Patterns of Library Service in Africa

JOHN T. STRICKLAND

READERS OF LIBRARY TRENDS will not need to be reminded that Africa is a vast territory. It is, in fact, as big as North America and Europe together, and West Africa is as far from East Africa as New York City is from Accra, the capital of Ghana.

The Mediterranean countries of North Africa have been part of world history from the earliest times, but of Africa south of the Sahara—l’Afrique noire—little apart from the coastline was known to the outside world before 1800. The colonial powers which took part in the “scramble for Africa” in the nineteenth century are now engaged in a much more difficult operation of withdrawal. The more than 230,000,000 people of Africa speak about seven hundred different languages, but since 1945 one of the most popular words in any of them has been “independence.” Where the attainment of independence is not bedeviled by a white settler problem the process of achieving it has been relatively smooth and bloodless. Of the former British West African territories, Ghana became independent in 1957, Nigeria is to follow in 1960, and Sierra Leone probably within the next four years. Most of North Africa is now self-governing, and the whole of French West Africa was dramatically offered freedom by referendum in 1958. But “partnership” in the Rhodesias, “apartheid” in the Union of South Africa, and open warfare in Algeria show the difficult or tragic alternatives accompanying this rebirth of a continent.

These rapid political changes, however, while spectacular, are only the latest and perhaps to the ordinary African not the most important manifestation of an economic, industrial, and social revolution, which has been going on for the last half century. To the African, there is one prerequisite that is basic to all development—education. He knows it is education which gives the white man his superiority, and he is prepared to make any sacrifice to obtain it.

For librarians, this attitude is all-important, and where money is

Mr. Strickland is Deputy Director of Library Services, Ghana Library Board, Accra.
available for education the librarian stands a chance of securing a fair share of it for books. In English-speaking West Africa the establishment and rapid development of libraries has been largely due to this thirst for education, and this survey will start on the writer’s home ground in Ghana.

A country of nearly five million people, which not so very long ago provided slave labor for the cotton fields of the southern states of America, Ghana is today newly independent, a self-avowed leader of African nationalism, wealthy for its size and with millions in reserve. Here surely is fertile soil for libraries. Before 1945 there were no libraries in the country, except for a British Council library in Accra, and one or two small collections of books in secondary schools. The establishment of the University College of the Gold Coast in 1948, of the Gold Coast Library Board in 1950, and of the Kumasi College of Technology in 1952, are the landmarks in both educational and library history.

The University College of Ghana is the apex of a rapidly expanding educational system, and awards the degrees of the University of London. There are faculties of arts, social studies, physical and biological sciences, and agriculture, a graduate institute of education, and a flourishing department of extramural studies. The library contains 115,000 books, and receives currently about 2,800 serials. It has a professional staff of twenty, including five senior posts, and caters for 550 students of both sexes and an academic staff of 150. Since 1948 it has occupied two single-storied buildings at Achimota, but was due to move in August 1959 into permanent quarters four miles away. The new library has cost over £350,000 ($980,000), has a book capacity of 250,000, and can seat initially about 150 readers. At the rate at which university libraries in Africa are growing this building, like its predecessor, will probably be bulging at the seams by 1970; but it has obviously been planned to make extension a relatively simple matter.

The Kumasi College of Technology provides higher technical and commercial education, and engineering courses up to degree standard. Its library has a well selected stock of over 20,000 books and it receives about 650 periodicals. It has operated since 1952 in very inadequate premises, but a proper building has been planned for 1961. The library was built up by an experienced British librarian, and on her retirement a Ghanaian who is a Fellow of the Library Association was appointed.
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There are several special libraries worth noting, including the Medical Research Library, the Agriculture Department Library, and the West African Building Research Library, all in Accra. In Kumasi the Land and Soil-Use Survey library, and in Tafo the library of the West African Cocoa Research Institute, are of great importance to the economy of the country. No governmental libraries of any kind are yet beyond the planning stage, mainly because of the shortage of qualified librarians.

Libraries in secondary schools are all growing fast with collections of between two and five thousand books, but few of them are satisfactorily organized, and too little encouragement is given to the teachers placed in charge. The appointment of a librarian to the Ministry of Education, to advise and assist in the establishment and organization of school libraries, is a possible solution. Each primary school has a collection of class readers and simple stories, and the Library Board hopes to start in September a mobile service to middle schools.

The Ghana Library Board, which runs a national public library service, has the following objective embodied in its Ordinance—“to establish and equip, manage and maintain, libraries in the Gold Coast.” It is financed almost entirely by a government grant, now about £70,000 ($196,000) a year, and it has provided three regional and eleven branch libraries throughout the country. Bookstock has increased from the 5,000 volumes taken over from the British Council to over 230,000; issues from 45,000 in 1951 to almost half a million in 1958, and readers from 3,000 to nearly 30,000, almost half of whom are children. In addition to these static libraries a book-box service is given to over five hundred members, including local councils, schools, clubs, community centers, and individuals; and exchanges are made three times a year by bookmobiles which tour the whole country. A postal service and a prison service also operate.

The library staff numbers about sixty, including three British librarians and eight qualified Ghanaians. These latter have all spent a year at English library schools, and their training was paid for by a grant of £5,000 ($14,000) provided by the Carnegie Corporation.

Ghana is a country addicted to five year plans, and in its next plan period, beginning July 1959, the Library Board is to receive over £200,000 ($560,000) for capital development. Among projects approved are an extension to the Accra library (headquarters of the system), five branch library buildings, a scholarship fund of £10,000
($28,000) for a staff training, and most important of all a scheme for providing small libraries for children and teachers in each of the 1,300 middle schools in the country. It is proposed to visit each school once a term with a bookmobile, and the children and teachers will choose their own books. Like most projects in Africa, its success depends almost entirely upon a continuing supply of trained librarians.

No country in Africa, outside the Union, possesses a better public library service, but enthusiasm must be tempered by the thought that this is almost certainly a reflection upon their general inadequacy or total absence.

The Federation of Nigeria is a vast country, four times as large as Great Britain, and lies close to the equator in what has been called, for obvious reasons, the sweaty elbow of Africa. The land extends from the mangrove swamps in the south, through tropical forests, hilly ranges and open plateau, to the desert in the extreme north. The population of between thirty-five and forty million is a mixture of many tribes, the most important being the Hausa of the North, the Yoruba of the West, and the Ibo of the East.

The country is divided into three regions, Northern, Eastern, and Western—all self-governing—the Federal Territory of Lagos, and the Southern Cameroons. The whole country, with the exception of the Cameroons whose political future is uncertain, is to become fully independent in October 1960.

