

LITERATURE FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN BANTU

A Comparative Study of Negro Achievement

Report of a Visit to the United States of America
under the Auspices of the Visitors' Grants Committee
of the Carnegie Corporation

By

R. H. W. SHEPHERD, M.A. (Edinr.)

DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS
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SOUTH AFRICA

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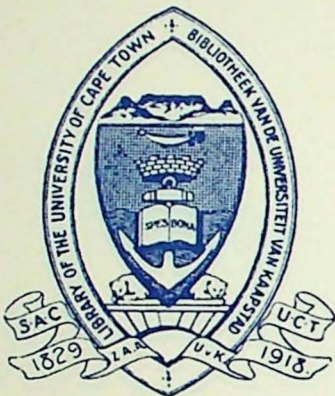
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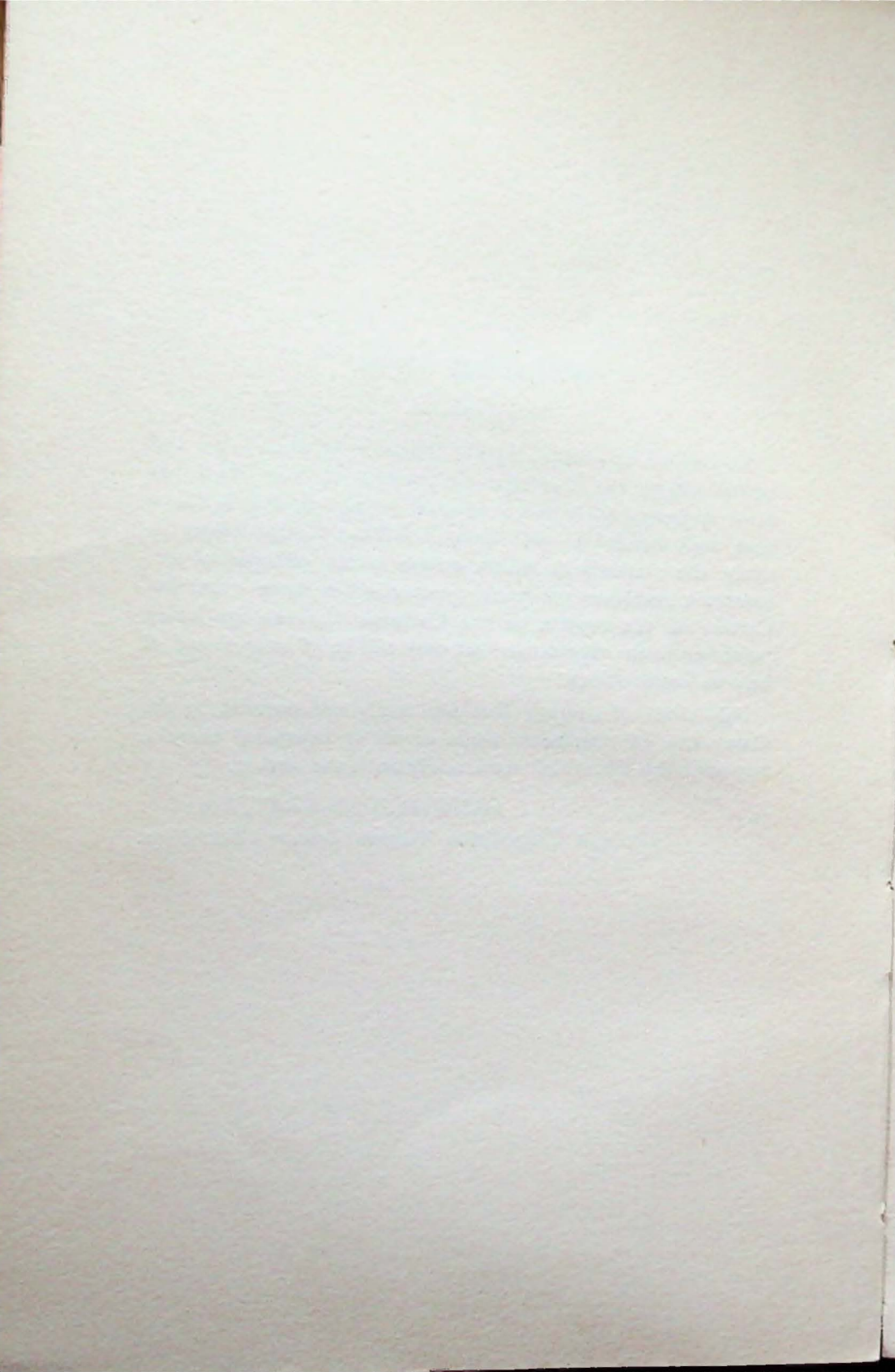


PREFATORY NOTE.

As part of its scheme for the diffusion of knowledge and understanding the Carnegie Corporation of New York has made arrangements whereby selected persons in South Africa have been enabled to visit Canada and the United States to study the methods by which certain social, educational and economic problems are being approached in those countries. Certain of the reports of the Carnegie Visitors are being published in the expectation that they will be of interest and of help to South Africa.

Publication of a report does not imply endorsement by the Committee of statements made or views expressed therein, responsibility for which rests solely with the author.

LANGHAM MURRAY, Sec.,
Carnegie Corporation Visitors' Grants Committee.



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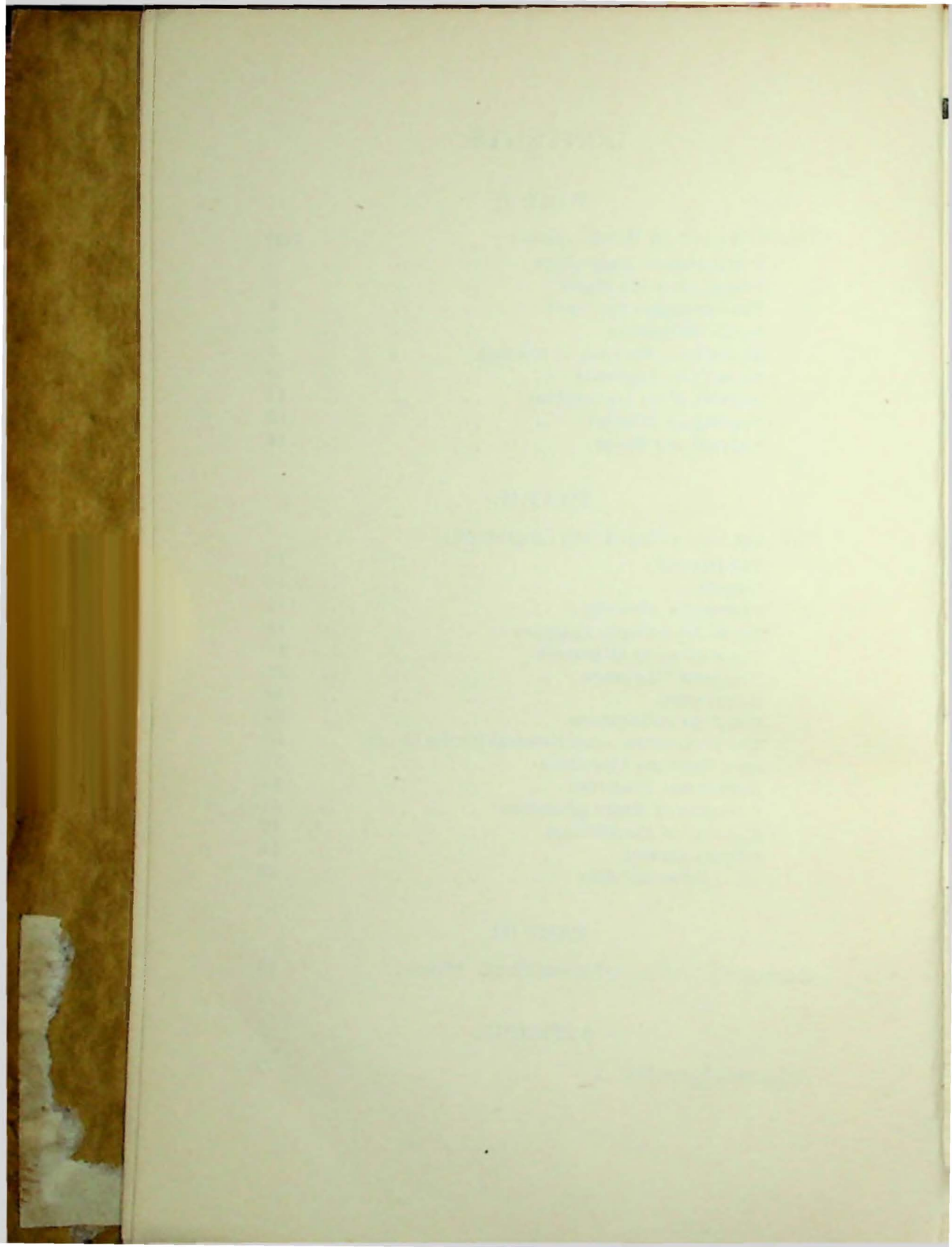
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Part I.

THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

South African Beginnings.

Education of the Bantu.

The Literature Produced.

Bantu Publishing.

Stimulating the Love of Reading.

Recent Developments.

Interest of the Universities.

Missionary Interest.

Negroes and Bantu.

SOUTH AFRICAN BEGINNINGS.

In the closing months of the year 1823 a missionary, the Reverend John Ross, newly come to South Africa from Scotland, journeyed by ox wagon from Cape Town to Gwali, a spot in eastern Cape Province only a few miles from the present site of Lovedale Institution. On the wagon, which, by making detours to include Caledon and Genadendal, travelled some thousand miles, there was a small Ruthven printing press. Arriving at Gwali on 16th December, the press was got in order on the 17th; on the 18th the alphabet was set up; on the 19th fifty copies were thrown off; and on the 20th the missionaries recorded that "a new era has commenced" in the history of the Native people of South Africa. Such was the beginning of the endeavour to provide literature for the South African Bantu.

In the century that has passed since then missionary societies and other bodies have not been unmindful of the need for effort in this particular line. The difficulties, however, have been immense and the efforts, it must be confessed, sporadic and lacking in co-ordination.

At the beginning the Bantu were found to be devoid of the knowledge of letters. While their spoken languages were highly developed and their traditional lore abundant, they had not so much as a written alphabet.

Moreover, their tongues were diverse. To-day in the area embraced by the Union of South Africa and the three High Commission Territories of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, there are, in addition to the official languages of English and Afrikaans, five important Bantu literary language forms in use. These are Xhosa and Zulu (belonging to the Nguni cluster of Bantu), and Southern Sotho, Tswana, and Northern Sotho (belonging to the Sotho cluster). In addition, there are two other languages spoken in the northern and eastern Transvaal, viz., Venda and Tonga (generally written as Thonga, and belonging to the cluster of languages, which also include Ronga and Tswa, spoken in Portuguese East Africa from Delagoa Bay northwards). For all of these, orthographies had to be provided and the people initiated into the mysteries of written

and printed speech. Of the clusters of languages mentioned, Sotho embraces considerably over 2,000,000 speakers, Nguni more than 3,000,000, Thonga probably over 750,000 and Venda 150,000. These numbers include members of tribes within and outside the borders of the Union.

EDUCATION OF THE BANTU.

Education as known to Europeans was unknown to the Bantu and still remains unknown to the majority of them. While some tribes, such as the Fingoes, have been swept by a desire for the White man's knowledge, other sections have remained without schooling. In estimating the causes of this, account must be taken of European and Native conservatism (suspicious, for different reasons, of the value of book-learning to African peoples) and the comparatively limited contacts between the two groups. The population of South Africa is preponderantly Bantu and large numbers of them live isolated from European contacts. Out of some five-and-a-half million people resident in the Union of South Africa the White population numbers only a million and a half. Again, the Bantu population has been almost wholly dependent for educational facilities on missionary bodies whose means have never been abundant. The latter, aided by the Native people themselves, have had to provide the school buildings, the Provincial Government Education departments supplying subsidies for the payment of teachers up to a limited aggregate figure. At the end of 1930, as reported by the *Native Economic Commission* of 1930-32, in the Government, Government-aided and private schools of the Union there was a total of 301,665 Native scholars. On a conservative basis the number of Native children of school-going age was given as 1,373,000. Thus not one-fourth of the children were at school. Not only so, but of those at school 77.5 per cent were in Standard II or below. Only 0.5 per cent were above Standard VI. The vast majority of the Bantu population therefore still remains illiterate; also, since the medium of instruction in the lower school standards is the mother-tongue, and the official languages

are only gradually introduced, the majority, even of those who know something of letters, can read only in the vernacular. Such facts must be taken into consideration in any plans for the supply of literature.

THE LITERATURE PRODUCED.

Despite the militating factors mentioned, literature has been produced and disseminated in all the principal Bantu languages of South Africa. Before the coming of the White man, owing to the entire absence of writing among the Bantu, such traditional literature as existed was purely oral and subject to the vicissitudes of a word-of-mouth tradition, with all the mutilation and loss this involves. The favourite lore was stories—mythologies, fables, legends—songs, whether set to music or merely intoned, like the praises of chiefs and others, and proverbs or riddles. With the passing of the older unsophisticated generation a great deal of folk-lore has been lost, but a good deal has, fortunately, been preserved. Thus we have fair-sized collections like Jacottet's *Treasury of Basuto Lore*, Plaatje's *Sechuana Proverbs*, Callaway's *Nursery Tales of the Zulus*, Rubusana's *Zemk' Inkomo*, Kuhn's *Sotho-Sprichwörter*, and Mangoaela's *Lithoko tsa Marena a Basotho* (Praises of the Sotho Chiefs.)

The mass of the literature published in the past and even to-day has emanated from mission presses, and naturally such literature seeks to fulfil the aims of missionary societies. Thus books of a scriptural or devotional character and text-books for schools predominate. Yet it must not be thought that the interest of missionaries in language and literature has been a narrow or merely sectarian one. Far beyond missionary circles it is freely recognised that a great debt is due to missionaries for their work in this important field. Professor C. M. Doke, the Joint Editor of *Bantu Studies*, writing of the research work done in the various language fields, declared: "A great deal of this—all the pioneer work—must be placed to the credit of the various missionaries who have done and are doing yeoman service, often at great disadvantage and with scant equipment. Much of their work is of such a quality that it will

not be superseded for many a year. . . . Their names are written in the hearts of the people, and inscribed in their lasting contribution to South African literature.”

In the *Bibliography of African Christian Literature* published by the Conference of Missionary Societies of Great Britain and Ireland in 1923, with the *Supplement* of 1927, just over 100 publications appear in the Suto (Sotho) list, about the same number in Zulu, some 140 in Xhosa, 50 in Tswana, 18 in Thonga (Tonga) and 2 in Venda. No doubt many of these represent items of slight importance and of passing interest ; some of them have been displaced, while others have been added since the *Bibliography* and *Supplement* were published. But a recent unpublished survey made by the writer indicates that the figures remain proportionately representative of the position to-day except that Sotho and Venda show increases. In regard to such Church and Missionary literature, it deserves to be mentioned that the Bible Societies, both British and American, have provided excellent translations of the Bible in the principal South African vernacular tongues. Some of the translations of religious classics, particularly Tiyo Soga's magnificent Xhosa translation of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, are also very praiseworthy.

A very hopeful feature is that in recent years Bantu writers, particularly in Xhosa and Southern Sotho, have been producing works of a biographical and historical nature, as well as novels and some poetry. Indeed there is now in some of the Bantu languages a fair and growing number of books available for general and cultural reading. Mofolo's *Moeti oa Bochabela* (" Traveller to the East ") and his *Chaka*, both in Southern Sotho ; Mqayi's *Ityala lama-Wele* (" The Lawsuit of the Twins ") and his collection of verse *Imi-Hobe nemi-Bongo*, both in Xhosa ; S. T. Plaatje's *Diphòshò-phòshò*, a remarkable translation of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, in Tswana ; Bareng's *Lithoitho-kiso tsa Moshoeshe le tse ling* (Praises of Moshesh and other praises) and Vilikazi's *Inkhondlo Kazulu*, as well as the works of other writers, all tell of a literary movement still in its infancy but of immense possibilities. A fair number of meritorious MSS. also remain unpublished for financial reasons, despite the

efforts of such as the Lovedale Press, which in the past half-dozen years has published at its own risk and expense the works of some twelve Bantu authors and composers.

Magazines produced purely by Bantu editors and publishers in the vernacular are practically non-existent in South Africa. Such vernacular magazines as do circulate among the Bantu, e.g. *Umcebisi wo-Mlimi no-Mfuyi*, a magazine devoted to agricultural interests and published under the auspices of the Transkeian Territories General Council, *The Health Magazine* published (in English, Xhosa and Sotho) at Lovedale and *Moxwêra wa Babaso* (Companion of the Black People) are mostly the product of European initiative and supervision. Native authors, however, make frequent contributions to such magazines, and there are sometimes Native assistant editors.

