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Sierra Leone's Statistics

FROM A FREETOWN CORRESPONDENT

DR. COX-GEORGE'S report on the structure of industry and commerce is undoubtedly important for he has carefully analysed the functions of the various entrepreneurs in the country, large and small, indigenous and foreign. Although problems of national interest arise, he believes, on the whole, that a dynamic economy should provide room for all kinds of enterprise—no matter what the source of capital or management. In a capital scarce country without substantial "capitalistic" traditions it is difficult to see how his conclusions could be otherwise.

One point which Dr. Cox-George makes strongly is that his work has been hindered by a lack of statistics; the last population census was taken in 1938, and many of the tables in his report have had to be specially prepared. This deficiency should be remedied in future, despite the unfortunate printer's error in one local paper that recommended: "Some of the fables appearing in the report should be reproduced annually". It has been suggested that Professor Jack, who is currently conducting an economic survey of the country, may also be hindered by the absence of statistical data and this is, to some extent true; but Professor Jack is less concerned with what has been, or what is, than with the future—the careful weighing of alternatives. Given even the roughest assessment of Sierra Leone's wealth, he will have to say how it can be most successfully exploited in the world market. The necessary margin of error in the Professor's calculations means that statistical refinements are superfluous.

However, improved information on the country's natural resources; population, and its distribution; pattern of trade; and income are undoubtedly necessary if the Government is to be in a position to guide the economy in the interests of all. Fortunately, the collection of these statistics should not be too great a burden on the administration; nor on the population, as long as we are fully informed of the purpose of the exercise. What is much more important, one competent statistician will probably be able to analyse them. The collection of information is relatively easy; much harder is the task of seeing that the information is fully understood and fully used. This is Dr. Margai's job.

DESPITE the current fall in the world demand for iron ore, the Hanna Coal and Ore Corporation of the U.S. are to conduct a survey for iron ore, manganese, bauxite and laterite ore in the southern part of Sierra Leone. Two representatives of the Corporation are at present in the country on a two-week visit: they will have consultations with the Government. They are looking for ore throughout West Africa and will have to consider quality and quantity as well as ease of transportation.

MR. SIAKA STEVENS, former Minister of Lands, Mines and Labour in the Government, has rejoined the staff of D.E.L.C.O. He will be on the staff of the Resident Director in Freetown, Mr. C. P. McConnachie, and his duties will include public relations.

AN ENQUIRY HAS been held into the conduct of Paramount Chief Bobo Dasama of Dama Chiefdom, Kenema District. The District Commissioner, Mr. J. L. Pepys Cockerell, conducted the enquiry and 20 witnesses gave evidence. The allegations against the Paramount Chief are that he used forced labour, that he forced trade transactions and he is also accused of extortion.

REPLYING to a motion that a fiscal survey of the country should be undertaken, the Financial Secretary told the House of Representatives that instructions for a fiscal survey had already been issued and that he had received some reports on the matter.

THE LEBANESE IN WEST AFRICA: I

Historical Background

IN making a study of Lebanese immigration to West Africa it is essential to start by describing Lebanon itself; its geographical position and physical features, its people and its history. For the physical surroundings of a human being greatly affect and influence his behaviour. How and why people move from one place to another, where they go and whether they return to their original place or not, how strong are their ties and relationship to the land they leave and the land they come to, are all questions the answers to which are largely affected by the topography and natural resources of the native land of the people in question.

Lebanon is a small country on the eastern side of the Mediterranean between Syria and Palestine. It is only 35 miles wide and 120 miles long, with about a million and a half population. The general pattern of its topography is an alternation of lowland and highland which runs parallel from north to south. Four such longitudinal strips comprise what is now the Republic of Lebanon, as constituted by the French Mandatory Authorities in 1920. The first strip is a long narrow coastal plain in which the capital, Beirut, and other important ports are situated. The second strip is a high mountain range called Mount Lebanon, which during Turkish rule formed the semi-independent Sanjak of Lebanon, the main source of emigrants in the second half of the 19th century.