The Nigerian library scene is similar in some respects to that in Ghana—a good and rapidly expanding university library, a college of technology, and a number of special libraries attached to government organizations. Public library services operate in each of the regions, but are generally hampered by lack of funds and qualified personnel.

The University College, Ibadan, like that of Ghana, was founded in 1948. It is the mecca for students from all over Nigeria, and for some studies, from all over West Africa, and has faculties in arts, science, medicine, agriculture, and veterinary science. The library is a fine functional building of impressive design, situated at the center of the new and still expanding college campus. It has a staff of over fifty of whom eight are professionally qualified. The bookstock is now about 110,000, and includes the most comprehensive collection of bibliographical material in West Africa. Owing to the acquisition of two important private libraries the Africana section is particularly strong, and an important collection of Arabic material includes 150 manuscripts from Northern Nigeria. The library publishes annually a
national bibliography which lists all new books, pamphlets and journals, including government publications, published in Nigeria, as well as books about Nigeria or by Nigerians, published overseas.

Of great interest to librarians in West Africa is the projected establishment in 1960 of a library school, attached to the University library, made possible by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation. Training is to be related to the examinations of the Library Association, but the University College may itself award a diploma based on library topics of West African significance. This school grew out of the report written by Harold Lancour, associate director, University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science, who surveyed the libraries in British West Africa for the Carnegie Corporation in 1957.

The Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology, established in 1952, is organized in three parts; a headquarters and the largest academic branch at Zaria in the Northern Region, and other academic branches at Enugu in the East and Ibadan in the West. The college offers arts and science courses to intermediate degree level and professional courses to certification standards. The library likewise is in three parts, all still in temporary quarters, with the main collection at Zaria. The librarian, who has had much experience elsewhere in the Commonwealth, has built up small, but well-selected, collections at each library. A grant from the Carnegie Corporation has been usefully employed in the purchase of American books and bibliographical tools. The staff situation, always chronic in West Africa, has until recently prevented proper organization of the branch libraries in Enugu and Ibadan, and the difficulties of establishing, maintaining, and administering three academic libraries 500 miles from each other, cannot be over-emphasized.

A number of special libraries of importance have developed in the last few years, among them the Central Medical Library in Yaba and the Regional Research Station of the Ministry of Agriculture in Samaru, both under the care of qualified librarians. There are in addition growing libraries at Vom (Veterinary), Lagos (Meteorological Services and several government departments), Benin City (Oil palm research), and Kaduna (Trypanosomiasis). There is no doubt that as qualified staff become available these libraries will become better organized and more efficient.

The situation with regard to public libraries in Nigeria is one more of promise than of achievement. Until recently it might truthfully have been said that in the North there was a library service but no legisla-
tion; in the East legislation but no library service; and in the West neither library legislation nor libraries. The picture has changed in the last two or three years, and provided funds and staff are available in sufficient quantities rapid development can be expected.

The Northern Region was the first to establish a regional library service in 1952, as an activity of the Education Department. The service is based on the library at Kaduna, and the total bookstock is now about 55,000. Issues in Kaduna itself were 110,000 in 1958-59. Outside Kaduna boxes of books are sent to over two hundred members, mostly schools, teacher-training colleges, community centers, and Native Authority reading rooms. Transportation is a major problem, as roads generally are poor, but it is hoped to put a mobile library on the road shortly. Other services include a monthly list of accessions and the ordering of books for individuals and organizations. This latter is a very useful service in West Africa where good bookshops are few.

A branch library at Bida is expected to open shortly, and future plans envisage a library in each of the twelve provincial centers. Any appreciation of the service offered must nevertheless take into account the present and potential demand. The population of the region cannot be far short of twenty million, yet there are only a quarter of a million children in primary schools, and only five hundred pupils will take the West African School Certificate examination this year. For the whole vast area there are only forty-seven teacher training and craft schools, and thirty-six secondary schools, many of them substandard. Under able management, preferably divorced from the Education Department, the library service could grow in step with the demands made upon it.

In the Eastern Region, with a population of seven million, the library service has made a flying start with the help of Unesco. A statutory body, the Eastern Region Library Board, came into being in November 1955; and shortly afterwards agreement was reached to establish a public library pilot project in Enugu, the capital. The regional librarian is a fully qualified Nigerian, and during the planning stage he had the assistance for one year of an experienced English librarian. A reference and reading room was opened in Enugu in 1956, and in May 1958 a Unesco gift of $10,000 was used to purchase a bookmobile to operate an experimental service in a sample area around the town.

The scheme could not be said to have got under way, however, until the opening of the Central Library Headquarters in March
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1959. This library, built at a cost of £40,000 ($112,000) is an extremely attractive building and will provide an adequate base from which to cover the whole territory.

In Western Nigeria the Ministry of Education is responsible for what reading facilities are available, including a very poor public library in Ibadan. A number of reading rooms, mostly created during the second world war, exist in the region; these are under the control of the local authorities and most of them are moribund as far as book stock and staff are concerned although it may be possible to integrate them with a regional system. Such a service has now begun and a library ordinance will shortly be passed. A site in Ibadan has been earmarked for a headquarters, a qualified librarian appointed, and a book stock of 30,000 is already in existence. With the usual provisos as to staff and finance, there seems no reason to suppose that the Western Region will for long lag behind the North and the East.

In the Federal Territory of Lagos there is one inadequate library to serve a population of about 300,000. Founded jointly by the British Council and Lagos Town Council in 1946, it was taken over completely by the Town Council in 1952. It has for some years been in good professional hands but unfortunately they are no substitutes for adequate financial support. The book stock is about 12,000, annual issues 30,000; the library charges a small subscription and membership is about 3,000. It is unfortunate that the federal authorities have not taken a hand, for Lagos with a literate population estimated at 50 per cent desperately needs a good library. Its present plight underlines the inadequacy of municipal authorities throughout most of Africa to provide the financial support necessary for this purpose.

The school library situation in Nigeria is similar to that in Ghana, one of wide extremes. Probably the greatest factor in the adequacy or otherwise of school libraries is the presence on the staff of someone with sufficient authority and time to insure that a library is created and organized. There are many instances of satisfactory school libraries in the country; the oldest and possibly the largest is the 10,000 volume collection of the Government College, a secondary school at Zaria.

The Colony and Protectorate of Sierra Leone covers approximately 30,000 square miles, and has a population of about two million. It is surrounded by French West Africa except in the southeast where it borders on Liberia. The territory is just about economically viable,
and may be self-governing by 1963. Chief exports are iron ore and industrial diamonds.