In the newspaper field, however, Bantu editors and publishers have been engaged for many years. *Imvo Zabantsundu* ("Native Opinion") led the way as an African-edited weekly newspaper in 1884. To-day there are between ten and twenty weekly newspapers regularly appearing. The best-known of these are *The Bantu World*, *Ilanga lase Natal*, *Imvo Zabantsundu*, *Umteteli wa Bantu*, *Leselinyana la Lesotho*. One or two of these are under European management but Bantu editorship. In all of them articles in English find some space, but the major portion is devoted to vernacular writing. *The Bantu World* indeed has six languages represented in its pages.

A few Bantu writers have written books of merit in English. D. D. T. Jabavu, of the South African Native College, Fort Hare (the only Bantu educational institution of university standard south of the Zambezi) has penned several, of which the best-known is *The Black Problem*; Dr. S. M. Molema (*The Bantu*), S. T. Plaatje (*Mhudi*—a novel) and R. R. Dhlomo (*An African Tragedy*—a novel) are other writers in English.

BANTU PUBLISHING.

There is no Bantu book-publishing house of large dimensions. The Bantu author is almost wholly dependent on South African mission presses for the publication of his work. One or

two London firms have published vernacular text-books. The lack of Bantu publishing houses is to be accounted for by the inexperience of the Bantu in trade and commerce and the want of the capital necessary for such ventures. Very few of the Bantu have, so far, succeeded as business men, largely, as some believe, because of lack of opportunity.

In any consideration of the development of South African vernacular literature account should be taken of the industrial and commercial aspects of production, closely related as these are to the cost at which books can be provided for a group of readers who are generally poor, and also because printing and book-binding open avenues of employment to a race that is in sore need of industrial opportunity. All this has not been overlooked, particularly by missionary societies. A number of Bantu are now employed as printers in Native newspaper and missionary printing offices, and a few as book-binders in the latter. They have no status within the trades unions of South Africa, but their wages are subject to certain regulations and steps are taken to ensure that they are engaged only on vernacular printing or on work intended chiefly for a Native clientele. An edition of any vernacular book is generally small in number, since the demand for such books is comparatively limited, partly because of the paucity of readers owing to the prevailing illiteracy and partly because of the poor economic conditions under which the Bantu live. The production of books by Native workmen, although their wages are relatively high, helps to avoid costs that would make the prices beyond the means of Bantu readers. It seems also reasonable that books intended for Bantu readers should as far as possible be printed and bound by Bantu workmen, and this, under prevailing conditions, is largely the case. A great increase of literacy and the development of a love of reading among the Native people of South Africa would have a powerful influence on the quality of the literature produced, as it would help to call out the best in Native authors and make it possible for many more to engage in literary work, while the development of the printing and book-binding industries would mean an increased number of Natives engaged in an honourable industry and obtaining thereby the means of livelihood.

STIMULATING THE LOVE OF READING.

Closely related indeed to all questions affecting the furtherance of a literary movement among the South African Bantu is the question of how to stimulate a love of reading among them. It cannot be claimed that even a majority of those who pass through Native schools and colleges emerge with a love of literature for its own sake. The Bantu have followed other sections of the public in a pathetic faith in the mere passing of examinations and in looking on such as the goal of scholastic endeavour.

One of the means of stimulating a love of literature would be an efficient library system throughout the land. Unfortunately, such a system does not exist to-day. At some centres, such as Fort Hare and Lovedale, there are fair collections of books available for Native students, but yet no Native school or college can claim to have a satisfactory library. Outside educational institutions library facilities for the Bantu are few and far between despite the fact that the South African Library Conference held at Bloemfontein in 1928 declared that "adequate library provision should be made for the Non-European sections of the population." One of the most promising developments is the establishment of the Transvaal (Carnegie) Non-European Library System which was made possible in 1930 by the provision of £1000 by the Carnegie Corporation under the condition that the cost of distributing the books purchased and the operation of the library be borne by the responsible participating organisations. The Witwatersrand Council of Education generously undertook to provide a maintenance grant until such time as it became possible for the Transvaal Provincial and municipal authorities to assume these responsibilities. Since 1931 when the scheme was first inaugurated the Library has progressed each year, and it is evident from the list of grants obtained that the Transvaal Provincial Administration and the local authorities are beginning to take an interest in the matter. Since the scheme was inaugurated about 46 centres for Bantu, Indians and other Non-Europeans have been established on the Witwatersrand, and in Pretoria, Pietersburg, Middelburg and other places in the Transvaal Province. The headquarters is the Germiston (Carnegie) Public Library. At Germiston Library there is a central stock

of books from which batches of fifty to two hundred are sent in stout wooden cases to the various centres. On arrival at a centre the boxes are unpacked and opened out and used as shelving, thus solving a problem which exists because most locations and schools cannot otherwise provide for storing the books sent out. As a rule the local schoolmaster or Location Superintendent takes charge of the library, registering the loans and keeping the books in good condition. After six or twelve months all the books are collected from the readers and sent back to Germiston where they are checked and mended ; a new batch is then sent out to the Branch in exchange for those returned. Any Non-European may become a member of the Library and borrow books, one at a time, free of charge. The total number of books issued during the year 1934/5 was 5,362. It was 4,895 in the previous year. The first report concerning the scheme, published in 1935, declares : " Natives connected with missions and churches, even those whose educational privileges have been very small, spend in the aggregate considerable sums in the purchase of Bibles, Testaments and other religious books in the vernacular the children now attending school are able to read and appreciate books almost as much as White children of their own ages." In connection with the above scheme a conference to which all Non-European Librarians (generally teachers) were invited was held at the Bantu Men's Social Centre in Johannesburg in March, 1935.

Another attempt to meet the existing need was made in Natal, where application was made to the Provincial authorities for a grant and an offer of £500 was made by the Carnegie Corporation for the purchase of books for the use of Non-Europeans in Natal. The Education Department of the Province was requested to make provision for the supply of book-boxes and for their transport from Durban to and from approved distributing centres. Schools and training institutions were chosen as the distributing centres and each box included, in addition to suitable books in English, a number in Zulu. An initial stock of 346 volumes was purchased. When at the end of three months the book-boxes were returned they were found to be in excellent condition and the records of their use had been

carefully kept, but an examination of these records revealed a very limited issue of the volumes. The limited service indeed threatened to fail because, as was alleged, the character of the books selected for reading in the Native schools required a more careful consideration of the scholastic attainments of the students and of their social and economic background, and because the Native has not yet acquired the reading habit. The lack of early association with books, the poor quality of school "readers," the absence of the whole idea of reading as a leisure time occupation, the lack of time, pre-occupation with examinations, the lack of a utility value in reading and the lack of any general perception of the benefit and pleasure to be derived from reading were the reasons advanced for the almost complete absence of the reading habit among the Natives. The writer ventures to think that the experience of the promoters of this venture is not typical. The experience of the Transvaal (Carnegie) Non-European Library System, the existence of the Native newspaper Press, the increased pressure on some mission presses, and the literary output in other parts reveal more hopeful features. Still, the broad fact remains that a great *desideratum* is the stimulation of the love of literature for its own sake among the Bantu. And in effecting this a Library system, designed, it may be, on unusual lines and mostly dependent on Bantu personnel, may yet play an influential part.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS.

Recent years have been marked by a new or increasing interest in some quarters concerning the provision of literature for the South African Bantu. The more scientific study of African life, customs and language which has been a feature of the modern age ; the danger lest the missionary agencies, having taught vast numbers to read, should leave to non-Christian and even anti-religious elements to supply the reading matter ; and the entry of Africans themselves into spheres for which previously they were not educationally qualified—all have presented a challenge to different groups to make their contribution towards more effective and co-ordinated production and distribution of literature suited to the Bantu.

INTEREST OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

The past twelve years have seen the growing influence of an important group, since Departments of Bantu Studies began to be established at some of the Universities. A further step forward was taken when in 1932 the South African Inter-University Committee for African Studies set up a sub-committee to gather information upon the languages of the Union, to ascertain what research has been and is being carried out, and to make recommendations for further research and for the development of literatures. They approached those engaged upon such research by means of a questionnaire the main items of which were :

1. Give a critical review of the available literature published and unpublished under the following heads :
 - (a) Grammatical.
 - (b) Phonetical.
 - (c) Lexicographical.
 - (d) Folk-lore.
 - (e) Proverb-lore.
 - (f) Ethnology, History, Customs *in Vernacular*.
 - (g) Other important Vernacular Work.
 - (h) Important translations.
2. What linguistic field work or other linguistic research work (a) has been carried out, (b) is now being carried out ?
3. What linguistic research should, in your opinion, be done ?
4. In what direction should the literary development of the language be encouraged ? How would you suggest that this might be done ?

The result of the sub-committee's labours was published in *Bantu Studies* for March, 1933, under the title, "A Preliminary Investigation into the state of the Native languages of South Africa with Suggestions as to Research and the Development of Literature," by Dr. C. M. Doke. This publication is of great value both as an exhaustive critical survey of the present position and of the lines along which development may best be encouraged.

It also contains Appendices giving extensive Bibliographies of the important publications in the various languages.*

It is clear that members of the University staffs are to wield much influence in the field of Bantu language and literature. They have already conducted considerable research and published a number of studies. Again, through research grants, with the assistance of the Union Government, they have made it possible for other workers to carry out work in the field. The Union Government, with commendable far-sightedness, allocated for a number of years grants for such research to the Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand.

The Universities have also entered the field of publication. Since 1921 the University of the Witwatersrand has published *Bantu Studies*, which has now become a full quarterly journal. Much material of a linguistic nature finds the light through its pages. Various important books of a linguistic or ethnographical interest have also been sponsored by the Bantu Studies Departments of the Universities.

MISSIONARY INTEREST.

Missionary societies are also seeking more concerted lines of action. The chief mission presses for many years have been those of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society at Morija in Basutoland, which specialises in the production of Sotho literature, and the Lovedale Press of the Church of Scotland at Lovedale, Cape Province, whose main work has been done in the Xhosa field. There are several other smaller presses. A recent investigation has revealed that overlapping in the production of vernacular literature is not so great as might be feared, thanks largely to the variety of languages, the needs of which must be met. Nevertheless much more might be done in missionary circles along co-operative lines in regard to such matters as making the existing literature better known, the selection of authors for particular tasks, the preparation and general acceptance of basic texts for translation into various

* A further valuable contribution on a related subject from the pen of Dr. Doke appears in *Africa*, April, 1935, entitled, "Vernacular Text-Books in South African Native Schools."

languages, and in other kindred efforts. Fortunately, plans are on foot for accomplishing some of these aims.

A large and influential conference of representatives of the missionary societies of South Africa, under the chairmanship of Dr. John R. Mott, declared in 1934 its conviction that the production and distribution of Christian literature, especially in the vernaculars, should have an increasing place in the thought and work of the missionary forces, especially in view of the rising tide of education among African peoples. The conference further expressed the belief that the time had come for a great forward movement in the production and distribution of Christian literature principally through a united plan for co-operative effort, and to this end it commended the labours of a committee representative of various missionary bodies which was seeking to give a lead in evolving a definite and concerted plan of production. The conference recommended that efforts be made by all interested to effect the following :—

- (a) To establish means whereby the existing Christian literature may be made more widely known to missionary societies and missionaries.
- (b) To survey the existing literature with a view to its evaluation for missionary purposes.
- (c) To discover the unfilled gaps or needs and to prepare a definite programme as to the order in which the needs of the various sections of the population should be met.
- (d) To seek for the persons best qualified by experience and literary ability to supply particular needs, and especially to enlist and encourage African talent.
- (e) To urge missionary societies to make arrangements, financial and otherwise, so that conditions favourable for the best literary work may be ensured.
- (f) To draw on the experience of other lands regarding the largest and most satisfactory introduction and use of literature.
- (g) To endeavour to stimulate the love of reading among the African people.

- (h) To urge the establishment of circulating libraries and the use therein of the Carnegie Library Fund.

Among the pressing wants of to-day, in addition to scriptural and devotional literature, the conference mentioned pictures of a good type, recreational literature, and a Christian newspaper. It was felt also that increased attention should be given to the problems of distribution.

NEGROES AND BANTU.

“ To draw on the experience of other lands regarding the largest and most satisfactory introduction and use of literature.” Perhaps no country offers to South Africa more pertinent lessons in this connection than does the United States of America. In the States there are as one-tenth of the population, living in close contact with western civilization, men and women of original African stock ; for long they suffered all the retarding influences of economic servitude and political disability, and even now in certain respects come short of the rights of full citizenship ; they are still mainly rural dwellers ; they have struggled to break the hampering bonds of illiteracy and to-day are making amazing educational progress ; they have made their own contribution to the literature of America, although there are those both inside and outside their ranks who believe that they have given but an earnest of the treasure they will yet offer ; they have developed a Press to meet some of the needs of their own group, and now, under their own auspices and by their own effort, publish books, magazines, newspapers and other literature ; they have faced the questions connected with the mechanical side of literary production and of distribution. In every aspect of a literature movement—intellectual, industrial and commercial—they are further along the road than the Bantu, and yet not so far in advance as to render valueless the lessons they can teach to their African kinsmen. It is true that their sole language is English, as against the variety of tongues in Southern Africa. It is true also that in a land inhabited by 120,000,000 people they number only 12,000,000, whereas in South Africa the Bantu outnumber the other elements of the population. Yet such disparities in circumstance do not make

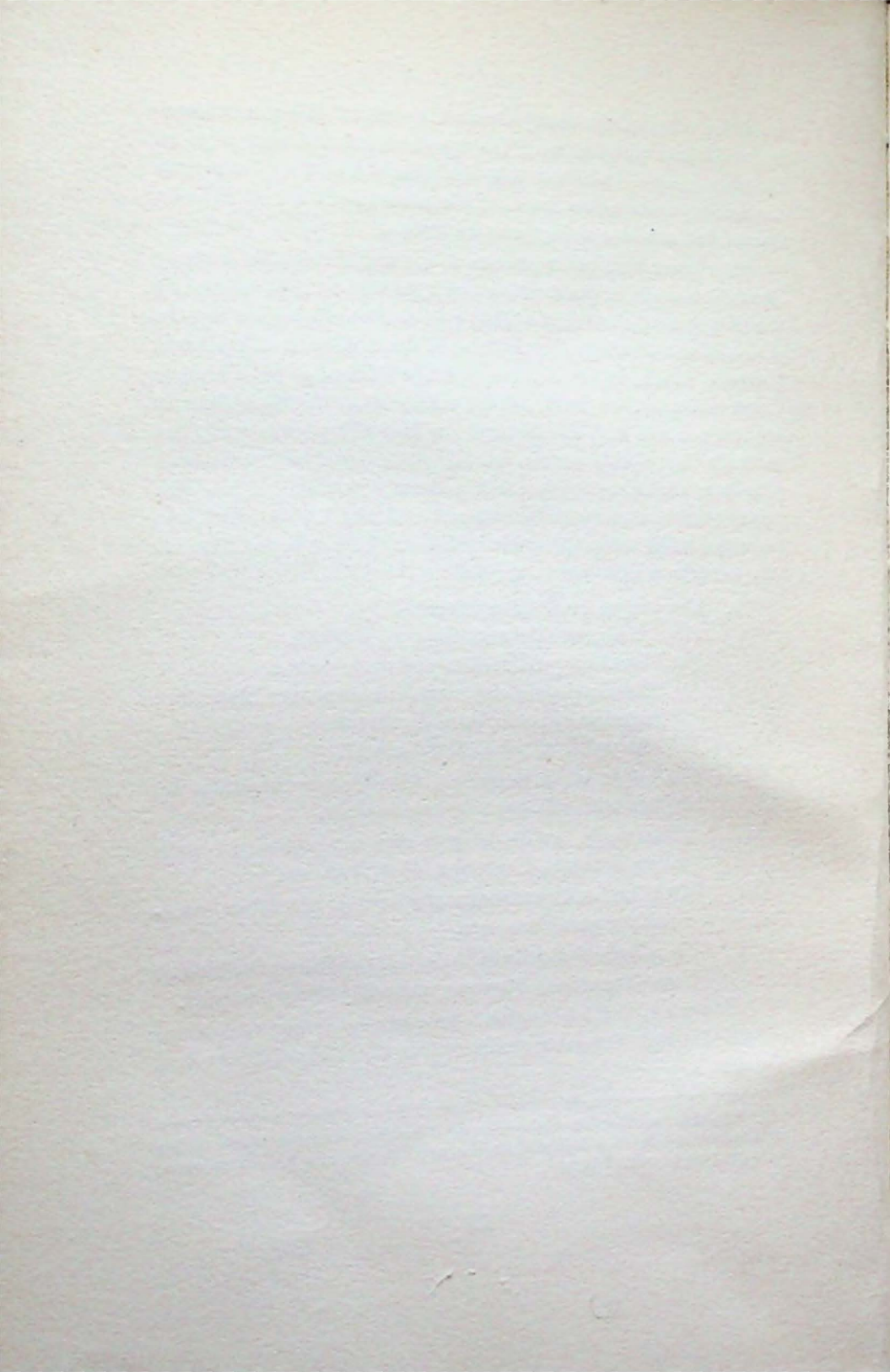
void the value of the comparisons they offer. They are essentially African people, with the spiritual, mental and physical characteristics of Africans and for generations they have been the underprivileged section of the community in which their lot is cast, but are now rising to equal status.