Behind the mountain is a low plateau called the plain of Bigua; and, finally, a second mountain range, called the Anti Lebanon, forms the fourth strip of land. From this it will be seen that Lebanon is mainly a mountainous country with very limited natural resources and still less irrigated land suitable for agriculture. Its population has increased by about half a million during the last quarter of a century, and it is estimated that the population will double itself within the next 35 to 40 years. The capital, Beirut, offers a good illustration of this tremendous increase; where in 1861 it had a population of 46,000, it grew to 130,000 in 1914 and is now estimated to have slightly more than half a million. With agricultural potentialities approaching exhaustion and industrial growth lagging, it is only natural that the Lebanese people should resort to emigration, and seek opportunities elsewhere.

Racially the modern Lebanese are a mixture of the ancient Phoenician-Canaanite tribes who lived in Syria and Lebanon as early as the third millennium B.C., and the Arabs who have drifted, and are still drifting, in from the desert and gradually pass from a nomadic to an agricultural state. Added to these are the remnants of the various conquerors who occupied the country, such as Egyptians, Assyrians, Hittites, Persians, Greeks, Romans, the Crusaders, Mongols and Ottoman Turks. In religion the Lebanese are nearly evenly divided into Christians and Moslems, the Christians having a slight majority; but the two communities live harmoniously together.

One last thing worth mentioning about Lebanon, which is an important factor in making emigrants eager to return to it, is its excellent climate and extremely beautiful scenery. We find Lebanese all over the world cherishing the memories of their beautiful homeland and hoping to be able to end their days there.

It is very difficult to assert with certainty the date at which Lebanese emigration started and to which country it was first directed, for the Turks had kept no archives or documents and there were no newspapers, or any other method of recording such events. Interviews with early emigrants or their descendants seems to indicate, however, that modern Lebanese emigration must have started about the middle of the last century and was at first mainly directed towards Egypt or the United States.

The first Lebanese emigrant to enter the United States was

a young man named Antonio Bishallany, who landed in Boston in 1854 and died there two years later. No considerable emigration to the United States took place, however, until the 1870's. Between 1885 and the year of the Chicago Exhibition, the flow of emigration increased to such an extent that it spread itself all over the United States east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio river and found its way into the Pacific Coast. It is assumed that from there some emigrants moved to South America. Antonio Bishallany was sent to the United States by the Presbyterian Mission in Lebanon to prepare for missionary work and an examination of the names of early emigrants reveals that they were closely connected with missionaries in the Lebanon.

It seems, therefore, that, among a great many factors operating in the Lebanon in favour of emigration, it remained for the American missionaries to give the initial push which started modern Lebanese emigration. At some later date in the 1880's part of the emigration was diverted towards West Africa.

Causes of Emigration

It must be pointed out that the causes of emigration, which I shall discuss below, applied only at the beginning of the emigration tide in the middle of the 19th century. Conditions in Lebanon have changed completely from what they were at that time, and an emigrant now is no longer influenced by the same causes that influenced emigrants of the 1870's.

Besides overpopulation and lack of land, there are numerous other causes which have prompted and perpetuated Lebanese emigration. Here, however, I add only a few of the more important ones. Among these is the political factor: when emigration started in the second half of the 19th century Lebanon was under the rule of the Turks, who oppressed its people and ill-treated them; many, therefore, chose to emigrate to escape the oppression. Another important cause is the religious one. The Turks were Sunni Moslems and they persecuted the Christians and the Shiite Moslems for their beliefs. This persecution reached its climax in 1860 when a religious civil war broke out, during which thousands of Christians were killed; it is not surprising that nearly all the emigrants in the third quarter of the 19th century were Christians.

Another important factor is the contact with Western missionaries who started operating in Lebanon around the middle of the last century. They assisted many of their early converts and students to go abroad and pursue their studies. Once emigration began it became a continuous process. Returning emigrants made a great impression on their fellow villagers and town folk; they told exciting tales about America and spoke of its wealth and how accessible it was, and how they themselves earned more money there in a few years than could be earned at home in two generations. Even where the early emigrants did not return themselves, they insisted on sending back their earnings to their native country and investing them in land, and in large conspicuous red-roofed houses each one of which acted as a mute and perpetual advertisement to encourage emigration. They also sent travel fares to their relatives and friends and asked them to come and join their businesses abroad.

Subsidiary causes, such as the adventurous spirit of the Lebanese, and their love of travel and adventure, have also been at work. All these factors together helped to create the modern Lebanese emigration movement, which brought great wealth and prosperity not only to the mother land, Lebanon, but to many other countries from Brazil and Argentina to Australia and Africa. To trace the development of the movement and the activities of the emigrants in all countries in which they settled would be a long and strenuous job. My purpose is to attempt to indicate certain aspects of their activities in West Africa.