Freetown, the capital, possesses a college with the oldest continuous history in West Africa—Fourah Bay College, founded in 1827. It was not until 1955, however, that a qualified librarian was appointed; since then the library has grown rapidly to almost 30,000 volumes, and is now organized to give effective service to the staff and students. A Carnegie grant and, more recently, a Colonial Development and Welfare grant, have improved the financial climate, but staffing has been, and still is, the major problem. A recent Visitation Commission recommended—and this recommendation has since been confirmed—that the College be raised to the status of a university college. The building of a permanent library has been brought forward to 1963.

Other libraries in Sierra Leone are few. The British Council library in Freetown, with a branch in the Protectorate at Bo, provides the only worth-while public library service. The Department of Education has on its staff the only qualified Sierra Leonean librarian who not only catalogs and classifies books for most of the government departmental collections, but gives advice and assistance to secondary school libraries. Progress is possible in the near future. A Library Board Ordinance has just been passed, establishing an organization similar to the Ghana Library Board, and it seems probable that the British Council book collection will once again provide the nucleus of a national library service.

The Gambia has no libraries other than the British Council library in Bathurst, and the territory is so small that its political future lies almost certainly in integration with the surrounding French-speaking countries.

Liberia, an independent republic since 1847, and a country with close ties with the United States, has few libraries other than those in the University of Liberia (15,000 volumes), the Booker Washington Institute, engineering college of the University, and the Cuttington College and Divinity School (8,000 volumes).

The U. S. I. S. Library, operated jointly with the Liberian government, is the only library of any size offering a public service; the government public libraries in Monrovia and Cape Palmas are decrepit and little used. A number of school libraries are maintained in the high schools, particularly those of the Mission Boards.

There have been many joint U.S./Liberian programs since 1950; one devoted to libraries is certainly overdue. A hopeful sign is the
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appointment of Lancour, whose report on West Africa is mentioned above, as an advisor on libraries to the Liberian government during October and November 1959, under the auspices of the Ford Foundation.

In French-speaking West and Equatorial Africa, libraries and library services operate mainly in the capitals and larger towns, and there is little rural service of any kind.

French Equatorial Africa, an area of almost one million square miles, has a population of barely five million people; this includes 25,000 Europeans. Forty-four secondary and one hundred and ten vocational schools have a total enrollment of 150,000, but there is no higher education available, although 150 students are studying on scholarships at French universities. The most important library is that of the Central Government at Brazzaville, with a stock of about 5,000 volumes, open to government officials, teachers and educated Africans. There are a number of “public” libraries attached to culture clubs, scattered throughout the four territories, and containing on the average about 1,000 books.

French West Africa is rather better served. This vast area, almost two-thirds the size of the United States, with a population of nineteen million, has recently become self-governing and seven of the former eight states are likely to remain in the French Community. The eighth, Guinea, is now independent.

The capital, Dakar, contains a number of libraries, chief among them being those of the University of Dakar and the library of the Institut Francais d’Afrique Noire. The former, founded in 1950, has faculties of arts, science, medicine and law, with an enrollment of over 1,000 students. Its library of over 65,000 volumes may also be used by other persons authorized by the Principal.

The library of I.F.A.N., established in 1937, inherited from the Central Government the official library of 2,000 books and 3,000 pamphlets. Bookstock is now over 40,000 mostly acquired through legal deposit and exchange, and the collection is particularly strong in the zoology, botany, history, and anthropology of Africa. Generally speaking the library is open to all who can make use of it.

Special libraries in Dakar include those of the Meteorological Service, the Inspectorate of Stock-breeding, and the Pasteur Institute.

Libraries to which the public have access are numerous, although membership is often restricted in some way. The Cercle Militaire library is open only to serving and reserve military personnel and their
families, but the libraries of the Catholic and Protestant missions are open to all upon payment of a small subscription, as is the library of l'Alliance Française.

A correspondent suggests that the most promising development towards a free library service is the establishment of the Bibliothèque Circulante de Dakar, organized by the Service de la Jeunesse et des Sports. This consists of frequently changed collections at ten schools, freely open to all past and present scholars.

I.F.A.N. has opened centers in several of the larger towns outside Dakar, and these libraries are normally open to the public as well as to students. The library at Saint-Louis de Senegal, for example, is the most important in the town. Opened in 1955, it offers a reference and lending service, and contains 14,000 books, including 6,000 novels, and 6,000 "ouvrages de vulgarisation." A small deposit is charged, and in 1956 the six hundred readers borrowed almost 7,000 books, most of them novels. The total funds available for books and binding in 1957 were, however, only £450 ($1,260) for a town of 50,000.

France itself, up to a few years ago, had probably the worst public library service in Europe. In recent years much progress has been made, but the old apathetic attitude to public libraries obviously lingers on in her former colonial territories.

The Belgian Congo and Ruanda Urundi have an area of one million square miles and a population of over seventeen million people. There are two universities, at Elizabethville and Leopoldville, mainly for the benefit of the 30,000 Europeans.

The Université Officielle du Congo Belge et du Ruanda Urundi was established in 1955, and its library two years later. The central collection consists of over 14,000 books, 2,000 works on micro-card, and 1,600 periodicals. In addition, over 12,000 books have been purchased for the departmental collections. The total staff includes librarian, two assistant librarians, and four clerks.

The libraries of the General Government, and Documentation Service, in Leopoldville are the only special libraries of note.

The reading public of the Belgian Congo would appear to be somewhat better off than their neighbors in respect of public libraries, at least as far as is indicated by statistics. In addition to Catholic and Protestant Mission collections, there are over two hundred "libraries" for Africans and almost thirty for Europeans. Those for Africans contain an average of about four hundred books, while European libraries are much larger; Leopoldville for instance has over 20,000 and Eliza-
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bethville over 10,000 books. These “official” libraries charge a small subscription, and receive grants and supplies of books from the government. A number of recognized “non-official” libraries are also provided with books. Impressive as these facts may be, a total annual expenditure of less than £3,000 ($8,400) brings them into perspective. Readers and issues are small, and book selection is quite out of touch with the needs of the populace.

School libraries are virtually nonexistent, except in a few secondary and agricultural schools.

In French North Africa, where contact with Europe has been continuous for many centuries, libraries are larger and better recognized. Algeria, the most advanced of the North African states, has two of the largest and most important collections on the continent.

The Bibliothèque Nationale in Algiers was founded in 1835. From 1862 until 1956 it was housed in the former residence of the Bey of Algiers which, although an excellent example of Moorish architecture of the eighteenth century, was, needless to say, not wholly suited as a library. In April 1954, the foundation stone of a new building was laid, and the resulting structure is probably the largest and most attractive library in Africa.

The total book stock of between four and five hundred thousand volumes is especially important for its material on North Africa and on Algeria in particular. It includes 3,000 Arabic manuscripts, some from the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, and over 27,000 books in Arabic, many dealing with Islamic philosophy, literature, and history. The new building can accommodate two million books and over three hundred readers; it has a large music and record collection (sound-proof rooms are provided); and microfilm and photocopy services are available.