For these and other reasons it seemed fitting that a study should be made of publication work, in various aspects, among the Negroes of America. This was rendered possible by the action of the Carnegie Corporation Visitors' Grants Committee, Pretoria, which, in accordance with the scheme of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, selects persons from South Africa and enables them to visit Canada and the United States to study the methods by which certain social, educational and economic problems are being approached in those countries. It was the privilege of the writer to be thus selected, and for that privilege he would make warm acknowledgement. The object of the visit was to make a first-hand study of :

- I. The Negro Press as represented by
 - (a) Daily, weekly and monthly journals.
 - (b) Learned publications and *belles lettres*.
 - (c) Publications of inter-racial committees, American missionary societies and other bodies working for the uplift of the Colored races*.
- II. The work of presses run wholly or principally by Negroes with a Negro clientele in view.
- III. The work, methods and aims of presses at such institutions as Tuskegee, Hampton, etc.
- IV. Publication departments of missionary societies, inter-racial committees, etc.
- V. Methods of distribution and of stimulating the love of reading among Negroes, including library service.

The pages that follow give some account of the impressions gained during a fourteen weeks stay in the United States and Canada.

* In this publication *Colored* is used in the American sense, being equivalent to *Negro*, while *Coloured* is used in the South African sense of a person of mixed blood.



Part II.

THE AMERICAN NEGRO AND LITERATURE.

The Itinerary.

Canada.

Vernacular Literature.

Negro Educational Progress.

The Negro and Literature.

Magazine Literature.

Newspapers.

Religious Publications.

The Universities and Literature
for the Negro.

Race Relations Literature.

Author and Publisher.

A Bureau of Negro Literature.

Methods of Distribution.

Library Service.

The Mechanical Side.

THE ITINERARY.

New York was reached on 7th September, 1934, and after brief and very helpful visits to relatives in Rochester, N.Y. (the city in which was published the first Negro newspaper of large circulation read by both White and Black people, Frederick Douglass' *North Star*) and in St. Catharines, Ontario, investigation was begun in Toronto on 19th September. It was completed in New York on December 14th. The following places were visited: Toronto, St. Catharines (Ontario), Rochester, N.Y., New York City, New Haven (Conn.), Boston (Mass.), Philadelphia (Pa.), Washington, D.C., Hampton (Va.), Norfolk (Va.), Durham (North Carolina), Chapelhill (N.C.), Charlotte (N.C.), Atlanta (Ga.), Tuskegee (Ala.), Calhoun (Ala.), Nashville (Tenn.) Chicago (Ill.), and Pittsburgh (Pa.). The names of those interviewed, to whom a debt is due for their willing helpfulness, will be found in an Appendix.

CANADA.

The visit to Toronto brought out the fact that only 19,456 Negroes were domiciled in the whole of Canada at the time of the last census in 1930. There is no literature produced specially for them as a group. "They come right in with ourselves," said the Rev. D. S. Ridout, Editor of the United Church of Canada *Record*.

VERNACULAR LITERATURE.

In forsaking for a little Africa with its multitude of vernacular languages, one had the impression that "vernacular" was being left behind. But in the heart of Toronto it was found. In Canada there are 122,911 American Indians. These live largely segregated in reserves and their needs in literature are catered for by various churches and societies. The United Church of Canada, for example, is responsible for the spiritual oversight of 20,000 to 30,000, and to aid in this publishes a quarterly magazine in the Cree language. The Cree syllabic, which is entirely different from the Roman alphabet, was invented by James Evans, a missionary of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of England, almost a century ago. The entire Bible has

been published in Cree, as has also Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, a hymn-book, etc. The Anglican, Roman Catholic and other churches also print in Cree, which, it is believed, will persist for many years to come. Such efforts are but typical of attempts to meet the needs of the American Indian. Towards the close of the investigation it was learned from Dr. Eric M. North, of the American Bible Society, that the society prints the Scriptures in the following American Indian languages: *Cheyenne, Dakota, Hopi, Keres, Muskogee, Ojibway, Navaho*. Altogether about 2000 publications in these languages leave the Bible Society's offices in New York annually.

The Office of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C., publishes a News Sheet for Indians and the Indian Service. It is a photostat journal, illustrated, and deals in a comprehensive way with matters affecting Indian education and uplift.

NEGRO EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS.

In estimating Negro literary achievement account must be taken of Negro educational progress. Of the total population of 122,775,000 of all races in the United States in 1930, 11,891,143 were of African descent. In 1870 eighty-one per cent of the Negroes were illiterate. In 1930 this number had been reduced to sixteen per cent. In 1930 there were 2,289,389 Negro children in the common schools of the South, or sixty-eight per cent of those of school age. Not including public high schools, there are almost three hundred secondary schools and colleges, with 5000 teachers and 90,000 students of whom 22,000 are doing college work. Negro college graduates now number 18,000 or more and about 2000 are graduated every year. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy has been awarded to more than fifty Negroes by American Universities. It is claimed that no people has made so fast educational progress as have the Negroes since Emancipation.

THE NEGRO AND LITERATURE.

James Weldon Johnson, one of the leading Negro literary men, has declared: "A people may become great through many means, but there is only one measure by which its greatness

is recognised and acknowledged. The final measure of the greatness of all peoples is the amount and standard of the literature and art they have produced. The world does not know that a people is great until that people produces great literature and art. No people that has produced great literature and art has ever been looked upon by the world as distinctly inferior."

Perhaps no fact during the whole tour so impressed the writer as the contribution being made by Negroes towards America's literary and artistic heritage. Some Negroes are taking their place in the front rank along with other American literary men and women. To anyone seeking a new and entrancing field of English literature the work of Negro authors may be confidently commended.

So far, it is in poetry and music that the Negro has found his most natural means of artistic expression. He has not been so successful in the novel and the drama, probably because they are forms of art demanding a more objective view of their subject matter, and the Negro is still too self-conscious and too race-conscious. Yet it is commonly admitted that some of the prose of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois will last as long as American literature endures. His volume *The Souls of Black Folk* is the most important work in classic English *written by a Negro* and one of the most outstanding contributions to American literature in modern times. Other writers like Jean Toomer, Charles Waddell Chesnutt and Eric Walrond, through their fiction, have also demonstrated that the Negro may be judged as an artist with no special consideration because of his race .

It is, however, in the field of poetry that the Negro has made his most arresting contribution. Negro poets are astonishingly numerous and their work frequently reaches a high level. According to *A Bibliographical Checklist of American Negro Poetry* compiled by Dr. Arthur A. Schomburg, more than one hundred Negroes in the United States have published volumes of poetry ranging in size from pamphlets to books from 100 to 300 pages.

American Negro poets may be divided chronologically into three classes.

- (1) From Phillis Wheatley, a Negro girl who arrived in Boston in 1761 as one of a cargo of slaves and who published several volumes of poems in the style conventional to her age, to Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) and to the outbreak of the World War.
- (2) The group that emerged during the World War. This group was marked by a revolt against the traditions of Negro dialect poetry, which had been popularised largely by White writers and whose stock-in-trade were stereotyped humorous-pathetic patterns and sentimental and supplicatory moods. The group endeavoured to express the feelings of disillusionment and bitterness so characteristic of the American Negro in the war and post-war years and so there came forth the poetry of protest, rebellion and despair. A very representative voice of this group was Claude Mackay.
- (3) A younger group, chiefly typified by Countee Cullen, who published his first volume, *Color*, in 1925, and Langston Hughes, whose first work, *The Weary Blues*, appeared in 1926. The new writers revolted against "propaganda" in poetry and struggled, though unsuccessfully, to get away from race problem poetry and to be simply poets.

Examples of the work of the above types may be found in James Weldon Johnson's *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, which contains valuable prefaces, selections from the work of forty writers, critical and biographical sketches of the poets, and a list of references for supplementary reading. The perusal of the poems in such a book reveals how much of American Negro poetry finds its inspiration in "race." James Weldon Johnson is however probably guilty of exaggeration when he says that in all the poetry not stimulated by a sense of race he does not find a single poem possessing the power and artistic finality found in the best of the poems rising out of racial conflict and conduct. "All of which," he declares, "is merely a confirmation of the axiom that an artist accomplishes his best when working at his best with the material he knows best."

To a visitor from Africa cherishing the hope that Bantu

writers will yet make their own distinctive contribution to the world's literature, few phases of Negro life are more interesting than the group's reaction to its own cultural contributions. To-day the position seems to be marked by confusion and amazing diversity of view. On one side is an intense desire for complete identification with American life.

“ Far, far the way that we have trod,
From heathen kraals and jungle dens,
To freedmen, freemen, sons of God,
Americans and citizens.”

On the other hand, in a land in which discrimination seems to brand the Negro as inferior, there is an intense desire to show original cultural superiority in the race wherever it can be found. Thus we have the claim made by James Weldon Johnson that the Negro is the creator of the only things artistic that have yet sprung from American soil and been universally acknowledged as distinctive American products. These are declared to be : the Uncle Remus stories ; spirituals or slave songs ; cakewalk ; and ragtime. Other writers are obviously not sure whether they should be proud of and claim some of these distinctive contributions or frankly disown them, particularly such as ragtime. The conflict is well illustrated in the attitude of Professor Alain Locke, who, anxious to lay hands on every token of Negro originality and yet to drain out doubtful elements, naively suggests, “ Jazz is one-third Negro folk-idiom, one-third ordinary middle-class American idea and sentiment, and one-third spirit of the machine age.”

In some quarters even the “ spirituals ” are now frowned upon. Their concepts and the language used to express them are felt to be beneath the dignity of the race. A sensation was caused in America in recent years by the production of the Negro religious play *Green Pastures*, the work of a White writer but played by an all-Negro cast. The *New York Times* said of it, “ No play of the century has inspired so much artless affection,” while a critic declared, “ In Oberammergau I expected to see God, and I saw a play. On Broadway I went to see a play, and I saw God.” Yet the great Negro actor, Richard Berry Harrison, who played “ De Lawd ” in *Green Pastures* found many persons

of his own race who resented his appearance in a play whose vehicle is the primitive and oft-times crude conceptions of some of the American Negroes before they were touched by the refinements of education. They refused to accept the great meed of praise which Mr. Harrison and his fellow-actors brought to the Negro, since they believed the acclaim had come because the play belittled the race. They believed that the tragic treatment of peasant types gives greater currency to the popular notion of the Negro as an inferior, superstitious, half-ignorant, and servile class of folk. Mr. Harrison, however, remained unmoved and to the hour of his untimely death exemplified the uplifting power of talent applied to a lowly theme concerning his own race, and contended that consecrated genius can redeem the commonplace and, in the long run, compel world attention.

It is to be hoped that in the end this spirit will prevail. However much the race may have suffered from the comic minstrel tradition or the sentimental plantation tradition, there is no call to disown the common, racy, living, authentic speech of the Negro as he is to be found in many places. There is genuine folk stuff of which the Negro need be no more ashamed than the Scotsman is of the dialect poetry of Robert Burns or of the homely diction found in the novels of Sir Walter Scott. It is along his own line and through seeing life with his own eyes that the Negro will first and most prove himself "a contributor to American life not only of material but of artistic, cultural and spiritual values; that in the making and shaping of American civilization he is an active force, a giver as well as a receiver, a creator as well as a creature." It is significant that the most outstanding literary figure which the Negro race has produced in America is Paul Laurence Dunbar, much of whose work, though not all, was done in Negro dialect. "He was the first to rise to a height from which he could take a perspective view of his own race. He was the first to see objectively its humour, its superstitions, its shortcomings; the first to feel sympathetically its heart-wounds, its yearnings, its aspirations, and to voice them all in a purely literary form. Dunbar's fame rests chiefly on his poems in Negro dialect . . . in these dialect poems he not only carried his art to the highest point of perfection, but he made a

contribution to American literature unlike what anyone else had made." The race is calling for Dunbars, who, whatever the medium they may favour, will dare to be themselves, giving free vent to their emotional endowment, their originality and artistic genius, unashamed of their people's past and their racial heritage, and yet reaching out to that which will have universal appeal and influence, not because it chimes in with the passing mood of the majority of mankind but because it is basically and attractively human.

MAGAZINE LITERATURE.

Magazines intended primarily for the Negro group have not flourished in the United States. During the past century some forty or fifty magazines have been started but few have lived long or been influential. The competition of White journals, with all the resources at their command, has proved too strong. As Dr. W. E. B. DuBois remarked to the writer: "The difficulty is that in the United States you can buy for five cents a magazine for which the five cents don't meet the cost of the paper on which it is printed. Such a magazine has beautiful pictures, interesting stories, etc. Then even Colored people themselves shrink from a magazine which is an exposition of the bare and unpleasant truth. . . . The magazine will continue but whether the future reading and propaganda is to be through the magazine or books or through the weekly press is rather a question."

The best-known magazines circulating amongst Negroes are *Opportunity*, *The Crisis*, *The Christian Recorder*, *The Journal of Negro History*, *The Journal of Negro Education*, *The Southern Workman* (published by Hampton Institute) and *The Tuskegee Messenger* (published at Tuskegee).

To the writer one of the most interesting magazine ventures is that of *Opportunity*. It is the organ of the National Urban League and has its headquarters in Broadway, New York. It is a cultural paper of about 30 pp. monthly with illustrations, and seeks to give a large place to the work of young, Negro literary people. Every year it offers prizes amounting to \$200 for the best MSS. received. Its standard is high but seems to be

maintained in praiseworthy fashion under the energetic editorship of Mr. Elmer A. Carter. In conversation the latter admitted that there is sometimes difficulty in obtaining suitable material for its columns. "Our view-point and standard eliminate many, because they want to slap-bang, agitate and protest."

Opportunity has made a notable contribution towards the furtherance of a literary movement among Negroes. This movement gathered force while Dr. Charles S. Johnson was editor of the magazine. Encouragement was given to young Negro writers to seek out the beauties of their own life and to express them artistically. They were urged to go back to many aspects of Negro life which had been ignored through sensitiveness, such as folk-songs, folk poetry, Negro peasant life, and the crude but beautiful philosophy even of persons who had not had the benefit of education. The beauty of the Negro physique in its own right was also emphasized without reference to other standards. All of this aimed both at giving stimulus to Negro writers to express themselves and at increasing self-respect. The movement was aided by a series of contests in which *Opportunity* offered prizes to young writers. Special attention was given to the work of those who had not been heard of and who dwelt in the provinces. It was assumed that there was hidden away in the towns and country places outside New York talent which had not found adequate expression. Outstanding White writers were secured to serve as judges in the competitions. They came to contribute a form of cultural philanthropy. Prizes were offered for poetry, short stories, one-act plays, essays, etc. The competition was found to be exactly the thing that many people who had been vaguely interested in writing needed; they saw their first opportunity of being able to get their work before real authorities. Interest was stirred. The circulation of *Opportunity* grew. There was started an avalanche of expression which led those seeking to write to study the life about them, inspired concern for their own self-respect and for group improvement. Some ten persons of note in the literary world of to-day, including such as Countee Cullen, then found their public. The prizes were presented at a social meeting which served to bring together people who had been trying to write

with those already established in the field. The good work thus begun by *Opportunity* is continued to-day. It is, however, regrettable that the circulation of the magazine is under 10,000 copies per month. Of the subscribers about forty per cent are Whites.

Another specially interesting magazine venture amongst Negroes is *The Journal of Negro History*. This is published quarterly at Washington by the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, Inc., of which Dr. Carter G. Woodson was the founder and is its energetic director. An executive council on which prominent members of the White and Negro races serve is responsible for the Association's affairs. The Association was organized in 1915 and brought out the first issue of *The Journal of Negro History* on 1st January, 1916. It has published this scientific magazine regularly every quarter since.

The purposes of the Association, which the *Journal* aids, are described as being :

1. To collect sociological and historical data.
2. To publish books on Negro life and history.
3. To promote the study of the Negro through clubs and schools.
4. To bring about harmony between the races by interpreting the one to the other.

