain's forward impulse behind him, he played the major part in creating from scratch the West African Frontier Force, which was to play such a vital part in Nigeria's development. He then commanded it in operations against the French to defend the same frontier against their eastward pressure to the Niger, a defence that he pushed to the brink of war. In 1900, when the British Government took over Northern Nigeria from the Company, he became its first High Commissioner, and with a mere handful of British military and civil officers mastered this vast, largely unoccupied, and even unexplored territory, and imposed on it his famous system of indirect rule. In 1907 he disappeared for a time over the far eastern horizon to Hongkong, returning in 1912 to amalgamate the two Nigerias. This he did according to his own plan that was accepted in almost every detail by the Colonial



atmosphere of realism and moderation in which this new nation is being born, some of them already make this assessment. It may assist the process if the writer concludes by trying to share her knowledge of the spirit in which Lugard carried out his work, and the sense of service to Nigeria which he showed during the later years to his death.

What, in the effective colloquialism of today, "made him tick"? "Ambition" is an inadequate answer. Ambition for what? For self, for Britain or Africa? The answer is that for him there was no distinction. He believed that it was equally to the advantage of the British and of the Nigerians that the one people should rule the other. If questioned, he might have said the balance of advantage was for Nigeria. As for self, he felt that he, and perhaps he alone, could both devise and execute this vast administrative enterprise: the self was utterly fused in the task. He could not help but know that in 30-odd years in India and Africa he had accumulated all the experience and the skills needed for the task, with the brain to devise large plans and the will to carry them out. No man could have exacted more from his brain and body. This taut, smallish man, with the square cut of a soldier, the imperious eyes under the domed forehead, could work all night on a mountain of files and ride all day with fever. He could resign in indignation in 1906 because the Colonial Office would not allow him to work without a break right through the year and every year.

With his retirement in 1918, ambition and self-assertion fell away. Not for him the nostalgia of watching from the shelf what other men were doing, counting and recounting his own greater achievements. He was too busy for that. He could no longer execute policy, but he could influence it. He found a dozen new ways of helping Africa, working with friends, serving on committees national and international, writing, speaking, organizing research, influencing the public men, official and political, who came to his house in the wooded hills of Surrey. I saw much of him in his later years, and I realized that though he may not have had a passion for democracy, he had one for justice and humanity. Slavery, forced labour

### EMIRS CONTROLLED

But there is an even better defence for Lugard than this. It is here that he would not, and perhaps could not, have done all his later critics demand in reducing the deeply founded power of the emirs and opening up the north to the invigorating air of the outside world that was playing upon the south. Yet he would have made a preliminary move, in this direction. He wanted to curtail the powers of the emirs and draw a greater proportion of their revenues to the central government with all the corrected balance of powers and bias towards greater centralization which that would have meant. He also wanted a vigorous advance in education, with a more liberal treatment of Christian missions, and a beginning, at least, of modern technical instruction. In this policy he was opposed by the leading northern officials who had learned their master's first lesson too well, to be open to his second. He could almost certainly have brought his own staff into line if they had not won the Colonial Office to an almost theological support of his original gospel of indirect rule. In peace time, so great was his courage and tenacity, he might have defeated even their combination. But, weighed

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# Flora Shaw gives the Name

By Our Special Correspondent

THE name Nigeria was first suggested in a special article published in *The Times* on January 8, 1897. The article, in accordance with the traditions of the newspaper, was published anonymously, but it was in fact written by Flora Shaw, who spent eight years in Printing House Square as an expert on colonial affairs. Later, in



Flora Shaw, who suggested the name Nigeria, is shown in a portrait. She was an expert on colonial affairs and spent eight years in Printing House Square.