The University of Algiers established in 1879, has faculties of arts, science, law, medicine, and Islamic studies. The 5,000 students and 400 teaching staff have access in the University library to the largest collection of books (outside Egypt) in Africa, over 700,000.

The Pasteur Institute in Algiers, specializing in microbiology and parasitology, has a library of over 40,000 books, and 392 current periodicals.

Public libraries are mainly the responsibility of the National Library which provides books in the rural areas, and of the municipalities which are responsible for the town services. About three hundred centers are served from the National Library, either by the two mobile
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libraries, or by book boxes changed three times a year. The latter are deposited at villages, rural centers, schools, hospitals, and prisons, and the service, which is entirely free, is operated by voluntary helpers. Twenty-five small collections have been established in the Saharan oases, and a bookmobile, to serve particularly women and adolescents, is planned for Algiers and its environs. Municipal libraries vary from those in Algiers (central library and nine branches) to those in the smaller towns, such as Bougie, Mers el Kebir, and Djidjelli. Books are provided partly out of municipal funds and partly by the National Library, buildings and staff being found by the local authority. Up-to-date figures on the library at Constantine (population 150,000) give some indication of the kind of service provided. A bookstock of 37,000 is managed by a librarian, an assistant and one clerk. Annual lending issues total about 60,000 and the entire budget, which includes salaries, is two million francs (approx. $5,700). Comment is not necessary.

Library services in Tunisia are very similar, being based on the National Library in Tunis, which gives a public library service to the town. Over one hundred libraries and deposit stations, mostly in schools, are run by the teachers. A mobile library issues books direct, and also helps with bulk exchanges of books.

The Republic of the Sudan was proclaimed on January 1, 1956. This country of a million square miles and with a population of over ten million has less than 200,000 children at school, and the literacy figure is only six per cent. Nevertheless it possesses the beginnings of a national library service, which may be expected to grow in step with the demand for books.

The largest and most important library in the country is that of the University of Khartoum, originally the Gordon Memorial College. Total stock in June 1958 was over 60,000 volumes, with 1,200 serials. An Arabic collection of 6,000 books has been classified and cataloged by the Anglo-American cataloging code, with modifications required by Arabic script. An annual book fund of £8,250 ($23,100) is helped out by the free deposit of publications of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, and by the Library of Congress which donates U.S. government publications. It is expected that the staff of sixteen will be entirely Sudanese by 1962.

Special libraries include the Research Division of the Ministry of Agriculture at Wad Medani, containing 6,000 volumes, 21,000 pamphlets and 280 current serials; and in Khartoum, the Stack Medical Research Laboratories library, the Flinders Petrie library of archaeologi-
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cal material, and the Geological Survey and the Sudan Veterinary Service libraries.

Public libraries in the Sudan are of comparatively recent growth, the first genuine public library being established by the Ministry of Education, in 1951, at Omdurman. It is now open to all on payment of a life subscription of ten piastres (28 cents), and currently contains over 16,000 Arabic and 4,000 English books, which may be borrowed for home reading. In addition to a reference and reading room, the library also organizes lectures, debates, and film shows. A mobile van is expected to be available in the near future.

Other libraries run by municipal councils have been established in about ten provincial centers, and the librarian of the Omdurman Central Library gives technical advice. Information on the size and efficiency of these libraries is not available, but in the absence of trained staff and adequate funds they are unlikely to be of great value. The British Council libraries at Khartoum and Omdurman are extremely popular.

The Sudan government is responsible for education throughout the country, and school libraries are provided by the Ministry of Education.

The neighboring country of Ethiopia possesses a National Library of approximately 40,000 volumes and the University College library of Addis Ababa with 23,000 volumes and sixty current periodicals. Both include important material on Ethiopia and large collections in Amharic, the national language.

There is a small Legislative Assembly library in Asmara, but the only “public” library is the United States Information Service library in Addis Ababa.

Apart from a few small collections in secondary, technical, and agricultural schools these libraries represent the sole resources of a country with a population of eighteen million people.

Letters from officials in Bechuanaland and Somaliland have provided the following information. In Bechuanaland, an entirely agricultural country, there are no libraries at all, except readers’ clubs for Africans which have been established at one or two of the larger centers. The clubs are voluntary self-supporting organizations, and charge membership fees of two shillings and six pence (35 cents) a year. From time to time they are assisted by the government with donations of books. Schools are encouraged to build up libraries, but direct government assistance has been confined to secondary schools.
In the Somaliland Protectorate there are small libraries in the Secretariat and the Community Center at Hargeisa, in the secondary school at Amoud, and in the Teacher Training College, Sheikh.

The associated countries of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika, which together make up the East African High Commission Territories, have a combined population of twenty millions, including 100,000 Europeans. On the whole, the African population is not so advanced as in West Africa, and educational facilities are poor. Higher education is provided only by one university and one technical college.

Makerere College, Kampala, Uganda, now the University College of East Africa, was founded as a technical school in 1922. Courses leading to general arts and science degrees of the University of London have been offered since 1950. The library serves staff and students, European and African, and a considerable number of “outsiders,” such as ex-Makerere students, teachers, government officers and research workers, to whom books are lent by post. The first stage of a main library which will house 120,000 volumes and seat 250 readers, plus offices, bindery, and printing unit, has just been completed. A new medical library branch building, with a capacity of 30,000 volumes, and space for one hundred readers is located at the Medical School about a mile from the College buildings. The main collection consists of 60,000 books and 1,000 current serials, and the library is a legal depository for East Africa. The medical library contains 15,000 books, and 230 serials are received. A total qualified staff of five seems none too many for such an important and rapidly expanding library.

The Royal Technical College of East Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, was opened as recently as March 1956; its departments include arts, science, commerce, and engineering. The library already contains 15,000 books and also houses the collections of half-a-dozen professional associations, in all about 3,000 books. Seating is provided for eighty readers. The professional staff consists of a librarian, three assistant librarians, and four juniors. Training classes are held in the library for the benefit not only of the College library staff, but also for people working in other libraries. Plans are being prepared for a new building to hold 100,000 volumes: a bindery is to be included. It is an official recommendation that the College should become part of a projected University of East Africa and if this happens it will, no doubt, accelerate development of the library.

Collections of specialized material are, as usual, to be found in
many East African government departments and research establishments. The Medical Research library in Nairobi has inter-territorial importance; and another equally fine collection is that of the East African Agriculture and Forestry Research Organization, with 20,000 books, a bindery and a newly purchased microfiche reader. In Entebbe, Uganda, the Forest Department has a properly organized specialist forestry library, and the Geological Survey has a collection of over 7,000 volumes and 2,000 separates. In Kampala, the Law Library of the Uganda Judiciary is important enough to supplement the collections at Makerere and the Royal Technical College.