The achievements of the Association are claimed to be :

- (a) It has directed the attention of investigators to this neglected field.
- (b) It has extended the circulation of *The Journal of Negro History* into South America, Europe, Asia and Africa.
- (c) It has published nineteen volumes of articles and documents giving facts which are generally unknown.
- (d) It has produced twenty monographs on Negro life and history.
- (e) It has organized and stimulated the studies of local clubs and classes, which have done much to change the attitude of communities toward the Negro.
- (f) It has collected thousands of valuable manuscripts on the Negro which have been made accessible to the public in the Library of Congress.

(g) It has had ten young men trained for research in social science and for instruction in colleges and universities.

The Journal of Negro History is perhaps the most ambitious attempt among Negroes to conduct a learned journal. Methods of distribution aim at placing it only in the hands of those who will appreciate its purpose and profit by reading its contents. It is claimed that it reaches some 15,000 readers. For members the subscription is \$3 annually and for libraries and other institutions subscribing the charge is \$4 per year.

Keeping in view the special nature of the *Journal* it is interesting to learn that no great difficulty is experienced in obtaining suitable material. About one-fourth of the articles are paid for. It is also not uncommon to have special research conducted and paid for by the Association and the results published in the pages of the *Journal*. The work already published is considerable quantitatively. It will no doubt be of great value as source material for future historians.

A praiseworthy feature of the Association and its *Journal* is that it is so largely a Negro self-help movement, although White universities and colleges as well as individuals figure prominently in the subscription lists. The Association holds annual meetings at different centres when its aims are brought before the public. A Negro History Week is also organized annually, generally in the month of February, in many schools throughout the country. The objective of the latter is to secure for the study of Negro culture the same consideration as is given to other elements of the population in educating all the youth of America. In Negro History Week addresses are given on achievements of the Negro and an effort is made to arouse a keener appreciation of the contribution of the Negro to civilisation.

The Association, wisely directed, is calculated to have much influence in helping Negro historians to develop an objective view of historical movements. This is important, particularly when it is remembered, as Dr. A. A. Schomburg, the noted Negro bibliophile, has declared, "The blatant Caucasian racialist with his theories and assumptions of race superiority and dominance has in turn bred his Ethiopian counterpart—the rash and rabid amateur who has glibly tried to prove half of the world's

geniuses to have been Negroes and to trace the pedigree of nineteenth-century Americans from the Queen of Sheba. But fortunately to-day there is on both sides of a really common cause less of the sound of controversy and more of the dust of digging."

A notable magazine with outstanding influence amongst Negroes is *The Crisis* which was established in 1910 and for many years enjoyed the editorial supervision of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois. Many would put it as the foremost and most powerful of all Negro periodicals. In 1919 its circulation rose to 100,000 copies monthly. It is the official organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Artistically produced, with many features of literary interest, it is also noted for its strong advocacy of Negro civil and political rights. Its future, under new editorship, will be watched with interest by the public.

The oldest Negro Magazine—indeed the oldest Negro periodical of any kind—is the *Christian Recorder*, published at Philadelphia. It is the mouthpiece of the American Methodist Episcopal Church and as such contains general church news, religious articles, etc. It has been in existence since the 'forties of last century.

The Journal of Negro Education is edited by Dr. Charles Johnson at Howard University, Washington. It is a quarterly which has been in existence for only four years and is still of limited circulation. It is to be regretted that Negro teachers and educationists have not yet recognised the value of this organ.

The Southern Workman published at Hampton and *The Tuskegee Messenger* published at Tuskegee are intended chiefly for friends and past students of these institutions. Like all the magazines mentioned in this section, they are under Negro editorship.

NEWSPAPERS.

In Negro life the Negro newspaper has a large and influential place. The figures given vary, but it is a conservative estimate that some 300 periodicals, most of them weekly

newspapers, are printed and published under purely Negro auspices and circulated among the Negro people of the United States.

The history of the Negro newspaper begins with *Freedom's Journal* first published in 1827. The chief interest of the earliest papers was in the Negro's struggle against slavery and the struggle of the free Negroes for the rights of citizenship. The early papers were characterized by good literary form and were intended for the intellectual minority amongst the Negro group. After Emancipation newspapers suffered in regard to circulation because the issues that had kept them alive were settled. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century the foundations of the Negro newspaper press as we know it to-day were laid, and the years of this century have seen the full development of the new type.

The growth of literacy has greatly aided the growth of the newspaper press. Indeed nothing is more expressive of Negro educational progress than the rapid increase of Negro newspapers. An indication of this is found in the fact that in 1870 there were 10 Negro newspapers, in 1880 the number was 31, in 1890 it had risen to 154, in 1910 to 288, while Mr. F. G. Detweiler in his book *The Negro Press in the United States*, published in 1922, calculated that there were in the summer of that year 492 Negro periodicals. The *Negro Year-Book* of 1931-32 gives the number as 250 periodicals.

While the earliest papers published essays and interpreted the news from the point of view of the trained and educated classes, the modern papers interpret for the mass of the people the kind of thing the proprietors know the mass of the people want. They have copied many of the worst features of the lower class of white newspaper. The old journalism avoided the printing of anything that would damage the good name or morals of the race, and kept all scandal and personalities, however attractive from a sensational point of view the news might be, in the background. But the modern journalism deliberately indulges in sensational headlines and the reporting of crime. Another unpleasing feature of present-day publications is many of the advertisements that figure prominently on

newspaper pages. These often refer to chemical preparations that "will make the skin white" and offer other similar extravagant claims. Some of the advertisements are of the crudest kind.

Many cultured Negro people are ashamed of their newspapers. They recognize that the latter are reflecting the life and interests of the untutored Negro and are not guiding that life to a higher stage. They deplore that the interest of financial success has so largely displaced the interest of Negro advancement. They perceive the harm that is done by giving large space and prominent headlines on a front page to some sordid scandal of Negro family life, while a review of the latest book by a distinguished Negro author is relegated to a back page and given but a few lines. Yet they recognize that circulation depends on the Negro masses and not on the intellectual minority. Said a Negro editor to the writer, "Negro newspapers have to be exciting if they are to sell."

The influence of the modern Negro newspaper is deep and far-reaching. Colored people in America are going to their own papers for news and for guidance in their thinking. The Negro seems to have newly discovered his fourth estate, to have realised the extraordinary power of the Press. It is not too much to say that the Negro Press is the great instrument making for race solidarity. Mr. Emmett J. Scott who was special assistant to the Secretary of War and as such responsible for the welfare and morale of Colored people reported that an outstanding force that helped to win the war was the Negro Press. The influence of the Negro newspaper was unmistakably reflected in the emigration of Negroes from the South to the North in the war and post-war years. This emigration was largely stimulated by Northern newspapers giving glowing reports of labour conditions in the North as compared with the South. The trek that resulted greatly embarrassed Southern employers of labour, and various States passed laws making the distribution of certain Negro newspapers a punishable offence.

A secret of the growing influence of the Negro newspaper has been well expressed by Mr. F. G. Detweiler: "The life of his own group was never so exciting as now, and it is daily grow-

ing more so. Group consciousness is growing, various individuals are opening up new doors of racial activity, new adjustments with the White group are being demanded. The economic movements in both South and North—largely those involved in increased industrialism on the one hand and better farming on the other—and the shifting of population both from South to North and from the country to the city, added to the teasing uncertainty of present political tendencies, democratic agitations, international realignments and all these bring fresh zest every day to the Negro's appetite for news and discussion. Pictures, descriptions, and reports of others like himself are in demand."

Some of the most prominent Negro newspapers are *The New York Age*, *The Amsterdam News*, (New York), *The Afro-American* (Baltimore), *The Philadelphia Tribune*, *The Journal and Guide* (Norfolk, Va.), *The Kansas City Call*, *The Dallas Express*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Chicago Defender* and *The Atlanta Daily World*. The majority of these have qualified to be placed on the Audit Bureau of Information, which is always a sign of standing and stability. Several have nation-wide circulations.

While the format and general appearance of Negro newspapers vary, some of them compare favourably with the ordinary class of White newspaper in that the letterpress is pleasing, the matter attractively arranged, and the illustrations clear. Perhaps the best-known newspaper is the *Chicago Defender* which was established in 1905 under the editorship of Mr. R. S. Abbott, one of the ablest of Negro journalists, who still controls its policy. This weekly consists of 24 pages, well printed, profusely illustrated, and is sold for ten cents. It is published in four editions, known as the national, western, eastern and city respectively. It is printed on a Goss multiple press, requiring ten men to operate.

The cause of the existence of the Negro newspaper is found chiefly in its acting as a supplement to the White newspaper by the publication of items affecting Negroes such as seldom find a place in a White newspaper, viz., Negro social, church, school and sports news. These indeed are the prominent features of Negro newspapers. A foremost place is given to stories of

Negro achievement. Negro newspapers also, when they find an incident, say, of crime committed by Negroes unfairly reported, as they believe, by White newspapers, give their own version.

Repeatedly it was declared to the writer that Negroes read their own newspapers as supplementary to, and not as a substitute for, a White daily. Negroes belong to the same language group as the Whites, share in American industry and politics, and live in a dominantly White world in which they must be interested. They dare not give up reading the great American dailies on which they depend for world news and news affecting the general life of the United States. Again, many Negroes are more nationally conscious than racially conscious. Their constant aim and desire is the securing of full civil rights in the existing American regime. Here the newspapers of his own group serve the Negro. They voice his aspirations and complaints. They give him the opportunity to be articulate with freedom.

The foregoing considerations help to explain why there is only one Negro daily—*The Atlanta Daily World*. It is commonly contended that there is not sufficient news affecting Negroes to warrant the publication of a daily paper, that Negro dailies would be handicapped from the start because Negroes are reached by White advertisers through White papers, and that Negroes are not yet in a position to compete with White daily newspapers owing to the enormous capital and staff required. A further important consideration is that the Associated Press of America gives its franchise only to certain selected newspapers. This Press is a co-operative organisation of 1300 papers. It is the largest and potentially the most powerful news organisation in the world, and the cost of obtaining its services is beyond the resources of the Negro newspaper.

It was therefore with special interest that the writer visited the office of *The Atlanta Daily World*. If a daily could be published in Atlanta why not elsewhere? It was soon evident that the publication of this daily is due to special enterprise and to a combination of exceptional circumstances. Its publication is assisted by the fact that the Negro population of Atlanta is one-third of the whole population of the city, and so local adver-

tisers find it advantageous to seek to reach this large population of ninety thousand souls through their own daily. The syndicate which owns the *World*—the Scott Newspaper Syndicate—owns also the *Memphis World* and the *Birmingham World*—both semi-weeklies—and has connection with thirty-five other smaller papers, many of which are printed in the *Atlanta Daily World* office. Much of the same news serves all. *The Atlanta Daily World* generally consists of six pages. Its principal features are reports of Negro meetings, social news, crime, college news, sport, a leading article on some question closely affecting Negroes, a serial story and comic strips. On Sunday a Rotogravure section, giving photographs of prominent Negroes and events of local interest, is published. The cost of the paper is 5 cents per day or 20 cents weekly. It is deserving of remark that the editor declared the motivating idea behind the publishing of a daily to be that of working with progressive forces towards achievement and service.

The Negro press generally is served by Press Associations of their own group. The most notable among these is the Associated Negro Press of Chicago which was established in 1919. It has agents or correspondents in numerous cities all over the United States. Prominent Negroes living abroad also keep the Associated Negro Press informed of their doings. Thus it receives from these sources news items, articles, etc., which it prepares and releases to many of the principal Negro publications, and so ensures that news of interest to Negroes is promptly gathered and disseminated. The favourite news sought from the Associated Negro Press is news concerning racial progress, distinguished achievements of Colored people, and news which tells of the trials and tribulations they are suffering.

RELIGIOUS PUBLICATIONS.

In the Negro is found a deep spiritual vein. The "spirituals" which have come down from the days of slavery are only one of many witnesses to this. Among the group it still remains a question whether the pulpit, even occupied as it often is by untutored preachers, has not a wider and deeper influence than the Press. So competent an authority as Dr. James Dillard has

emphasized that among rural Negroes "the most important and potent influence is the country preacher. From him the masses receive their ideals of duty and conduct, of life and death. From him come all their ideas above and beyond the routine of daily life in the field and cabin. Through him, more than in any other way, the masses of Negroes can be influenced for better living."

It comes therefore as no surprise that there is much religious literature produced by and for Negroes. Indeed, although the Negro generally prefers to read the books that the White population read, there has grown up and been welcomed an extensive religious literature specially intended for the group. Particular attention has been given to the production of Sunday School and Bible Class helps, Church histories, hymn-books, and literature for the young.

The chief centre for religious publications under purely Negro auspices appears to be Nashville in Tennessee. Here one was met by three large religious publishing houses run solely by Negroes. Around one of them has gathered an atmosphere of romance. In 1859 there was sold on a slave auction block a Negro who came to bear the name of Richard Henry Boyd. The years that followed Emancipation set him on the road to higher things and finally he became a minister, though of scanty education. Towards the close of last century he sensed a need among the Negroes for religious literature suited to their capacity. And so in a room in Nashville he started a publishing business. The small apartment, eight feet by ten (preserved to-day with reverent care) was most scantily furnished. Despite the humble beginning, from the first the business prospered. To-day the staff numbers almost 150, and a block of seven buildings is required to house the firm which is now known as the National Baptist Publishing Board. The Board supplies practically every want in general church literature, but it makes a speciality of graded Sunday School publications. There are in all twenty different departments. The amount of business done may be gauged from the fact that sometimes as many as 2000 letters are found in one day's incoming mail. There are 97,000 name plates in the firm's addressograph. Over half a million periodicals are printed every quarter. The gross

receipts for 1933, despite the depression which has swept America, totalled 270,000 dollars (£54,000). The literature published goes all over the United States, to South and Central America, Mexico, Canada, the Philippine and Hawaiian Islands, the Greater and Lesser Antilles, and even as far afield as Europe, Africa and Asia. It was remarked by the present Secretary of the Board that considerable difficulty is experienced in obtaining suitable writers for the various publications, as seldom has anyone been trained for such work: "They finish from the best Colleges and have not the slightest idea how to write a story or a Sunday School lesson." It was further declared that for Sunday School literature women had proved themselves better.

In Nashville there are two other similar publishing houses, one known as the National Baptist Publishing Board (Incorporated) and the other as the Sunday School Union of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The former has an extraordinarily fine suite of buildings, and in connection with the latter an aged minister's home and other social ventures are financed from the profits. A very noteworthy feature of the Nashville Negro publishing houses is that they deal chiefly in multitudes of small orders which come by post from all over the land. They are literally supported by the cents of the common people.

Other religious publishing under solely Negro auspices was met at the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Charlotte (North Carolina), at the African Methodist Episcopal Book Concern, Philadelphia, which was founded in 1818 and which publishes *The Christian Recorder*, the oldest Negro periodical in the country, and under the auspices of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, New York. This Council takes a wide view of its functions and publishes pamphlets on such subjects as, "Do Your Best Every Day on a Piece of Land," "Land Ownership by Negro Farmers," etc. The American Bible Society, with headquarters in New York, has special agencies among the Colored people at Atlanta (Georgia), Charlotte (North Carolina), Cleveland (Ohio), and Houston (Texas). These agencies are all under the control of Colored ministers. Reports for 1933 revealed a circulation of 162,489 volumes of the scriptures through these agencies.

THE UNIVERSITIES AND LITERATURE FOR THE NEGRO.

It has been found in the United States that one of the best approaches to the race problem is through the study of sociology on a university standard. Thus at various universities there are strong departments of sociology working in close conjunction with the departments of economics and education. Such departments generally deal with matters affecting all sections of the population including the Negro. It is a truism that questions affecting race relations, Negro land tenure, Negro housing, the adjustment of Negroes to urban life, are largely sociological in character. The aim of the departments on this side is to bring to the investigation of Negro life the advantage of the scientific method of approach and study, and to develop a more realistic body of knowledge concerning the Negro and concerning race relations. To attain these ends a great deal of research has been made into the Negro's past as well as his present day conditions, and so in not a few fields the Negro is presented as he really is.

One of the most impressive efforts along the above mentioned lines is that being made by members of the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina. The Institute was founded in 1924 and has on its staff several professors and research workers. It deals with all types of questions affecting both the White and the Colored sections, economic and industrial, historical and regional culture studies, the Negro and folk backgrounds, social problems and social policy. The Institute has been supported largely from grants by the Rockefeller Trust. Various books have been published by the Institute and some have been published through other channels with the help of the Institute. Some of the books may be mentioned as showing the variety of the studies undertaken : *The Negro and his Songs : A Study of Typical Negro Songs in the South* by Howard B. Odum and Guy B. Johnson ; *Folk Culture on St. Helena Island, South Carolina* by Guy B. Johnson ; *Negro Family Life* by Ernest R. Groves ; *The Tragedy of Lynching* by Arthur F. Raper.