MARWAN HANNA.



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Jack Report to be Ready in June

FROM A FREETOWN CORRESPONDENT.

BEFORE leaving for the U.K., Professor D. T. Jack, who for the past month has been conducting an economic survey of the country, said that his report will be ready by June.

Improving communications is probably the most important single need at the moment if the natural resources of the country are to be efficiently exploited, and this could in part be achieved, he thought, by a greater use of inland waterways. Unfortunately, many of these waterways are not yet charted, but this should not be a major obstacle for, although surveying and marking navigable channels requires skilled manpower, it does not need enormous quantities of capital—either fixed or circulating. This is a sensible suggestion which might well be implemented without much delay, and it should be accomplished by volunteers—if properly supervised. The Outward Bound School at Man O'War Bay provides just this sort of useful and adventurous activity in its training programmes and Ghana's Building Brigades are designed, to some extent, to meet similar problems. Here, in a short Press conference, just before flying to London, Professor Jack has offered Sierra Leone's youth both an adventure and a national duty. Can our leaders and the youngsters respond to the challenge?

CONTROL OF SIERRA LEONE military forces and primary financial responsibility for them will be taken over by the Government on January 1, 1959. Details are now being worked out. The Chief Secretary, Mr. Waddell and Brigadier J. R. H. Orr, Commander of the Sierra Leone Military Forces, have gone to London to discuss the future of these forces. It is believed that they will be considerably reduced.

MR. JUSTICE S. A. BENKA-COKER expressed surprise in a recent Supreme Court sitting at Kenema that in the 20th century human beings create a market for either cannibalism or slavery in Sierra Leone. He was addressing the Supreme Court in passing sentences on two men who had been found guilty of kidnapping Joseph Yavana and bargaining to sell him for £700 to a Lebanese trader at Hangha in the Kenema District.

The two men, Amadu Mansaray and Member Karma were sentenced to seven years' imprisonment with a fine of five pounds and five years' imprisonment and two pounds fine respectively.

THE FIRST SIERRA LEONEAN to qualify in the U.K. as a psychiatric welfare officer, has taken up an appointment with the Sierra Leone Medical Services, and is attached to the Mental Hospital at Kissy, near Freetown. He is Mr. Nasiru Deen who spent about nine years in Britain qualifying for the State Registered Nurse Certificate, the Registered Mental Nurse Certificate and the Tutor's Certificate. Mr. Deen was awarded a Government scholarship to qualify for the tutor's certificate.

NEW CHAIRMAN of the Public Services Commission is Mr. M. F. G. Wentworth, a retired Establishment Secretary from Ghana. Appointed an Inspector of Schools in Ghana in 1930, Mr. Wentworth was Senior Education Officer, Principal of the Teacher Training College and Permanent Secretary before being appointed Establishment Secretary in 1954. He retired last November.

MR. G. C. JARVIS, Principal Auditor, has been appointed Director of Audit, in succession to Mr. W. R. E. Stephenson, who is retiring. Both Mr. Jarvis and Mr. Stephenson began their careers in Hong Kong.

FREETOWN City Council has recently passed a motion granting councillors £5 a month as a transport allowance. This will be paid instead of providing hired cars to carry members to meetings.

THE LEBANESE IN WEST AFRICA: 2

How and When They Came

THERE seems to be no authoritative date for the beginning of Syrian and Lebanese immigration into West African colonies. Police and immigration records in West Africa do not go far back enough to cover the period when Syrian and Lebanese emigrants first came. Several theories have developed on how and when they did reach West Africa; but none of these can be said to be wholly valid. All authorities, however, agree that Marseilles was the port where all Syrians and Lebanese emigrants to all parts of the world assembled to arrange travel documents and book passages to their destinations. It is very doubtful if emigrants leaving Beirut had any intention of going to West Africa. Many had practically never heard of the continent, and the few who had were not encouraged by what they had heard. Africa to them was "jungle", where danger was always near.

So the emigrants must first have become aware of the possibility of going to West Africa while at Marseilles. It was mainly through this port that the French carried on trade with their West African colonies, and shipping lines made regular journeys between Dakar, Saint Louis and Marseilles. Dakar, in Senegal, was also a transit port for lines connecting France to South America; it was natural that emigrants ignorant of travel formalities and methods, and so very dependent on the advice of shipping agents, should hear from these agents about West Africa and the possibility of going there.