The public library facilities which are available are mainly confined to the towns and to the European population. There is one organization, however, which attempts to provide a book service to Africans throughout the three territories. Founded in 1948, the East African Literature Bureau has a four-fold objective, one part of which is the provision of library services; grants from Colonial Development and Welfare funds and the East African governments have been provided for a period up to June 1960. After that date support from C.D. and W. funds will cease.

The Literature Bureau offers book box and postal services, the former consisting of collections of 150 to 200 books, issued free, from a Branch of the Bureau in each territory—Nairobi, Kampala, Dar-es-Salaam—and available to local authorities, schools, social and community centers, etc. Exchanges of book stock are usually made twice a year. Although issue figures are not always kept as well as they might be, the estimated total issue figure for 1957-58 was well over 175,000. Results obtained in the centers vary according to the interest and enthusiasm of the local authority or the voluntary librarian. The total number of boxes on loan is just over 250, and despite the long waiting lists for boxes at each branch of the Literature Bureau, this number is not likely to increase because of the lack of funds.

The postal service has been equally popular, and in 1957 there were almost 5,000 borrowers who read over 55,000 books. The annual report of the Bureau for 1957-58 includes this passage: "In this year the fact had to be faced that, not only must we give up any hope of being able to meet the growing demand for library boxes and for membership of the postal library, but we must take steps to cut down the postal library membership." In a continent where public libraries are still struggling for recognition it is surely ironic to find one that is too successful.
In preparation for the termination of the service in 1960, the Bureau has suggested to the High Commission the need for setting up library boards in each territory, and for obtaining local government contributions towards development of libraries in their areas.

Outside the service of the East African Literature Bureau there are only half-a-dozen libraries worthy of note. All are subscription libraries, which tends to limit their clientele to Europeans, and most of them receive grants from local authorities.

The Macmillan Memorial Library in Nairobi, opened in 1931, is the most important of these libraries. Although until recently books were lent only to Europeans, it is now open to all races, but its annual subscription of 35 shillings (approx. $5.00), will prevent any rapid change in the composition of its membership. One-third of its annual income consists of grants made by the Kenya Government and Nairobi City Council, and its subscribers numbered 1,638 in 1957. An analysis of additions to stock in 1957 illustrates the weakness of all subscription libraries; an over-emphasis on recreational literature, and only slight provision for children. Out of total additions of 3,837, 2,480 were novels, 559 were in the history, travel, and biography classes, and only 487 were for children. A subsidiary of this library, the East African (Carnegie) Circulating Library, provides a subscription book box and postal service to communities and individuals outside Nairobi. At the end of 1957 there were thirty-nine book boxes on loan and ninety-one postal subscribers.

The United States Information Service and the British Council both have libraries in Nairobi, and there are a number of sectarian libraries, including the Desai Memorial Library and the Ismail Rahimtulla Trust Library.

The Seif bin Salim Public Library in Mombasa is the oldest public library in Kenya, and is open to all races. It owes its existence chiefly to the support of the Indian and Arab members of the community, although an annual grant is now received from the Mombasa Municipality. Present bookstock is about 10,000, more than half of which is in Gujarati; readers total about nine hundred, including one hundred children; and the total annual issues in 1958 were about 26,000. A subscription fee of 12 shillings (approx. $1.70) a year is charged. Although many Africans use the reading room few of them borrow books.

An interesting development, sponsored by the East African Literature Bureau is the decision of Kiambu African District Council, in
Kikuyuland, to establish its own library.

Kampala, the commercial center of Uganda possesses a municipal/subscription library, opened in 1953. The cost of the basic stock and equipment was borne by the Uganda Government and Kampala Municipal Council; the former making an annual grant of £200 ($560). Originally designed as a reference library only, it was later decided to lend books and to charge a subscription and levy a deposit. In 1958 there were 1,140 subscribers, consisting of 92 Africans, 270 Asians, and 778 Europeans. Much useful activity (mainly African) goes on in the Reference library, but with a total book stock of less than 10,000 its impact upon Uganda, or even Kampala, can only be slight. Lending library issues in 1948 totalled 47,000.

The King George VI Memorial Library in Tanga, Tanganyika, was opened in March 1958. A total subscription membership of about 1,000 is almost entirely European and Asian. Financial assistance is given by the Tanga Town Council. A bookstock of almost 7,000 includes 2,000 in Gujerati. Issues in April 1959 were 5,000.

School libraries are almost nonexistent in East Africa. The few that do exist are very well used, and a Carnegie grant of £20,000 ($56,000) has recently been made to four schools which are to begin courses for the Higher School Certificate.

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland is a country whose current political slogan is "partnership." However much of this quality may be on the political front, little evidence of it is shown—with one or two notable exceptions—in the provision of libraries for Africans.

The University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, at Salisbury, is the only higher educational institution in the Federation. The College, founded in 1955, is open to men and women of all races, and will award the degrees of the University of London. Associated institutes include colleges of agriculture, teacher training, and music. The library, just over two years old, already contains about 35,000 books and 650 current journals. The intention is to build up a large general learned library, able to sustain teaching and research in a wide range of subjects. The collection is already strong in material relating to the Federation. A permanent library building, designed to hold 300,000 volumes and accommodate 500 readers, is due to be completed in mid-1960. Provision has been made for a bindery and a photographic studio.

The main governmental libraries in Rhodesia are those attached
to the Legislative Assembly of Southern Rhodesia, the Federal Assembly, and the National Archives, all in Salisbury. The Legislative Assembly library is the most widely developed collection in the Federation, containing 20,000 books, large pamphlet and map collections, and about 150 periodicals. The Federal Assembly library, founded in 1954, contains about 5,000 volumes, and as the two libraries occupy contiguous buildings unnecessary duplication of stock is avoided. The libraries are primarily reference collections for the Assemblies, but borrowing facilities are extended to members of Parliament, diplomatic representatives, members of the public service, and University College staff and students.

The National Archives library is the national reference collection, and includes material on all aspects of Central Africa. It is the only legal deposit library for the three territories, and contains 11,000 books and pamphlets, 12,500 volumes of newspapers, periodicals and reports, and 8,000 maps, illustrations, and microfilms. Plans for a new building to cost £200,000 have been completed, and construction will begin later this year.

Special libraries in the Federation include the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute libraries, at Livingstone and Lusaka, which specialize in anthropological and social research, and libraries attached to government departments, such as the Geological Survey libraries at Salisbury and Lusaka, and those of the Meteorological Department and the Central African Statistical Office.