Similar work is being done at Fisk University where recent volumes by members of the Faculty have borne the titles: *Differential Mortality* by Elbridge Sibley; *The Free Negro Family* by E. Franklin Frazier; *The Economic Status of the Negroes* by Charles S. Johnson; *The Southern Urban Negro as a Consumer* by Paul K. Edwards.

The publication of the results of research work in some of the universities is aided by the enterprise of presses under the auspices of the University. Very noteworthy in this respect is the University of North Carolina Press, some of whose publications have already been mentioned in connection with the Institute for Research in Social Science at that University. The University of Chicago Press has also been responsible in recent years for such books as *The Shadow of the Plantation* by Charles S. Johnson; *The Negro Press in the United States* by F. G. Detweiler; *The Negro in Chicago · A Report by the Chicago Commission on Race Relations*; *The Negro Family in Chicago* by E. Franklin Frazier. Other universities such as Columbia and Harvard have also been responsible for studies concerning the Negro. Atlanta University formerly published a series of books and pamphlets under the general title, "Studies of Negro Problems," but these are not now undertaken.

The university presses named are to be highly commended for publishing books which it is well known will have only a limited sale owing to their special nature; although in some cases after several years the number of copies sold remains fewer than 500 the university press authorities are unconcerned and frankly confess that they are publishing not for the present but for the future. They have the satisfaction that the influence of the volumes is sometimes out of all proportion to the sales. In some cases books are published by university departments through regular commercial channels, the department concerned guaranteeing the publisher the sale of a definite number of copies.

RACE RELATIONS LITERATURE.

Thanks largely to the leadership of Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones and others, recent years have witnessed throughout the United States a growing interest in different quarters in the subject of

race relations, particularly as they affect White and Black. Race riots during the war and post-war years helped to accelerate the movement. Numbers of the best men and women of both sides felt that the position was becoming intolerable and that the races must get together with a view to mutual understanding, sympathy and service. From organisations so formed considerable quantities of literature have come.

The most notable society of the kind is the Race Relations Commission of Atlanta which was founded some sixteen years ago and whose chief officers are Dr. W. W. Alexander and Dr. R. B. Eleazar. Early in the Commission's history a press service was inaugurated. At the time of its founding the traditional attitude of newspapers to the Negro was one chiefly of amusement and tolerance. Publicity was given in newspaper columns to the comic or the criminal Negro. Papers intended for White readers seldom thought of Negroes in terms of dignified or constructive news. The attempt was made by the Commission to apprise particularly Southern newspapers of the possibility of news of a constructive kind affecting Negroes. Some 500 daily papers were supplied with worthwhile items, and there were occasionally releases to 2000 weekly papers as well as women's journals, educational journals, college papers and religious periodicals. By such means millions of readers were reached. The items chiefly supplied were stories of Negro achievement and character, descriptions of incidents showing inter-racial co-operation, information about the conditions under which Negroes lived and which were crying for reform, special articles against lynching and so on. The service was performed not merely for White papers but also for Negro papers; the latter, it is said, were found to be perhaps as unfair as the White side; they stressed the crimes of White people against Negroes with very little attention to the better things that were going on between the two races.

It is interesting to note that the press service of the Commission is not so active as formerly because White and Colored papers have largely taken over the work. Newspapers have come to see fields of news that hitherto they were ignorant of or ignored. The Associated Press of America is also now looking

for these items and supplying them to their large clientele. Local papers all over the country are taking more interest in Negro affairs and treating them with dignity. Almost all newspapers are united in their opposition to lynching and legal injustice suffered by Negroes.

The lessened activity of the press service has left the Commission more free for fixing attention on the educational processes of the schools and colleges. Bulletins and pamphlets are sent to numerous educational establishments. In harmony with the recommendations of a body of educationists gathered in conference there have been prepared units of study or supplementary material in the fields of history, literature, civics and other public school subjects. Endeavour is made not to supply propaganda but to give facts concerning the Negro's part in the life of America—his literature, art, etc. The writer was informed that new and revised courses of civics and citizenship are particularly needed. Existing books generally give little or nothing to the Negro's credit. Negro leadership is displayed as only insurgent. The reconstruction period of American history is often described in a manner calculated to give children wrong ideas. The Negro freedman is set over against his White master and represented as bringing in an orgy of extravagance, brutality and indecency. In most civics books no reference is made to inter-racial problems; there is no suggestion that an obligation lies on the majority group for the education of the minority. The constant aim of the Commission through its literature has been to correct erroneous impressions and to give a balanced factual treatment. Special attention is directed by the Commission to teachers. Among them there were recently circulated thousands of copies of a pamphlet on "Education in Racial Adjustment." Another group whom it is sought to influence is church workers of all kinds. Mrs. Ames, a woman officer of the Commission, concentrates on groups of church women. The Southern Methodist Church, for example, has about 6000 such groups. In every community in the South these groups now exist. Generally each one has a committee of women on race relations whose business it is to inform itself about conditions and to pass the information to others, to co-operate with

Negro women in the community, and to assist wherever possible in working out the problems that need attention in improving schools, establishing day nurseries, looking into housing systems and such-like tasks. Once a year these societies have a programme of race relations and the Commission at Atlanta sends them printed material to assist them in arriving at the facts.

Other bodies besides the Race Relations Commission of Atlanta are engaged in similar activities. The Rosenwald Fund Committee have been working on the treatment of the Negro in text-books. They took up with text-book publishers and State educational superintendents concerning the revision of text-books in order to have the Negro more fairly treated. In doing so it was found that publishers often did not know what was fact and what was propaganda in their publications. A movement is now on foot for the preparation of a set of readers suitable to all classes.

Some notable volumes have been published recently with a view to improving race understanding and relationships. Among those may be mentioned *Adjustment of Whites and Negroes in the United States* by Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson (D. C. Heath and Co., New York), *Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* by Horace M. Bond (Prentice Hall Co.), *Negro White Adjustment* by Paul E. Baker (Association Press, New York), *Life on the Negro Frontier* by George R. Arthur (Association Press, New York). The last mentioned describes Negro urban life consequent on the flocking of hundreds of thousands of Negroes to the North. Attempts have also been made by White writers to interest particularly the youth of their own group in the Negroes' struggle by the publication of brief biographies of prominent Colored men and women. Miss Sara Estelle Haskin's *The Handicapped Winners* and Ralph W. Bullock's *In Spite of Handicaps* are typical of this.

Besides numerous other societies the Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes publish through magazines, pamphlets and their respective press services information of value to those seeking to improve race relations. A startling but helpful service is that of the Tuskegee Institute which sends out periodically a record of

lynchings for the whole country. This is always given nationwide publicity.

The literature published by church and missionary societies on behalf of racial understanding is worthy of more than passing notice. The official organs of the various churches are declared to be giving more space to-day than ever before to the subject of racial adjustment. It is not uncommon to find in church magazines, both of the South and North, articles devoted to aspects of the racial situation and stories in which Negroes figure as the heroes.

The majority of the churches in the United States and Canada combine in maintaining a Missionary Education Department with headquarters at 150, Fifth Avenue, New York. Under the auspices of the Department each year study is made of some part of the missionary world including the work amongst Negroes. Five text-books for various ages are published annually for group study. At the time of the writer's visit, Dr. Charles S. Johnson and Miss Ina C. Brown, a prominent Southern inter-racial worker, were engaged in writing books on the Negro for this series. Such books are assured of a large circulation.

The Missionary Herald (Boston) which was formerly the official organ of the American Board of Missions and which, having been established in 1818, is the oldest continued publication in the United States is now a magazine devoted to both the home and the foreign missionary work of the Congregational Church. The change thus made in 1934 is indicative of the growing conviction that race relations and race uplift in America cannot be divorced from similar interests in more distant lands, but that both indeed are one. In this connection it is worthy of remark that the Association Press—the Y.M.C.A. publishing house in New York—made recently a major change in policy. Formerly it was a press purely devoted to religious books and specialising in devotional literature. It is now, of set purpose, publishing considerably on social and inter-racial affairs.

AUTHOR AND PUBLISHER.

In general the Negro author, especially if his concern is the production of literature in its truest sense, seeks to publish through a White publisher. Apart from the publishing houses of the large Negro churches, whose concern of course is the publication of religious literature, there are few Negro publishers. The most ambitious attempt at publishing met by the writer among Negroes was the Associated Publishers Inc. of Washington. This firm, although under a separate board, is closely connected with the Negro History Association. As in the case of that Association, Dr. Carter G. Woodson is its moving spirit. The Associated Publishers claim to seek to gather in the form of text-books and popular treatises every phase of Negro life and history. The objective is declared to be to make possible the publication and circulation of valuable books on the Negro not acceptable to most publishers. "Our aim," remarked Dr. Woodson, "is not to produce works that have only a temporary value but to publish books that will sell as well twenty years hence." The books already published are largely of a historical and sociological nature. They bear such titles as, *The Negro in our History* by Carter G. Woodson; *Slave Trading in the Old South* by Frederic Bancroft; *Anti-Slavery Sentiment in American Literature Prior to 1865* by L. D. Turner; *The Negro in South Carolina during the Reconstruction* by A. A. Taylor. Curiously enough the volumes issued by this press, which stands for a Negro self-help movement, are printed and bound by White firms.

A great difficulty for the Negro author is the lack of demand for books among his own group. It is true there are 12,000,000 Negroes to draw upon in the United States, but the majority of them are poor. Again, while most Negroes can now read and write such ability does not mean that they buy and read books. The actual reading public in search of good literature is small—much smaller, Negroes allege, than it ought to be. Yet it is contended that there is a growing demand, as a comparison between present-day circumstances and those of twenty years ago reveals. Still the fact remains that the Negro author who

seeks to give to the world his work in poetry, the novel or kindred forms is largely dependent on the White publisher and White readers.

It was freely admitted by Negro literary men with whom the writer conversed that the Negro as such meets no difficulty in having his work published provided it has sufficient merit. The verdict of Dr. Du Bois on this aspect was of special interest: "The Negro author has no difficulty in getting his book published. A publisher immediately asks 'Can I sell this book in the ordinary channels of trade?' If it is an extremely controversial book on the side of the Negro he will conclude that he cannot do it. If it is a book in literature which appeals chiefly to the aspirations of the Negro he may hesitate. He will not ordinarily bring out a book of Negro poetry except it is a book that is going to appeal to his White clientele. Countee Cullen had three books of poetry published by a White publisher within a short time. With regard to novels, if the novel is entertaining it will obtain publication. But a book like my last novel was published only because other books of mine had been accepted. If you get a Colored author who is unknown and who feels intensely along racial lines, he is to have difficulty. Of course in this he is the same as any other radical."

The work of Negro authors has been included in such eminent magazines as *The Atlanta Monthly* and in O'Brien's *Prize Collection of the Best Stories* and the O'Henry Memorial Award volumes. In a volume of twenty-five *Prize Sermons* published by Macmillan there was included a sermon by a Negro preacher, Raymond Henderson. A very notable series of anthologies begun in 1913 and continued annually since has been published by a Negro poet and critic, William Stanley Braithwaite. Braithwaite's own work is unique in that he has written no poetry motivated or coloured by race. He was one of the pioneer forces in stimulating the "revival" of poetry in America which began about 1912. Some years ago he was honoured at a public function convened specially for this purpose in New York by a representative gathering of American authors.

A BUREAU OF NEGRO LITERATURE.

The more investigation is made concerning literature by and for the Negro people of the United States, the deeper becomes the conviction of the valuable work being done in many quarters in this connection by universities, by societies whose primary aim is Negro advancement, by inter-racial, church and missionary bodies and by commercial firms responsible for the publication of books, newspapers and other periodicals. All over the land various groups are helping to set forth Negro life as it was and is, to open doors for the Negro author, and to stimulate in the Negro people a love of literature.

Nevertheless closer acquaintance with the situation deepens also the conviction that efforts hitherto made have suffered because of lack of co-operation among those interested, and by failure to co-ordinate the work being done. Historical and sociological investigators work mostly without reference to other research workers in the same field; the Negro author anxious to obtain advice as to literary form or the publishing of his MS. knows not where to turn or finds himself shut up to ordinary commercial channels; while endeavours to instil and develop a love of literature have lacked the stimulus of a large concerted plan.

It has seemed to the writer that one of the pressing needs of to-day is for the setting-up of some form of organisation—call it a Bureau of Negro Literature or by any other name—which would bring co-ordination and correlation into the effort of to-day and which would evolve a more masterly and more united plan for research into Negro life, would give a helping hand to authors, particularly in the early stages of their career, and would tackle problems of the production and distribution of literature suited to the needs of the Negro people. Such a body might bring together trained sociologists and other scientific workers who are making it their business to investigate Negro life in the past and present. Mutual consideration of subjects requiring investigation, the sharing of difficulties experienced, and the assignment of tasks to particular groups or individuals, would all be productive of good. No less important a function

of such an organisation would be to advise and encourage the Negro author. The discovery by *Opportunity* of literary attainment in unlikely places is suggestive of large untapped resources. A prominent body with this as one of its main functions would undoubtedly discover unrecognised literary power in many quarters.

In close association with the Bureau—probably indeed as part of its work—there should be a press and publishing house specializing in books and other publications by and for Negro people. The establishment of such an organization would no doubt be attended by difficulties, but none of these appear to be insuperable. One of the obstacles would be the rugged individualism which is a feature of American life. As a Negro editor declared to the writer, “American people enjoy going individually. They have not learned the importance of running together.” A venture somewhat along the lines mentioned above now in existence has not realised the hopes that were entertained of it partly because its head finds team-work difficult. Co-ordination of effort in research and publishing would presuppose agreement of policy and aims, but some leading investigators of to-day would not accept the norms that seem satisfactory to others. Yet the bringing together of a sufficiently strong body sharing similar aims and with agreement as to methods seems not an impossible task. Fisk University, with its Chair of Creative Literature and its admirable sociological department, has to-day considerable co-operation with the Universities of North Carolina and Chicago, with the Inter-Racial Commission in Atlanta and in a lesser degree with the Atlanta University and the Tuskegee Institute.

A further difficulty would be the financial one. Such a Bureau and publishing house would require a large capital for staff, plant and advertising. The risk of loss might be great. Yet when one considers the large sums gladly given by philanthropic agencies for the foundation and up-keep of colleges for the training of Negro teachers and industrial workers one wonders why a portion has not been set aside for the establishment of an organization whose special business would be the advancement of Negro literature. Vast numbers amongst the

Negro people are being taught to read, as the growth of literacy shows. It is surely not less important to place in their hands books from the pen of those who, through belonging to their own group, best know their life and its needs. The Negro people are poor. Books in the United States are costly. A publishing house that would specially cater for Negro purses would be a boon. It is the kind of service which is being performed by mission presses amongst the under-privileged in other continents.

A consideration mentioned to the writer was that the Negro author of ability can meet the demand of White publishers so that a special channel is not a necessity. As an off-set to this it may be stated that many authors must just fall short of accepted standards and these with a little guidance would be set right. Many too must remain inarticulate through ignorance of procedure in seeking a publisher.

The writer was interested to find that in various quarters the establishment of a Negro Bureau of Literature was strongly favoured. Said a prominent sociologist whose books on Negro subjects have commanded a wide sale, "We do need somewhere a body for the specific publication of Negro works. It would require vision, imagination, leadership and a critical mind." It is the conviction of some that a great deal more historical work and scientific study of the Negro problem is needed. This will be explored satisfactorily only by co-operative effort. The publication of a Negro encyclopaedia is greatly to be desired and its preparation would keep investigators and writers busy. The development of literature as pure art is greatly needed amongst the Negro group. At present it is possible for Negro writers to obtain recognition in so far as they write for the entertainment and interest of White people. But the Negro who wishes to write about himself and his problems and to reveal the whole spiritual experience which his people are going through must often remain silent. There ought to come into operation some means that will encourage that kind of author and so make him articulate. Some authors indeed have departed from their best and most characteristic vein in order to ensure publication. They have suppressed their truest feelings in order to please the

Whites on whom they rely for sales. It is contended that judging from certain publications by Negro authors the outsider would say, "These people are contented," but in this respect Negro literature is not reflecting the actual discontent and it will not do so until the group has its own influential means of publication.