Limited Choices

Another factor which might have diverted some early emigrants to West Africa was the strict United States rule about the health of prospective immigrants. The number of those who were debarred from the United States for failing to satisfy the health regulations, mainly because of trachoma, was considerable. Those thus debarred had either to return to the Lebanon, bringing disgrace to themselves and their families, or to go to some other country which would admit them.

Their choice was also affected by their financial position. Almost all these emigrants were members of large, poor, families. Each in raising money for his voyage had exhausted all the family's savings, had sold personal belongings, or borrowed money. All the family sacrificed in the hope that the one member emigrating would be able to collect a fortune and send remittances to allow them an easier and better life. An emigrant contemplating return from Marseilles had to think of all these facts and the disillusionment and disappointment he would cause to all his family. Thus his choice was really limited to one possibility—to emigrate to some place other than the U.S.A.

A third factor was that some emigrants could not get passage to the United States easily and had to spend weeks and months in Marseilles, drawing on their meagre resources. When an emigrant finally succeeded in getting a passage, he might not have enough money to pay for the trip to America. Shipping agents, though very active in encouraging and persuading Lebanese and Syrians to emigrate, did not go to the extent of lending them money for their fares. Moreover, it was only in Marseilles that the emigrants first realised how costly it was to travel to America, and travel agents there were foreigners, being mostly French, Italian or Greek.

Faced with this situation the hard pressed emigrant found West Africa the best way out. Fares were cheap, and emigrants did not have to acquire travel documents, or to pass any physical test. All they feared was what they had heard about Africa as "the white man's grave"; but they decided it was easier to face that than their hungry families, and disgrace in their country.

Since no strict registration of immigrants was enforced in West African colonies during the last quarter of the

19th century, it is very difficult to name the year when the first one, or group, arrived, or which colony first received them. One theory is that in 1892 four or five Lebanese men between the ages of 20 and 22 arrived on the coast of Senegal and settled somewhere between St. Louis and Conakry. They were wearing "oriental dress" and had small quantities of coral and similar goods which they peddled in public squares. Surely it is more logical to assume that emigrants who had gathered in Marseilles and were travelling in French ships bound for French colonies should disembark in French ports, of which the most important were Dakar, St. Louis and Conakry? But this does not seem to be the case, for there is conclusive evidence that in 1890 a Lebanese emigrant called Elias el Khoury, originally from a village in the northern part of Lebanon, arrived in Nigeria, coming from Sierra Leone.

This indicates that immigration to Sierra Leone must have taken place sometime in the late 1880's; but Elias el Khoury does not seem to have said anything about other Lebanese in Sierra Leone. Old emigrants in French Guinea relate the story of Jacop Bitar who, in 1893, while sailing from Sierra Leone to the Gambia, encountered rough seas and drifted to the shores of Guinea, where he sold his goods at very high profits. He returned to Sierra Leone to tell his story to his countrymen who did not believe him; but on his next trip a few accompanied him and found it profitable to stay in Guinea. From all this it would seem that Sierra Leone was the first country to receive Lebanese emigrants—even if it is unlikely that emigrants in French ships would pass French ports and arrive in Sierra Leone. Even if they wanted to do this, they would have had to change ship, and wait in French West Africa.

A Manchester Export

It has also been suggested that the first Lebanese to come to British West Africa might have come from Manchester, where a large Lebanese merchant community had been established since 1870. It was thought that Lebanese firms in Manchester might have sent representatives to West Africa to buy produce and ship it to Manchester. Investigation among Lebanese merchants in Manchester has ruled out this theory. Up to 1927 Lebanese merchants in Manchester had not heard of any of their number doing business in West Africa, their main activity being confined to the Middle East, while a few exported to South America and the West Indies. In 1927 a Lebanese merchant in Manchester Mr. Fadlow Hourani (now Honorary Consul for the Lebanon in Manchester), got in touch, accidentally, with a Lebanese trader from Lagos, and started doing business with him and other traders in British West Africa.