The over-all picture of public library services in the Federation is far from a "tidy" one, since no coordinating authority, or legislation, exists on either a federal or territorial basis. Public libraries have been established in townships, as in East Africa, purely as subscription libraries under the control of committees elected from the membership. Even in those cases where Africans are allowed to join the library, the subscription is generally too high for them to pay. There have been movements to secure local authority control and conversion to free libraries but, although grants-in-aid from both local and territorial governments have been general, these aims have met with little success. The difficulty is that territorial governments are not prepared to spend, and municipalities generally cannot afford to spend, the sums required to provide an adequate service.

The two largest public libraries are the Queen Victoria Memorial Library in Salisbury, and the Bulawayo Public Library. Membership is respectively 4,000 and 2,000 and the subscription rate £2 ($5.60)
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per year. Both libraries receive grants from their city councils and from the Southern Rhodesia government. Annual issues at Salisbury in 1957-58 were 300,000, and at Bulawayo 125,000. Other libraries of this type operate at Umtali, Gwelo, and Gatooma.

In Northern Rhodesia there are subscription/municipal libraries at Livingstone, Lusaka, Ndola, and Kitwe. The Nyasaland Public Library at Blantyre is theoretically open to all races, but the subscription of 50/($7) a year no doubt insures that membership is entirely European.

Few Africans make use of the libraries mentioned above, and library services—if such they may be called—have developed separately for Africans. In Northern Rhodesia, where copper-mining employs the greatest labor force, the mining corporations administer libraries for both Europeans and Africans. In addition, libraries and reading rooms are maintained in some towns by Welfare Officers, under the aegis of the Social Welfare Department, and are supplemented by a book box service from the Publications Bureau of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

In Southern Rhodesia, libraries have been established by Welfare Officers in African townships, but there is a trend towards establishing libraries in townships forming part of the cities, and a start has been made in Salisbury and Bulawayo. In the rural areas the Native Affairs Department, in cooperation with the Southern Rhodesian African Literature Bureau, supplies a box of books to any Native Council or recommended institution or organization. Most of the books provided are in English, but all the vernacular publications of the Literature Bureau are included. Local voluntary librarians are appointed, and boxes may be exchanged upon request.

Libraries for Africans in Nyasaland are virtually nonexistent. The British Council library in Blantyre lends to anyone on whom the representative has some check. There are eight or nine small collections mainly at Mission Stations, financed by the Ewing Bequest (income £50 or $140 a year), and the Nyasaland African Library operates a subscription service to individuals and associations. Little progress has been made since these facts were first reported at the Unesco Seminar in 1953.

One of the most important libraries in the Federation is the Southern Rhodesian National Free Library Service at Bulawayo. Although financed solely by the Southern Rhodesian government the library acts as a central library for students throughout the Federation; it
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lends books to the public of all races, and acts as a clearinghouse for interlibrary loans. It has never had a large stock of books, nor a large circulation, but it has a special responsibility for technical and commercial literature not provided elsewhere. A union catalog of nonfiction additions was begun in 1955, and in 1958 loans to other Rhodesian libraries were almost 1,000, about 250 books being borrowed from South African libraries.

In general, school libraries throughout the Federation are encouraged by a basic education grant, which may be augmented in the case of European, Indian, and colored schools, by a £1 for £1 grant in those cases where local funds have been raised. This is not normally sufficient to provide adequate libraries, except perhaps in a few schools in the larger towns, and there is seldom separate accommodation for the books, or proper organization. Founded in 1943, the Beit Circulating Library for Schools for many years provided regular refresher stocks to existing school libraries, but recently it has ceased to function.

The Union of South Africa can hardly be called a newly developing country, for although physically a part of Africa, historically, politically and industrially it is a separate entity. The official policy of "Apartheid" not only separates "whites" from "blacks" and "coloreds" within the country but it also divorces the Union from normal contact with the majority of the remaining African states. South African librarians, for instance, were not allowed to attend the Unesco seminar on public libraries held at Ibadan in 1953, although their papers contributed to the success of that meeting.

An adequate account of the individual libraries and library services of the Union is quite impossible and out of place here, but in the interests of completeness, and because library service to whole sections of the community is hardly developed at all, certain major features may be noted.

The Union of South Africa is fortunate in having two national libraries, the South African Public Library in Cape Town, and the State Library in Pretoria. The former, established in 1818 and incorporating an even earlier foundation (The Van Dessin Library) dating from 1761, is the senior library in the Union, and functions as the national reference library for the whole of South Africa. It is a state-aided institution, deriving 80 per cent of its funds from the Union government. The book stock numbers approximately 350,000 items, and includes three important rare book collections (Grey, Dessinian,
and Fairbridge) and a strong collection of material on Africa south of the Sahara, including unique collections of South African bound newspapers (some on microfilm), blue books, and periodicals. The library has had copyright privileges since 1876. Special attention is paid to bibliographical work, and the library acts as a national bibliographical center, publishing a current national bibliography (Africana Nova, quarterly), the Grey Bibliographies series, and the Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Public Library. A new extension to the library, with an automatic fire-resisting section for rare books, accommodating, altogether 150,000 works and costing £84,000 ($235,200), was opened on April 7, 1959.

The State Library, Pretoria, established in 1887, in addition to being a national library, is the oldest public library in the Transvaal, and gives a free public library service to Pretoria. Funds are provided by the state and the local authority. The library houses the National Union Catalogue and since 1933 has acted as the center for national interlibrary loans. Regular lists of the publications and periodicals received under the Copyright Act are published.

Also important at this level is the Library of Parliament at Cape Town. Founded in 1854, and a copyright library since 1951, its book stock is now about 200,000 volumes. In addition to government documents it includes the Mendelssohn library of Africana of about 45,000 items.

The Union of South Africa has nine universities, in addition to the University College of Fort Hare, which is solely for nonwhites. The university libraries at Cape Town, and Witwatersrand (Johannesburg) are impressive by any standards, each holding over 300,000 volumes, and containing many special collections. Other holdings include those at Pretoria (200,000), Stellenbosch (150,000), and Natal (120,000). The universities of Potchestroom, Grahamstown (Rhodes University), and Bloemfontein, have been established less than ten years, but their book collections are all expanding rapidly, the first two having already topped the 100,000 mark. It has been suggested that the Union, with a total white population of less than three million has too many universities. Almost all of them now offer post-graduate courses in librarianship, but the supply of trained librarians is still very far short of the demand.

The University College of Fort Hare is now the only higher educational institution open to non-Europeans. Adequate standards of teaching are maintained only with difficulty, and the courses available are
limited. The library, of about 35,000 volumes, is strong in African native life and languages, but the science and general reference sections are inadequate and reading room space is insufficient. Extensions to the library are planned.