The locus of a bureau of Negro literature would require careful consideration. To the visitor from South Africa who is accustomed to the efforts of Institutions like Morija and Lovedale to foster a literature movement amongst the Bantu, it comes as a surprise to find that similar American Institutions, such as Hampton and Tuskegee, give so little lead to the production of literature amongst Negroes. At these Institutions for example there is seemingly little attempt to

- (a) Give Negro authors a chance to become articulate through book publishing as distinct from magazine articles ;
- (b) Co-ordinate efforts for the publication of the work of Negro authors, and other kindred interests ;
- (c) Stimulate reading amongst the growingly literate Negro people through a series of books produced under their own guidance.

It may be contended that the Institutes are trade schools and so not interested in literary affairs. Yet on the other hand they are placing the emphasis more and more on academic studies. The founding of a library school at Hampton is also proof that it has interest in the tasks for which a bureau of Negro literature would stand. The large plant for the training of printers at both Hampton and Tuskegee with no commensurate emphasis on the production of literature, seems disproportionate.

Perhaps, however, the best centre for such a bureau would be Fisk or Atlanta University.

METHODS OF DISTRIBUTION.

The methods of distributing literature in the United States are in general the methods that have proved themselves useful in European lands. Books find their way to the public

through the large publishers and book-sellers. This indeed is one of the causes why Negro authors of standing seek to publish almost invariably through White firms. As Dr. W. E. B. Du-Bois remarked to the writer, "There are unusual difficulties of distribution. If I should publish not through a White publisher I would have difficulty in getting Colored people to know that I have published such a book. It becomes known only through the Negro press which is a weekly press and which does not discriminate about books or give them a large place. In the second place where is the Colored man or bookseller to get the book? Booksellers know only well-known firms."

Almost the only books intended for Negro readers which have effectively reached the Negro group without White aid are books which have been sponsored by the great Negro Churches. Many religious books by Negro authors and published by Negro presses are disposed of at church conferences. By rule of their respective churches ministers must attend these conferences. At them they are urged to purchase literature and to push its sales in their congregations. The American Bible Society depends in part on personal visits by their agents to ministers and Sunday School superintendents. To multiply such visits motor caravans are used in the Atlanta and Houston divisions while colporteurs are also employed on a commission basis. But even the Bible Society superintendents find their most prolific source of sales promotion to lie in attendance at church conferences.

Some Negro authors have been successful in distributing their own books through personal appeal. They give lectures and arrange for their books to be on sale at the close. The Associated Publishers Inc. of Washington, which is closely connected with the Negro History Association, has found the system of personal canvass a fruitful one when in the hands of good agents.

Not a few books published under the auspices of universities are disposed of by a system of appeal through the mail. The Fisk University Social Science Department, for example, has carefully built up lists of persons comprising about four-fifths of the college graduates of the country who are likely to be readers.

A new book published under the auspices of the Department is made known by letter to individuals, organisations, schools, school libraries, etc.

For a time the *Crisis* magazine staff acted as sellers of books which the magazine recommended and in this way disposed of a fair number of volumes. If this could have been emphasized more it is probable that sales would have been considerably increased.

With respect to periodicals, the chief means of distribution are by mail and through school and college youths who act as agents on a commission basis. At a number of the best known Negro newspaper offices it was declared that the principal channel of distribution is by mail. Distribution of periodicals through boys and young men is a notable feature of American life. Many youths are enabled to pass through college by means of the money they earn in this spare-time occupation. Even the sons of well-to-do families are found in large numbers doing this work. They are encouraged to take it up because of the experience it brings in handling finance, in learning business methods and in dealing with men. It is not uncommon to offer a prospective subscriber a periodical say for three years at a cost of $3\frac{1}{2}$ dollars per year when the ordinary annual subscription is $4\frac{1}{2}$ dollars. The subscriber may pay a dollar down and the rest on delivery of the magazine. The dollar so paid is given to the school boy or student who obtained the new subscription.

It was the writer's privilege to see at work one of the representatives of the Macfadden Publication Inc. of 1926 Broadway, New York City, the publishers of *Liberty* and other magazines which have an enormous sale not only among Whites but also among Negroes in the United States. The sales representative in question was responsible for the oversight of 225 school boys who were acting as part time agents. The boys solicit new subscribers to whom they afterwards regularly deliver the periodicals. To encourage the boys the firm has a system of rewards in the shape of coupons given for successes in furthering sales, which coupons may be exchanged for watches, bicycles and other prizes. No fee or government tax is payable by the boys many of whom are domiciled in country towns where other

periodicals are not numerous and where many distractions in the form of places of amusement do not exist. The boys are visited at regular intervals by the firm's sales representative who is responsible for seeing that suitable boys are employed and for their guidance in the work. It is worthy of note that the Macfadden Publications Inc. have laid down the following rules for boys acting as agents :

1. No boy must be under ten years of age ;
2. No girl must be employed under any circumstances ;
3. There must be no street sales ;
4. Sales should be confined to residential districts.

Some periodicals have their distribution facilitated because of their being the official organ of an association. *Crisis* for example is the mouth-piece of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. This Association has nearly 400 branches in different parts of the country all of which are potential distributing agencies.

A novel method of distribution was noted in the city of Washington D.C. There the "Honor" System of exposing papers has considerable vogue. In many streets are stands on which bundles of newspapers are deposited. Each stand is marked "The Honor System. Pay three cents." No one attends the stands. If a newspaper is desired the customer puts the specified coins in a slot and lifts the paper. The public are put on their honour not to remove the newspapers without depositing the money due. The fact that the stands are found in numerous streets and that they have been in use for years witnesses to the success of a novel method of sale and incidentally to the honesty of the public.

LIBRARY SERVICE.

In stimulating a love for literature library services in most countries play a foremost part. In the United States of America, however, particularly in the South, library services are generally quite inadequate. This applies both to White and Colored people, but naturally the latter, as a comparatively small and poor group without much political or social influence, suffer heavier disability.

The American Library Association reported the use of library books in the United States in 1926 to average 2.13 per per individual.

Some recent figures relative to the South are of interest. In 13 states of the South there is a population of 33,104,818. To meet the needs of this population there are 485 public libraries with 11,841,464 people in their service areas. There are thus 21,263,354 people, or 64 per cent of the population without public libraries in their communities. Out of a total of 1284 counties in the South only 94 are contributing to the support of county library service. There are 788 counties with no public libraries of any kind within their borders. In all these counties only 72 public libraries serve Negroes.

How badly the Negro fares may be judged from the fact that, according to a statement made by Miss Tommie Dora Barker, American Library Association Regional Field Agent for the South, in the *Library Journal* of February 1931, 89 per cent of the Negroes in the South are without access to public library service. Even Negro schools are woefully deficient in libraries. In South Carolina it was recently found that of Negro elementary schools 91.1 per cent, or 2,123 of the 2,330 schools, were entirely without library books for the use of their pupils. Even the Negro High Schools of the State reported that 79.5 per cent, or 171 of the 215 High Schools, had no school library books.

Not a few forces are at work seeking to improve the situation. The American Library Association, with headquarters at Chicago, has recently been seeking to do intensive work to promote the extension of library facilities in the southern region. It is also becoming increasingly conscious of its duty towards the Negro group. Whereas some years ago the idea of providing library facilities for Negroes was frowned upon by many librarians in the South, this attitude is becoming uncommon. There is still however much land to be possessed and the only causes for satisfaction meantime are that a duty has been recognised, a beginning made and that the problems are being tackled through the co-ordinated activities of an influential body with central headquarters from which the whole country can be served.

The Rosenwald Fund has been of immense assistance to

rural school and other libraries belonging to both races. The Fund offered one-third of the cost of providing a library if certain conditions were met. From the beginning of its operations on behalf of libraries in 1929 till 15th May 1933 the Fund gave one-third of the cost of 1,330 school libraries in 1,056 Negro schools, located in 632 counties of 16 Southern states, costing in all \$162,510.63. Of this number 1,002 were for elementary schools and 328 for high schools. The Fund suffered in the years 1931-33 from the effects of the depression but was assisted by the Carnegie Corporation making an appropriation of \$100,000 to enable the Fund to carry through a programme of demonstration of intensive library services on a county-wide basis. This demonstration was carried on in nine counties of six Southern states. A critical survey of the counties that benefited from the Rosenwald benefactions has been made with a view to arriving at an estimate of results. The Fund has also published lists of books suitable for elementary and high school libraries. One list gives the titles of a \$120 library containing 155 books. Transport charges are paid by the Fund in addition to its share of one-third cost of the library.

The Carnegie Corporation has taken much interest in library services for the Negro people. In the Northern states Negroes have a part in the public library service, though sometimes it is more convenient for them to have their own branches. In the South separate branch libraries for the Colored people are the rule. In cities like Atlanta and Nashville are found Carnegie branch libraries for Colored people. The Auburn Branch Library in Atlanta may be taken as typical of such. It was opened in 1921. While said to be inadequate for the whole Negro population of Atlanta numbering 90,075, it is adequate for the section of the city in which it stands. At the time of visiting, 603 adults and 603 juveniles had lending cards—a curious coincidence in numbers. The Library serves also as a reading room but its usefulness is limited in this respect because with the existing staff it can be open only from noon till 8 p.m. A considerable section of the Library is devoted to books by and about Negroes and these are greatly in demand. It was stated by the Librarian—a Negro woman who appeared unusually competent

—that two new copies of Booker Washington's *Up From Slavery* which had recently been put on the shelves would be completely worn out at the end of twelve months. Books of sociology, literature, science, American history and etiquette are all much in request. The staff, aided by readers, submits lists of books desired to the Central Carnegie Library in the city and the latter acts as buyer for all branches. It was pleasing to be told "We have no difficulty in getting books about the Negro. Even out-of-print books on Negro affairs they seek for us." Special features of the Library are "a story hour" held for children once a week; pupils of the fourth to seventh grades in the local high school come to the library twice a year to receive lessons on the care of books, use of a library, how to use reference books and kindred topics; a great deal of reference work is done with students in the evening; during the summer school vacations reading clubs are formed in the library which children on holiday attend and for which they are given certificates to show what they have done in the reading clubs, in order to obtain credits for them in their respective schools. In the auditorium of the library the writer found gathered under the auspices of the Adult Education Board a class of some eight elderly and middle-aged matrons learning to read and write. It was admitted that in this library a good many books are lost each year chiefly through children of poorer homes taking them out and failing to return them when the family moves on to some other dwelling. Amongst children of better class homes this difficulty is not experienced to the same degree.

Similar conditions were found in the Carnegie Library Negro branch at Nashville, Tennessee, though the latter Library seemed less well equipped. Few new books had been supplied in recent years. There was the same great demand for books about Negroes and by Negro authors. It was stated that James Weldon Johnson's *Along This Way* which was secured for the Library in November 1933 was never on the shelf till November 1934. At one time there was a list of sixty readers waiting for it. This Library holds a Book Week once a year. During Book Week the Negro schools of Nashville send down their pupils in classes to make acquaintance with the Library and its use. About

3,000 pupils are thus dealt with annually. Children in various schools are asked to prepare posters suitable for advertising Book Week. To encourage them in this, some townsmen offer prizes. The writer was shown some good specimens of the posters drawn and painted by the children.

Some of the most efficient libraries for Negroes are housed in Negro schools and colleges. Excellent libraries are found at Atlanta University, Tuskegee, Hampton and other centres. At these places pupils are taught in classes the use of a library, the parts of a book, how to look after books, how to use reference books, etc. The lectures given by the Librarian are accepted as part of the English course. In the Atlanta High School which is connected with the University there is a Library Club open to girls intending to become librarians. At the time of the writer's visit the club numbered 20 members. In the Tuskegee Library seating accommodation is provided for one-fourth of the large student body. In addition to the main reading room there are rooms for grammar school children, for those engaged in the agricultural and trades section, for the display of periodicals and newspapers, and for books reserved by instructors. Four of the Negro colleges recently shared in a large book grant made by the Carnegie Corporation, the sum given to the four amounting to \$114,000. Thanks to a grant of \$25,000 from the Corporation, Tuskegee Library contains some 42,000 volumes. There is a staff consisting of a chief librarian and seven assistants with about ten student assistants. The Library assumes as part of its duty not only the holding of Book Week in early November but the celebration of Negro History Week in February. In the former there are brought out new and stimulating books in which it is believed the students will be particularly interested, while in the latter there are exhibited new books on Africa, old MSS., African curios, costumes, war implements, carvings and such like. Attention is given to the history of the Negro in Africa and America and race pride and interest in Africa are encouraged.

Library development in many schools is being stimulated by the demand of State education authorities that before schools are rated and accredited their libraries must be in some degree adequate to the pupils' needs. More and more it is being

emphasized that the library is an indispensable part of the apparatus of education.

It deserves to be mentioned in passing that Negro rural dwellers are sometimes reached by means of a travelling library in the form of a bookmobile. Some of these wagons carry as many as 2,000 books. They are so compactly arranged that there is sufficient room for selection of books by fifteen persons at a time. Generally the bus takes a different road each day, stopping for an hour at each appointed station. It is extremely popular with children who wait its arrival with eagerness and enthusiasm. By such means large areas are served with a minimum of expense and a maximum of convenience. It is a safe prediction that coming days will see considerable development along this line in the more sparsely populated regions of the country which do not warrant the installation of regular branch libraries.

At several centres there are notable collections of books by and about Negroes. In this respect Hampton, Tuskegee, Fisk and the Y.M.C.A. College at Nashville, are specially to be commended. The last mentioned Library, thanks to Dr. Willis D. Weatherford, is open to students of all races, and during two recent years fifty-seven theses or dissertations on race problems were completed by White students with the aid of the Library. The most interesting collection of books on Negro matters is found, however, at the Carnegie Library, 135th Street, New York City. Dr. A. A. Schomburg, a Negro book enthusiast, had built up over forty years what came to be known as the Schomburg Collection. Some 7,000 items in number, it is probably the most extensive collection in the world of books by and about the Negro. Some of the books and MSS. date back to the sixteenth century. The collection was bought by the Carnegie Corporation in 1926 and presented to the Library mentioned which stands in the heart of Harlem, the Negro quarter of New York. The Collection is now used purely as a reference library, being housed in a flat separate from the main public library. It has been added to but the additions are kept separate. An average of 800 to 900 people, many of them research students, use it each month. This unique Library is

stimulating a great deal of race consciousness and race pride among the Negro people.

A most interesting and promising development of recent years has been the establishment at Hampton Institute of a School of Librarians. The School was founded through the generosity of the Carnegie Corporation and with the approval and co-operation of the American Library Association and General Education Board. Candidates for admission to the Library School must have had at least one year of college training. They are given instruction in the technique of running a library, but in addition they are introduced to the literature available and most suited to their people, particularly the young, and led to grasp the importance and privilege of inspiring others with the love of reading.

At the time of the writer's visit (October 1934) the School had been in existence for nine years, having been opened in 1925. There had graduated from it 96 individuals. A record had been kept of their after careers and it was found that 84 were employed in library posts in 19 different States (mostly in the South and East), in the district of Columbia and in the West Indies. Only four were unemployed. Sometimes the library post held carried also teaching duties but this was not regarded as an ideal arrangement. The librarians are mostly employed in college libraries, as public library work is so undeveloped. It was admitted that probably the saturation point had been reached and that now it was more difficult to obtain posts for graduates.

The salaries of Hampton-trained librarians were averaging in 1928-29 from \$100 to \$120 a month. Owing to the depression this is believed to have dropped to about \$75 a month. Through the Hampton Library School the profession of librarian has been given dignity and status amongst Colored people in the United States.

The head of the Hampton Library School (Miss Florence R. Curtis) spends about a third of her time in field work, visiting libraries in various parts of the country in order to help and encourage those in charge. Every two years she visits the

majority of the important Negro schools and colleges and renders reports to the Carnegie Corporation.

The Huntington Library at Hampton, containing over 50,000 volumes, is used as the School laboratory.

The School of Librarians performs a variety of functions outside the training of its students, with a view to stimulating the love of reading amongst Negro people generally. It has staged at Hampton, for example, a rural school library demonstration of a hundred books. The demonstration was purposely made of the most simple and inexpensive type. Wood from boxes and common bricks such as can be found in the vicinity of any rural school were used as shelving for the books. The Library School has also published leaflets for the help of librarians, teachers and others on whom may fall the duty of organizing a school library. Amongst such leaflets has been one entitled "Children's Literature: A Selection of books in inexpensive Editions" by Emily Biddle Meigs, who is a member of the School faculty. In the Library School a thorough course is given in children's literature. Students are initiated into the history of the development of special literature for children and they are made acquainted with the present-day literature that seems most suitable.