During the past twenty years there has been a rapid increase in the number of scientific, technical, and government libraries of all kinds, in addition to the very important special collections in the national and university libraries.

The Central Government Library in Pretoria coordinates the activities of about thirty governmental libraries throughout the Union, and is building up a union catalog of their holdings, supplementing that of the State Library. Of the fifty or so industrial and scientific libraries, the most important is that of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Pretoria, established in 1945. Its object is primarily to provide a book and information service to the Council's staff and laboratories, which are concerned with a wide range of subjects, including physics, chemistry, building, nutrition, road research, and mechanical engineering. A monthly annotated book list is produced, and books are lent by post to institutions and individuals throughout the Union.

Typical of the many special libraries existing are those of the Institute for International Affairs, the Institute for Medical Research, and the National Museum (Bloemfontein). Special collections in the Cape Town and Johannesburg public libraries are also important; the former with its Long Street Branch specializing in business, commerce, and industry, and the latter in geology, mining, and engineering. Cooperation between these libraries, perhaps because of their rapid growth, is not all that it might be at the moment, and photocopying services are rare.

Progress in provision of free public libraries has been startling during the past decade. Even as late as 1952 it was noted that of the 250 public libraries, only thirty were free. The growth of the Provincial Library Services in each of the four provinces—Cape, Orange Free State, Transvaal, and Natal—since that date has transformed the situation, and has accounted for the virtual disappearance of the subscription library. In 1949 the Provincial Administrations were empowered to establish free libraries (they were previously only allowed to administer libraries set up by other bodies), and Provincial Library Services were established in each province. Existing libraries are admitted to the scheme, and new libraries and depots started where
necessary. The usual basis of affiliation is the provision by the existing authority of suitable accommodation with free access, plus a financial contribution of so much per head, or a proportion of the rates. In return the Provincial Service provides books, mobile libraries, technical services, and assistance towards re-organization if required. Although existing libraries are not compelled to join the scheme, the advantages are so obvious that the great majority of them have done so. Not only is a better book service possible, but the local financial grant is often used to provide more and better qualified librarians.

Cape Province, in addition to the normal provincial library service, offers financial assistance of up to 50 per cent to the larger towns, and this has lead to a spectacular expansion of the Cape Town City Service. In 1957 schools were allowed to join the scheme, and the Provincial Library Service buys books for them out of education funds.

No account of public libraries in the Union can omit reference to the most outstanding of all, the Johannesburg Public Library. This library has been free since 1924, and in 1957 from its central library and eleven branches it issued nearly three million books. Other important city systems are those of Cape Town and Durban. In the ten years since 1947, the expenditure on libraries in the Union as a whole has risen from £250,000 ($700,000) to £1,300,000 ($3,640,000), and issues from six to sixteen million. For a total white population of barely three million these figures are impressive.

The services mentioned above are provided, however, almost solely for "whites"; the provision of library services for "nonwhite" sections of the population being left to the enterprise of the municipalities and voluntary committees of librarians, assisted by grants, mainly from the Carnegie Corporation.

In Natal the service is confined to one branch library in Durban, which in 1957 issued 8,500 books per month, mainly to Asians and "Coloreds"; and to one new branch in Pietermaritzburg for Indians and Africans.

The Non-European Library Service, Transvaal, operates from Pretoria, and a book stock of 8,000 is loaned to personal borrowers through three service points and by post.

Bloemfontein Public Library supplies six centers with boxes of one hundred books, and operates two libraries, one in a Bantu Social Institute and another in a "Colored" district. The total grant in 1957 was £161 (approx. $450)!

Some improvement has recently been made in service to the "Col-
ored" people in Cape Province, where the Provincial Library Service has operating 150 deposit stations and a book box system. Bursaries for "Colored" librarians are available at the Cape Town University Library School, and a first short training course has been organized by the Provincial Library Service.

In Johannesburg, services to "Colored" and Indian readers, as well as to Africans, have been given for many years by the Public Library. Cape Town City Service also has several branch libraries and a bookmobile.

So far as the large "black" section of the community is concerned, it is now the declared policy of the present Union government to provide libraries for Africans only as part of the general scheme of Bantu education, which falls within the sphere of the (Union) Bantu Education Department. For this reason no facilities for "black" Africans are provided by the four Provincial Library Services. It is possible that the Bantu people of South Africa are not worse off than their fellow Africans in many other parts of the continent. What is depressing, however, is that little progress is likely to be made in the near future, for in addition to the present official attitude there are two great practical difficulties. Firstly, any service to non-Europeans must be a separate service; the simple solution of allowing them to use existing facilities has been officially ruled out. Secondly, such a service must be given by non-Europeans; and trained African librarians are simply not available.

School libraries are largely the responsibility of the Provincial Education Departments, to which are attached library organizers. Most European and some "Colored" schools are financed by grants from Education funds; in the Transvaal and Natal this is a basic grant, plus £1 for each £1 raised locally. In the Cape Province, schools may now join the Provincial Library service.

An attempt to find a trend in library services in a continent such as Africa is akin to the task of finding a pattern in a patchwork quilt. The countries and peoples of Africa are too diverse and their economic, political, and social development too uneven to allow any valid generalizations. It may be useful, however, to comment briefly on certain aspects of librarianship as they appear in the African setting, especially on library associations, legislation, finance, organization of library services, staffing, cooperation, and "outside" assistance.

The South African Library Association is the oldest and largest on the continent, with a membership of around one thousand. Established
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in the early 1930’s, and helped by a generous Carnegie grant, it soon undertook correspondence courses, held examinations, and awarded diplomas. Annual conferences are now held, and a lively and informative journal, South African Libraries, is published quarterly in English and Afrikaans. Organized on a branch basis, the Association includes Rhodesia and Nyasaland as a Central African Branch.

The West African Library Association was started in 1953, as one of the direct results of the Unesco Seminar on public libraries held at Ibadan in that year. Its membership, of individuals and institutions, is restricted to English-speaking West Africa; annual conferences have been held at Ibadan, Lagos, and Accra; a journal, WALA News, is published twice yearly and the Association has made some contribution to the development of libraries, especially in Nigeria.

The year 1958 saw the establishment of two more professional bodies on opposite sides of the continent. The Association pour le Development des Bibliothèques en Afrique, is primarily for French-speaking West and Equatorial Africa, and is a very welcome sign of a growing demand, among librarians at least, for better public libraries. A first conference is scheduled to take place in Dakar in November 1959, and its program includes papers on national, university, and public libraries. The inaugural conference of the East African Library Association was held last year, near Nairobi, and it too has a great opportunity of making a contribution to an integrated library service for East Africa.