In passing it may be mentioned that in some quarters in America—Hampton Library School is one such—there is a strong feeling that it is not advisable to provide special literature for the Negroes as a group. It is contended that their life is integrated so fully with the life of White America that they should not be treated as a group apart. It is felt that what is wanted is to provide books simply for children who in general have few books in their own homes and who particularly lack the knowledge of simple science which more favoured children have. In seeking to stimulate a love of reading, imaginative literature is the wire by which is made the connection for underprivileged children, especially in rural districts. Myths, legends and stories with dramatic element make a universal appeal and are best for Negro children as for most other children. On the other hand it is admitted that Negro children often wish that the illustrations in books that come into their hands did not so

frequently depict only members of the White race. They desire also books in which Negroes figure, especially biographies of prominent Negro men and women. The vast quantities of religious literature published by some of the Negro churches and publishing firms likewise bear witness to a desire for literature specially prepared for the Negro group as such. The writer was informed of one Negro publisher who in the early days of his business found his readers resent his custom of serving up "White" religious literature in covers designedly Negro. They wished the whole publication to be specially designed for themselves.

Those responsible for the School of Librarians at Hampton feel that there are two classes whom they wish specially to influence. There is the class that enters the School for the purpose of taking the course and graduating as trained librarians. There is also the large student body, especially teachers in training, who throng the Hampton class rooms. To instil in both classes an abiding love of and thoughtful reverence for the best literature and to inspire them to lead their people to a similar love are reckoned as major objectives. "Begin with the teachers," it has been urged. The teacher should love especially books that children love. Experience has shown that even small, poorly-equipped rural school libraries have been a success where teachers know the books and attract the children to read. "A book," said Miss Curtis, "that has meant something to someone will never moulder on the shelves." There is everything to be said for having educated Negroes as a means of inspiring enthusiasm for books and reading amongst the fellow members of their race. Negroes know best the background and conditions of the Negro people. If trained they know the books suitable and available for them and can best commend such books to them. Negatively they can save young readers who join a library from the common fault of selecting the wrong kind of book. To-day in numerous Negro colleges students have the boon of daily contact with librarians of their own race, who are thoroughly equipped, who know their people's needs and the material available. It was noted that in the Atlanta University Library, where Miss Charlotte

Templeton, a highly-trained White librarian, is in charge, all contacts at the counter with students handing in and receiving books were made by Negro assistant librarians.

There are other library schools for Negroes and in addition special efforts are sometimes made for the help of Negro librarians. A notable instance of the latter was a Library Institute held at Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia, from June 14th till July 25th, 1930. It was felt that Negro public librarians were in special need of help as their duties are in a large measure dissimilar from the duties of college librarians. The Rosenthal Fund therefore agreed to finance a six weeks Institute and to pay the railroad fare of students attending. Miss Charlotte Templeton was asked to direct the Institute with full power to plan the course of study, select the necessary instructors, and establish qualifications for entrance. The number of students was limited to thirty-five, all of whom were actually under appointment as branch librarians in public library systems. Twelve States and twenty-seven librarians were represented in the group. The chief emphasis of the Institute was on library service for children. The Institute appears to have been an unqualified success.

By those seeking to stimulate the love of reading some interesting discoveries have been made, two of which may be mentioned. A great need is for books suited to under-educated adults. It is easy to obtain books whose text is simple enough for such readers but generally the matter of such books is more suited to juveniles. The difficulty is to get books simple in text and yet adult in tone and contents. Research experiments have been carried on by a sub-committee of the American Library Association amongst White people with a view to finding what makes a book easy to read, but so far there has not been evolved the type of publication which would meet the need of some 40 to 50 per cent of the population. After ten years of enquiry, largely confined to sifting of the available material to see what could be applied to the class in question, the trend of opinion is that there is not much in existence and that a new type of book will have to be prepared to supply the need. What is wanted is simple reading material, quite adult,

quite informative, especially interesting, but not too difficult in form. It may be safely assumed that this need which has been sensed amongst Whites is equally clamant amongst Negroes.

Another discovery is the advantage of using pamphlets. They are cheaper than books and so more within the reach of the poorer rural readers. Moreover their shortness makes appeal; to begin to read one of these does not convey the sense of a lengthy task waiting to be performed which a large volume sometimes inspires. People coming from the fields are more ready to take them up than to peruse cloth-bound books. Thus amongst those seeking to inspire a love of reading in the under-educated the movement is towards pamphlets and away from books.

It was pleasant to learn in various quarters that the reading habit is growing, even if slowly, amongst the Negro group. From Illinois in the North to Alabama in the South, from Tennessee to Massachusetts testimony was received to this simple fact. Perhaps one of the most touching testimonies was given at Calhoun Colored School in rural Alabama—an admirable school in which education is truly conceived as “an atmosphere, a discipline and a life”—where it was declared that recent years have shown a marked increase in the use of the school library. The efforts put forward by school and library authorities and the hundred plans for stimulating a love of reading among the Negro people are proving not to be in vain.

THE MECHANICAL SIDE.

In various newspaper offices throughout the country when the question was asked as to where trained pressmen and linotypers were obtained, the answer was given “From Hampton” or “From Tuskegee.” It was of interest therefore to make some investigation as to the aims and methods of the printing workshops in these Institutes and to compare with them South African conditions. In both Hampton and Tuskegee it was found there is no book-binding department. In both, however, the giving of training in book-binding to Negro youths has received consideration. Indeed years ago there was such a department in Hampton, and recently the question

was raised as to whether it should not be re-started, but the proposal was departed from. The reasons given for this decision were that its re-starting would involve the appointment of a skilled instructor, that this type of service can be had when required within seven miles of Hampton, and that the equipment necessary would be so great and the value of the training so small that the using of an outside firm is preferable. Negro lads do not go into this type of work. At Hampton however it is felt that "a boy ought to know all about book-binding in his theory class though he will not apply it in practice, and the development of practical skill should be confined to the necessities of the boy's future." At Tuskegee it was learned there is in some quarters a desire to add a book-binding department.

In both Hampton and Tuskegee the apprentice system is discouraged and the student system fostered. At Hampton in the printing department there is a staff of five along with thirty students. Students take printing as their major subject but they have academic subjects also. The printing workshop is divided into two sections, theory and practical training. A room is set aside for class teaching in theory. The theoretical instruction is given by a member of the staff who is trained in educational method. Students must take the full theory course and theory takes precedence over production. Students have their time mapped out at the beginning of each week. Some are scheduled for production purposes but the number so employed each week is only about one-fourth of the total. In the first year of his four years course the student does no production work. The various branches are dealt with in the first three years and in the fourth year specialization takes place. Specialization is aimed at; the object is to make the student a good linotyper or a good pressman or otherwise.

The Hampton Printing Department was described by its head as "a typical job shop." The training of the students is the first consideration. Nearly 90 per cent of the work done in the shop is for the Institute. This allows the work to be planned better than would be the case were a large production demand being made. "Our objective has been to let the students do the work. The more our craftsmen are kept off the job the better

we like it. When our journeymen do the work our system is breaking down." Almost 95 per cent of the work on linotype or press is actually done by the students. After the first year students receive payment according to the value of the work done.

From four to eight students complete their course each year and generally there is no difficulty in placing them, chiefly in Negro newspaper offices. The biggest call is for linotype operators. Few go into Colored job shops. Generally such are one-man shops. Some students qualify as teachers of trades and for this they take the full B.Sc. course. These generally find posts in Colored high schools.

The restriction is imposed on Hampton that it cannot sell within the limits of the county in which it stands. The purpose of this regulation is to eliminate the endowed Hampton printing shop as a competitor against local business houses. "If our selling is diffused all over the country then it has no damaging effect."

The Hampton printing office is well equipped with two linotype machines for production and two for practice. There are two cylinder presses and four platen presses of various sizes and types. Some are old-fashioned but these may be the kind a number of the students will have to operate in later life in Negro offices.

At Tuskegee Printing Department there are two aims—to produce and to teach. The ideal is still Booker Washington's simple policy and principle, to learn by doing. The attempt is made to set up in teaching as nearly the same conditions as a lad will find in industry. Students have a six day week, of eight hours per day. On three alternate days they attend high school and on other days are in the printing shop. This continues for three years. In the first year instruction is given in hand composition; in the second year linotype or cylinder press operating. In the fourth year students attend the high school on five days of the week and are employed in the shop only on Mondays. No explanation could be given as to why the emphasis is so much on school work in the last

year of the course. Throughout the course two hours per week are devoted to theory during workshop time.

Generally there are 30 to 50 students in training. At the time of the writer's visit there were 34. It was declared that the printing department attracts a better type of student than most of the other trades, since it is recognised that to make a successful printer a certain amount of education is required.

In special cases lads are allowed to spend every day in the workshop and go to school at night. These are virtually apprentices. The system however is discouraged. No such special cases existed at the time of the visit. In this connection Mr. Abbot, the head of the printing department, declared, "I think that printing is more than a mere mechanical trade. The more general information a man has the better a printer he can become. If a boy takes printing when he leaves here he will do printing but he may not go on studying. I discourage boys who wish to become apprentices and not students, unless family circumstances demand they be apprentices and not students. I prefer lads to go to school even though it means that the shop gets less out of them."

For about fourteen weeks in the time of the summer vacations the shop is turned into a production business. For this 8 to 12 students are retained. These work a nine hours day.

In the Tuskegee Printing Office—a large spacious building—there are five linotype machines, also two cylinder presses and three hand presses, one of the last mentioned being an old model.

Part III.

RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING SOUTH AFRICA.

RECOMMENDATIONS AFFECTING SOUTH AFRICA.

In penning the foregoing account of the situation as observed in America the writer has selected the material chiefly because of the possibility of its application to South African conditions. Lines noted as those along which the Negro people have progressed are lines that the Bantu may be encouraged to pursue. In some of the literary fields mentioned the Bantu have already begun to make their own contribution; they should be urged and given opportunity to continue to do so with increasing earnestness and freedom. And other literary tasks they should be encouraged to attempt.

The task of the European in connection with a vernacular literature movement in South Africa demands review. Coming days should find him with fewer calls to be himself the producer of literature for the Bantu. His task ought to be to organize and promote its production and distribution—to advise and stimulate, and especially to emphasize the value of the use of literature. More and more the Bantu themselves should provide the literature required, and the energies of others interested should be directed towards this end. Bantu youths should be trained for research work in dialect, grammar and other branches of language study. On every committee or board dealing with literary matters Africans should have adequate representation. Means should be sought to ensure that every manuscript of merit by a Bantu author may find a channel of publication. The suggestion of Mr. W. G. Bennie that an effort should be made to raise a fund of say £5000 to be placed in the hands of trustees in order to finance valuable publications and further the development of Bantu literature in South Africa is worthy of careful consideration. Books by or for Bantu people are, generally speaking, slow in selling and this militates against their acceptance by publishers. A fund that would help the latter to bear the initial outlay would be serviceable. Such a fund would be replenished by refunds as sales were effected, and so would be a continuous one. It might be helpful were there called together in the near future a conference of Bantu authors, who would work along the lines found useful by Dr. D. Willard Lyon in

China, in seeking to visualize the tasks most urgent in the field of literature, the means that should be adopted to accomplish them, and the persons best able to carry them to a successful conclusion. The day may not be distant when a magazine of the type of *Opportunity* (see pages 24-26) would meet a need among the Bantu and lead to the discovery of considerable hidden literary talent. Meantime every encouragement should be given to Bantu authors to enter for the literary competitions arranged by the African Institute of Languages and Cultures. Similar competitions under purely South African auspices would be a boon. A beginning of such has been made through the provision of prizes by the May Esther Bedford Fund for art, music and literature.

In view of the variety of languages, dialects and orthographies in South Africa, it is greatly to be desired that standardization be arrived at in each language area and that complete unification of the orthographies of closely-related languages be attained. The recent adoption of revised orthographies in several of the languages is a step in the right direction. Means should be sought to make the new orthography known to all classes in the respective groups. Gradually the existing literature should be changed into the new orthography and new books printed in it. In Tšwana particularly there is a call for dialectal unification and the adoption of one uniform system of orthography. But the larger task of complete unification in different languages should also not pass out of sight.

A desideratum is a large and resourceful mission press in each language area, or alternatively that Morija for the Sotho cluster and Lovedale for the Nguni cluster should be developed sufficiently to undertake all vernacular work, without regard to ordinary considerations of profit or loss. For several years Lovedale has deliberately used the gains on some of its more successful books to meet the losses on others by Bantu authors. Such a system is capable of great development—development that can be limited only by the means available. It is of the utmost importance, particularly in view of the economic position of the Bantu, that books should be produced as cheaply as possible.

The existence of presses with large resources would make

possible the carrying into effect of many of the recommendations put forward by the sub-committee of the Inter-University Committee for African Studies as given in *Bantu Studies* of March, 1933. These recommendations deserve the most careful consideration and the most earnest effort to ensure that they are carried to a successful end. They map out tasks sufficient for years to come. As summarised by Dr. C. M. Doke the recommendations are as follows :

Xhosa

- (1) Preparation of an up-to-date grammar.
- (2) Publication of Xhosa Phonetics.
- (3) Revision of the Kropf-Godfrey Dictionary in approved orthography.
- (4) Dialectal survey (common to all Nguni).
- (5) Collection and publication of folk-tales.
- (6) Translation into Xhosa of selected English classics.
- (7) Collection of standard *izibongo* ("praises") to be annotated and published.
- (8) Collection of modern *izibongo* ("praises") to be made, annotated and published.
- (9) "Bird-lore" to be published in Xhosa by Rev. R. Godfrey.
- (10) Mqayi's *Ityala lama Wele* to be translated into English.
- (11) An investigation to be made into the influence of *Ukuhlonipha* in Xhosa.
- (12) A committee to be appointed (a) to choose suitable texts for translation from English into Xhosa (see (6) above), and (b) to act as an advisory committee to further the publication of manuscripts now ready and to be presented.
- (13) The possibility of training Native investigators to be explored.

Zulu

- (1) Translation into Zulu of Mofolo's *Chaka*.
- (2) Preparation of an English-Zulu Dictionary.
- (3) Preparation of a Zulu-English Dictionary in approved orthography.

- (4) Preparation of an annotated publication of Zulu proverbs.
 - (5) History of the Zulu in the vernacular. ("praises").
 - (6) An annotated collection of *izibongo*
 - (7) A comparative dialectal study of all Nguni.
 - (8) A comparative grammar (including phonetics) of Xhosa, Zulu and Swazi, with reference to dialects.
 - (9) Collection of texts in folk-lore and customs in Zulu.
 - (10) Collection of texts in dialects such as Swazi, Ndebele (Rhodesia and Transvaal).
 - (11) Stimulation of Native authors, the work of the Xhosa writers to be emulated.
 - (12) Further study of Tonetics.
 - (13) Translation into Zulu of selected English-classics.
 - (14) Preparation of a graded Reader for European learners.
 - (15) Formation of a literature committee.
- Southern Sotho*
- (1) Preparation of a "Life of Moshesh."
 - (2) Preparation of the "Story of Mohlomi" from a collection of the legends.
 - (3) D. C. Theko Bereng to be approached for further Sotho poetry.
 - (4) Enlargement and rearrangement of Sekese's *Mekhoa le Maelé* for a new edition.
 - (5) Arrangements to be made for the publication of Sekese's other material, *Jonathan, Lipapali tsa Basotho*, etc.
 - (6) Preparation of a vernacular collection of *Tales of the Bushmen*.
 - (7) Collection of ethnological texts.
 - (8) Study of the tonetics of all Sotho.
 - (9) An investigation into the Nguni elements in Sotho.

- (10) Preparation of a graded reader for European learners.
- (11) Encouragement of vernacular writers.
- (12) Appointment of a committee to select writers for translation into Sotho.
- (13) Revision of orthography as a step towards more unity with the other members of the Sotho cluster.

- Northern Sotho*
- (1) Thorough dialectal survey with object of standardising.
 - (2) Publication of the Grammar or Manual being prepared by G. P. Lestrade.
 - (3) Compilation of an authoritative Northern-Sotho - English and English - Northern-Sotho Dictionary.
 - (4) Stimulation to be given to Native writers to produce works of an imaginative nature; Native teachers especially to be encouraged.

- Tšwana*
- (1) Dialectal survey with a view to standardisation.
 - (2) The preparation of an up-to-date grammar and a manual for the use of Europeans.
 - (3) Preparation of a graded reader.
 - (4) Publication of an authoritative Dictionary.
 - (5) Publication of the 2nd edition of Plaatje's collection of proverbs.
 - (6) Collection and publication of folk-lore.
 - (7) Encouragement to Natives to collect and publish texts of history, customs, etc.
 - (8) Publication of Plaatje's other translations of Shakespeare.
 - (9) Preparation of a *Life of Khama* in Tšwana.
 - (10) Consideration of choice of texts for translation into Tšwana.

- Venda*
- (1) Collection of ethnographic texts.
 - (2) Provision of elementary school books.

- (3) Collection of folk-lore material.
- (4) Publication of a Manual (Lestrade).

Thonga

- (1) Preparation of the Grammar of the Thonga cluster.
- (2) Collection of Texts in Folk-lore, etc.
- (3) Publication of Thonga Dictionary.

It is to be hoped that, in view of the research work that awaits, the Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand will again enjoy the grants for research given for a number of years by the Government of the Union of South Africa.

The missionary forces, which were the pioneers in the production and distribution of literature for the Bantu, should give an increasing place in their thought and work to the publication of vernacular and other literature. There is a rising tide of education among African peoples. The fact that one mission press in South Africa printed, published and sold during 1934 no fewer than 73,000 copies of books, the vast majority in the vernacular, besides innumerable pamphlets, magazines, etc., as well as the works of other publishers, witnesses to a growing demand for the right kind of literature. The recent decision of the South African Government that two-fifths of the revenue received from the Native poll-tax will henceforth be devoted to Native development, as against one-fifth previously, will ensure more adequate educational facilities for the Native people. The number of those employed by the missionary forces for the teaching of the Bantu is out of all proportion to the number whose definite task it is to produce literature suited to Bantu needs. The number of the latter should be increased. The call was never more clamant than it is to-day for missionary societies to make arrangements, financial and otherwise, so that conditions favourable for the best literary work may be ensued. The Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council held in 1928 laid a finger on a weak spot when it declared of literature work, "It is generally recognised and admitted that this is the most neglected part of the missionary enterprise. There is possibly no other missionary subject in which so many resolutions have been passed and so few put into effect."

The time has indeed come for a great forward movement in the production and distribution of Christian literature of the best type. What is wanted is a united plan for co-operative effort. Some steps towards this have already been taken. A committee of the General Missionary Conference of South Africa is seeking to give a lead in evolving a definite and concerted plan of production. In the proposals for launching during 1936 a Christian Council of South Africa, in which all the Churches and Missionary Societies will co-operate, provision is made for the appointment of an editorial secretary, whose duty it will be to give special attention to this aspect of missionary effort. It is expected also that Miss Margaret Wrong, Secretary of the International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa, will visit South Africa early in 1936 so that her wide knowledge and experience may be made personally available.

Some of the immediate tasks waiting are : a survey of the existing Christian literature with a view to its evaluation for present-day needs ; the establishment of means whereby the existing worthwhile literature may be made more widely known, with the hope that outstanding publications will be used as basic texts for different language areas ; the discovery of unfilled gaps or needs and the preparation of a definite programme as to the order in which the needs of the various sections of the population should be met ; the appointment of persons best qualified by experience and literary ability to supply particular needs, and especially the enlistment and encouragement of African talent ; the preparation of plans and the trial of methods for stimulating a love of reading among African peoples.

In addition to the various classes of Biblical and devotional literature, a special need is for pictures of a good type. The love of African peoples for pictures deserves exploitation in the best sense. In many Bantu homes pictures are found that are far from pleasing. Another need is the production of recreational literature in the form of stories, etc. Several Xhosa-speaking Africans have shown what they can do in the writing of the short novel and have thereby rendered signal service to their people. This is a movement deserving of encouragement in all the South African vernaculars.

In all their work on behalf of vernacular literature there should be the closest co-operation between the University Departments of Bantu Studies and the missionary forces. Their respective efforts, particularly if more closely welded together, would ensure that all the functions of a Bureau of Literature for the Bantu, similar to that advocated for the Negro people, were being performed.

The vernacular newspapers should receive encouragement, particularly with a view to improving their format and literary quality. Some of them are obviously in need of skilled contributors. They should be urged to give more adequate space to the review and commendation of the books of Bantu authors. Generally the tone of the Native newspapers is extremely good.

Increased attention should be given to the problems of distribution, as apart from production, with a view to the establishment of agencies so that good literature may be made more easily accessible to the Bantu people, both urban and rural. In all the Native townships connected with the cities and larger towns there should be recognised shops at which may be obtained the publications of the chief presses specialising in work for the Bantu. Here indeed is a large uncultivated field. If, as is to be fervently hoped, Bantu economic conditions improve in the near future, there may be revealed an innate fondness for reading which only poverty has hitherto prevented finding adequate expression. Of Bantu love for speech and interest in language concerns there can be no doubt. While probably the Bantu have not yet reached the stage when the employment of students and school boys as part-time agents for the disposal of literature would accomplish the end in view, a modification of the American system seems a possibility. According to the rules of the Education Departments of South Africa teachers must retire from active service at the age of 55 or 60. Many Native teachers thus find themselves at a comparatively early age with abundance of enforced leisure. Generally, because of their calling and life-work, they are men of influence among their people. The careful selection of a corps of such, dwelling in different districts, to act as agents for presses specialising in literature for the Bantu would probably lead to surprising results.

The Bantu are fond of conferences of all kinds : religious gatherings, agricultural associations, teachers meetings are being continually held amongst them. The attendance at such meetings, particularly in country places, of one who would lay before them the fact that " a reading people is a leading people," might do much to stimulate the love of reading, and incidentally would not only augment for the agent a meagre pension but provide him with a task of interest and a further term of useful service.

As has been stated, library facilities for Non-Europeans in South Africa are meagre. Even at most Native educational institutions libraries are generally quite inadequate. The whole matter of library equipment and personnel demands much more thorough tackling on the part of the authorities of such institutions. The experiments of the Carnegie Non-European Library, Transvaal, are worthy of every encouragement and should be multiplied throughout the country. It is based and administered on lines similar to the County Library Systems of Great Britain and the United States of America. In Britain and America the county is the library unit, and in the Transvaal the library unit is the Province. In other respects the county and provincial systems do not differ in any essential feature. The system has been proved by experience to be the most efficient, effective and economic method of providing library service to small and scattered communities. From a central headquarters library books in bulk are supplied to local centres such as rural schools, village clubs and other institutions. These books are exchanged for others as often as required and in addition any borrower can apply at any time to his local centre for a particular work not in the local collection and this will be supplied by the headquarters library. Thus any reader has many thousands of volumes at his call instead of a comparatively small and stagnant collection. The boon such a system would be to the Native who after days at school and college finds himself having few contacts with educated people cannot be calculated. It is interesting to note that in reply to the question, " What do non-Europeans read ? " those responsible for the Transvaal experiment declare : " Indians will read anything that

the European reads, and so will the better educated Native and Coloured person ; children of all types will read and enjoy the same books as those enjoyed by White children. Some Natives will not read novels because they think it a waste of time ; they are keen on improving their knowledge of the world and prefer to read books which give information rather than amusement. In one location the best read book was Breasted's *History of the Ancient Egyptians*. Biography, especially of people connected with Africa ; travel ; history written in easily readable language ; and books well illustrated, of general interest, such as the *Wonder Books* and the *National Geographic Magazine* are the most popular classes. All books dealing with Native life and South African affairs are well received." A considered statement such as this makes it clear that the provision of library facilities for Bantu readers is worthy of support.

An important step towards the more effective organisation of non-European library service in South Africa and the consequent stimulating of a love of literature among the Bantu would be the training of non-Europeans in library service. This might be best effected by means being provided by some interested body for the opening of a School of Librarians at a centre like Fort Hare or Lovedale, for training on lines similar to those followed at Hampton Institute. When such librarians were trained missionary institutions could assist by employing them to run their libraries, preferably as full-time workers. Some might also find employment in Native branches of public libraries. Thus incidentally there would be provided a new and attractive sphere of employment for educated Bantu youths and girls. If Native students while taking their courses of training could be in daily contact with librarians of their own race who know their needs and the books available for them and who could inspire them with a love of reading, much might be done to raise up a reading public among the Bantu. From teachers, nurses and others the movement would spread. This has already been demonstrated in that the Natal Education Department has a Native Teachers' Library of nearly 3000 volumes, in charge of a full-time Native librarian, which is well patronised.

In a land like South Africa where through various causes

there are hosts of under-educated adults, both White and Black, the investigations made in the United States concerning the provision of literature suited to the needs of such a class deserve the closest attention, with a view to meeting such needs amongst the various races of the sub-continent.

The inauguration of an annual Book Week in South African primary and secondary schools is greatly to be commended.

The collections of *Africana* found in the Gubbins Library in Johannesburg and at the South African Native College, Fort Hare, are worthy of commendation, and should prove a boon to research workers in coming days. It is to be hoped that many additional items will yet be added to these libraries.

In conclusion, let it be stated that a great pre-requisite is the recognition by all interested—the Bantu themselves, university authorities, missionaries and others—that the provision of literature for the Bantu is of supreme importance. The Native tribes of South Africa face to-day a new and perplexing world. Their old life is passing because of the inrush of Western civilization. Old sanctions no longer hold. Their former occupations and recreations are largely gone. Vast numbers are being taught in school to read. While in school and when they leave it they ought to find within their reach literature suited to their every need. Only thus can they be equipped for the demands of the new day. Only thus can they find a substitute of a satisfying kind to take the place of so much that has passed from them. No individual and no nation will reach their highest development without a thoughtful and reverent love for good literature.

Appendix.

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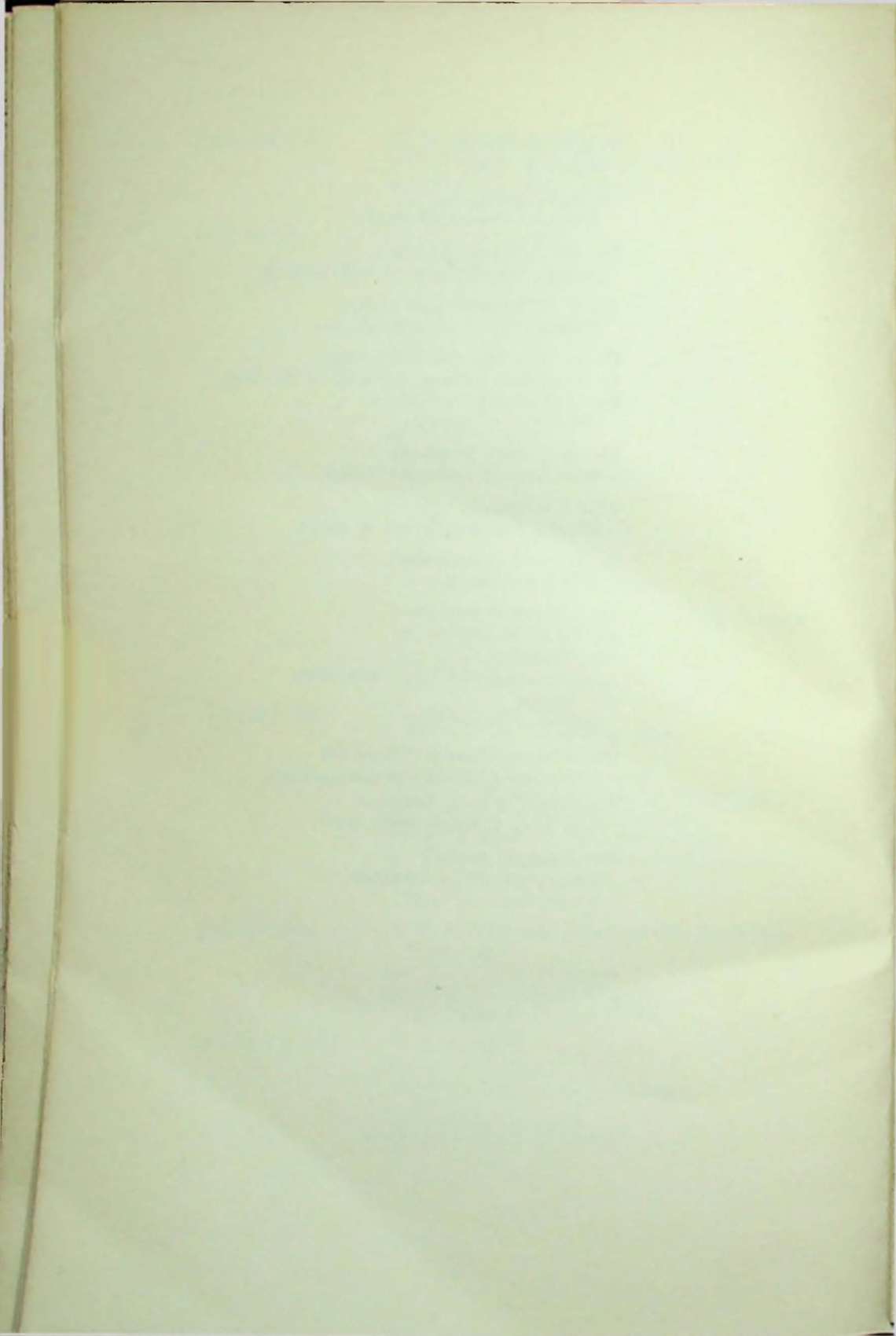
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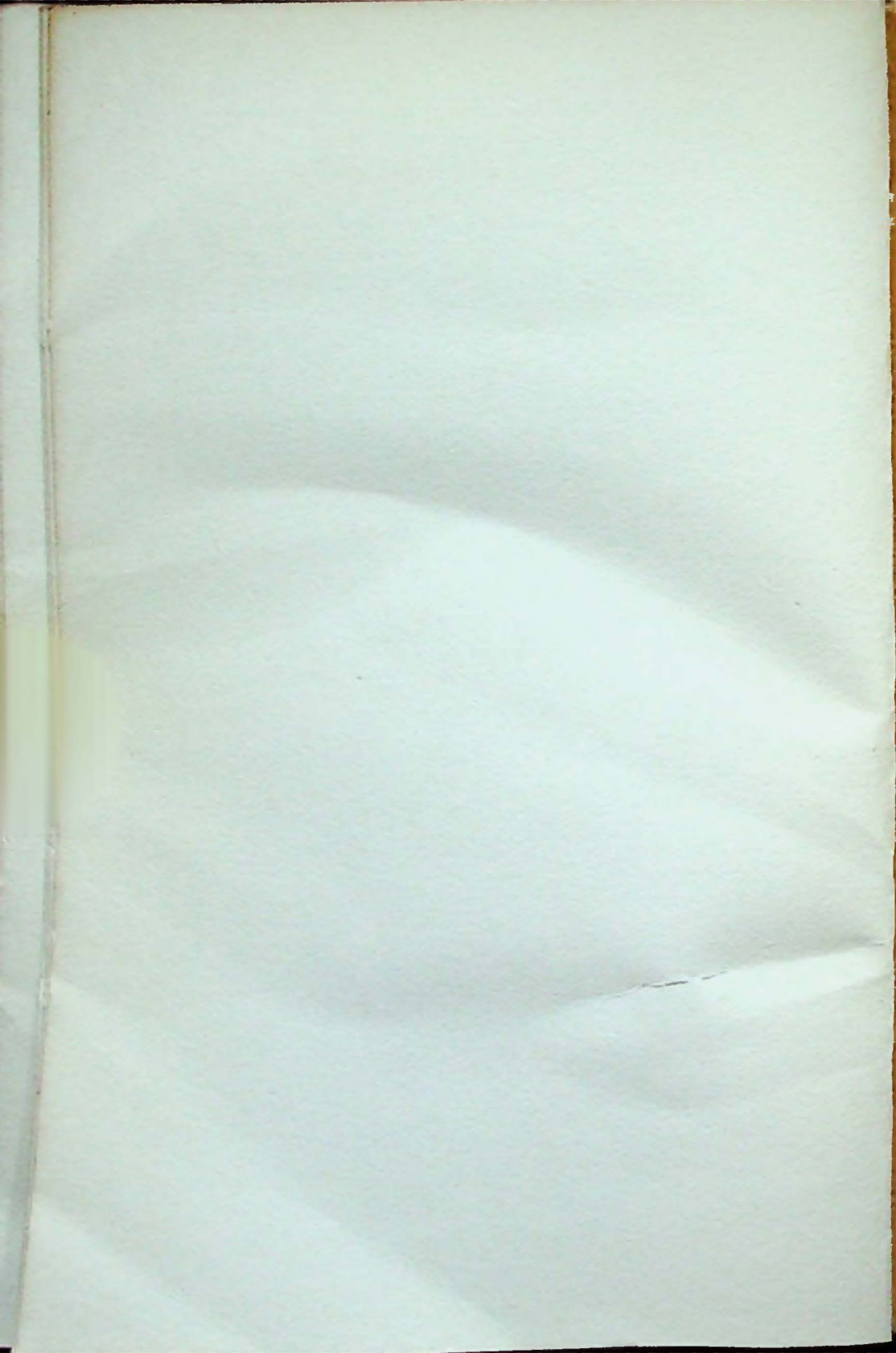
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