Library legislation in most countries concerns chiefly the public libraries, and Africa is no exception. National and university libraries are interested, of course, in regulations regarding the legal deposit of books and newspapers, and in most parts of Africa the national, university, or chief public library benefits in this way. Relatively few books, however, are published outside the Union of South Africa, and this privilege is not of any great assistance elsewhere in building up a bookstock. As far as public libraries are concerned, it may be said that where they are organized on a national or regional basis, as in South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, and parts of North Africa, there is library legislation; where they are not so organized the converse is generally true. Legislation is important in defining the objective, providing a legal basis for the actions of the library authority, and obtaining the necessary funds, but it is of less importance than acceptance of the need for libraries and a determination to provide them.

National libraries, in the sense of organizations whose function is
to collect and preserve books, are rare, being present only in South Africa, Ethiopia, Algeria, and Tunisia. In the newly developing countries books are too scarce, and means too slender to provide them, and there is little point in building for posterity when present urgent needs are so largely unmet. S. R. Ranganathan’s law, that “books are for use,” is as apposite to Africa as to India. In any case, many of the university libraries are, by right of legal deposit and in the normal course of events, building up collections of books published in, and about, their respective countries.

On the whole it can be said that university and special libraries are adequate to meet the demands now made upon them; or are rapidly becoming so. This is not to imply that many could not be better, but even in the worst there is at least some awareness that they are necessary. University and special libraries have this in common, that they have arisen as a result of demand from a specific section of the community who use books regularly, who are aware that books are essential, and who normally have the authority and the funds to see that they are provided. Time and time again it can be seen that the only library of any size or importance in a country is that of the university or college, and it is essential that these libraries should take a liberal view of their responsibilities and make their collections as widely available as possible.

Public libraries show astonishing variety in their organizational and financial arrangements. There are national libraries which give, or aid, a public library service, as in Pretoria, Algeria, and Tunisia; “ad hoc” national and regional bodies, such as the Ghana Library Board, the Eastern Region Library Board, Nigeria, the East African Literature Bureau, and the South African Provincial Library Services; government and semi-government departments, as in North and West Nigeria, the Sudan, Southern and Northern Rhodesia, and French West and Equatorial Africa; municipalities, like Johannesburg, Cape Town, Lagos, Salisbury, and many official, semi-official, and private organizations of all kinds, including especially the British Council and U.S.I.S.

Few local authorities are financially able to provide adequate libraries entirely from their own resources. Not only are most of them too poor, but in much of Africa they are still in the incipient stage. Where local libraries have grown up they have invariably begun as subscription libraries, and the local authority has often later eased its conscience by providing some assistance from public funds.
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This process is typified in East Africa, the Rhodesias, and, until recently, in South Africa. In the Union, however, the Provincial Library Services offer the advantages of books and technical assistance on a regional basis, while still retaining the roots of the service in the local community; and a similar system operates in Algeria.

Where national or regional bodies have been set up, as in West and South Africa, funds are obtained directly from the central or regional government, often with contributions from the larger towns. In Ghana a subscription of 4/- (56 cents) a year for adults, and 6d. (7 cents) for children is charged.

A book service to rural areas can only be efficiently provided by regional or national agencies, and in their general absence there is comparatively little organized rural activity. Although a serious defect, this is perhaps not quite so important as in more developed countries, for in Africa the towns truly possess not only a concentration of potential borrowers, but a concentration of need, and not only of need for books, but for reference and study facilities. The lack of responsible, library conscious, local government and voluntary organizations, which are prepared to act as agents, is also a serious handicap, and the vast majority of local "centers" are therefore to be found in schools.

There are two main difficulties in the path of general improvement in public libraries for Africans. First, there must be a change in the attitude, held in many quarters, that Africans are not yet ready for, and cannot make use of books. The experience of Ghana, Nigeria, and the East African Literature Bureau points the moral that where the right books are available there is a voracious and increasing demand for them. Of course, people cannot appreciate what they have never had the opportunity of experiencing, but once a book service is offered there is abundant evidence that it will be used. Secondly, the lack of qualified African staff is a very serious handicap to progress, and although librarians can be, and are, imported, the availability or otherwise of trained librarians is the biggest single factor in determining the rate of expansion of existing services. Almost every library in Africa of any size is engaged in training its own staff, and even in the Union, where most universities offer professional training, the problem is acute.

Lack of funds is not so important although it is too often put forward as an excuse for a policy of "laissez-faire." Provided the need for public libraries gains acceptance, especially at the highest level,
funds can and will be found.

Book supply to children, either through the schools, or from the public library, is generally poor, or nonexistent. Although in many parts of Africa grants are provided from education funds—either general grants which may be used, in part, to purchase books, or specific book grants—they are seldom large enough to provide what librarians would consider adequate libraries. In fact, it appears that many educationists do not believe in books or reading, even though they pay them lip service. Yet if children do not leave school with an appreciation of the joys of reading, and with the ability and the desire to continue their education through reading, then the schools have failed them. And for this objective a plentiful supply of books is essential.

Even where school libraries occur their effective organization is often difficult, owing to lack of qualified staff. This may be partly overcome by attachment of librarians to education departments, or by close cooperation with the public library service, where it exists. Owing to the chronic shortage of teachers the ideal solution of a teacher-librarian in each school or, at the least, a teacher with special responsibility for the library, is not likely to be attained in the discernible future.

Formal schemes of library cooperation in book supply, and of union cataloging, exist only in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. In most other countries they are rendered unnecessary by the very limited number of libraries, which usually have informal arrangements for inter-lending. Even when the presence of a book or periodical can be found in another African country, it is often quicker and safer to obtain it, or a microfilm copy, from Britain or the United States. In the last analysis, it is probably true that there is no substitute for self-help.

A survey of African libraries cannot conclude without reference to certain official, semi-official, and private organizations which have made, and are making, a contribution to library development. British Colonial Development and Welfare funds have been allocated to several libraries and library projects. Unesco has provided scholarships for study abroad, organized a Seminar on Public Libraries, at Ibadan, and established a public library pilot project at Enugu in Eastern Nigeria. The British Council, and the United States Information Service, have libraries in almost every part of the Continent, and in a number of countries provide the only worth-while service available. And finally, the Carnegie Corporation. Beginning in the early "thirties,"
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with generous grants to South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, there is hardly a single country, outside the French-speaking territories, which has not at one time or another benefited from its help. Although few trends are discernible in the patchwork quilt of library provision in Africa, at least in help from "outside" there is a recognizable trend of steadily increasing concern and assistance. Long may it continue, for there is much work to be done.

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