If we dismiss this Lebanon-Manchester-West Africa theory, there remain three possible explanations of how the Lebanese could have arrived in British before French West Africa. First, some emigrant might have found a British ship in Marseilles, or a ship of another nationality, bound for British West Africa, and boarded it. The second possibility is that emigrants aboard French ships chose to move southward by land or sea, after calling in the main French African ports, and deciding not to stay. It is difficult to explain why they chose British West Africa—unless we accept, as a few early immigrants have told me, that they chose British West Africa because they had a much higher opinion of British justice and administration than of French; and in Africa they thought peace and order were essentials for safety. Finally, a third possibility is that the early Lebanese emigrants did come to French West Africa first—but the French researchers were unable to trace them before 1892, while those in British West Africa were traced more easily back to the late 1880's.

MARWAN HANNA.



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Co-operatives Progress in Sierra Leone

FROM A FREETOWN CORRESPONDENT

THE report on the Department of Co-operation for the year to April 1956 was published last month—not quite two years after the period it covers. At the other end of the financial world, I see that the Colonial Development Corporation, with interests in 23 countries and capital commitments of over £80m., also submitted its report and accounts for the year to December 1957, a few days ago—just three months after the period covered.

Such a delay is most regrettable for though the Department no doubt has available up-to-date figures and has the current situation well in hand, the significant contribution it is making to the country's economy cannot be fully appreciated by the public, or vigorously presented to it, if the available facts are really history. Two main points emerged from the report: one is the general staff shortage which prevailed during 1955 and 1956, and the other is the most successful experiments started on mechanised rice cultivation. Despite an increased establishment being sanctioned in 1955 'recruitment proved to be difficult' and sickness and retirement further increased the shortage of temporary staff so that for four months the Registrar was virtually on his own. Such shortages no doubt account for the delay in presenting the report.

Rice cultivation by light tractor is an exciting story of how the supply of the country's most valuable foodstuff is being steadily increased. Although heavy tracked vehicles have been employed to break-in new land, a lighter, less expensive tractor seemed likely to suffice in established areas. The uses of these light tractors were suitable for co-operative ownership and, moreover, allowed the Department of Agriculture's heavy equipment to be used on fresh reclamation work. This policy has worked remarkably well: six tractors and harrows were bought by co-operatives on five-year loans and, in the time available in their first season, almost 1,500 acres were harrowed. Last year, 1957, over 3,000 acres were ploughed and harrowed and this year, no doubt, even greater progress is being made.

THE FIRST aerial exploration of a new area in West Africa using the airborne magnetometer, is now nearing completion in Sierra Leone. On completion, 4,000 square miles will have been surveyed. These geophysical studies are being undertaken for the Department of Overseas Geological Surveys on behalf of our Government. The aircraft flies 500 ft. above the terrain following a gridded pattern. A 35 mm. camera records every foot of the flight path. The magnetic data will be compiled in map form, for delivery this summer, at a 10 gamma contour interval and a scale of 1 in. to 1 mile.

L'UNION AEROMARITIME TRANSPORT has commenced operations. U.A.T. is a privately-owned French airline and will operate once a week between Freetown and Conakry, French Guinea, where it will make connections with Europe.

De Havilland 'Heron' aircraft will be used, and the agents in Sierra Leone for the company will be the West African Airways Corporation. On the inaugural flight on April 10 there was one paying passenger—Mr. Sabatino Memmi, an Italian businessman.

DR. PETER HESSE, who has been in the country since January, has been appointed to a post at the West African Research Station at Rokupr. He is 33 years' old and after doing research work into maize rust and the chemical and physical properties of termite mounds, has specialised in soil analysis. With experience of the mud 'soils' of Lake Victoria in East Africa, he worked with Mr. R. S. A. Beauchamp on the influences of sulphur content on the productivity of fisheries, Dr. Hesse is a very welcome guest to our shores.

THE LEBANESE IN WEST AFRICA: 3

Number, Distribution and Activity

HAVING discussed how the Lebanese and Syrians came to West Africa, I would like to go on to trace their activities in their new country of residence, and give an idea of their number and distribution. We have no reliable sources from which to ascertain the number of Syrians and Lebanese in the various West African territories; the two main sources are census reports in the British West African colonies and Lebanese Government estimates of the emigrants in 1955. The census reports are not very reliable because they rarely covered the whole territory, and in some the system of estimating was used, instead of actual enumerating. Added to this is the fact that until recent censuses Syrians and Lebanese were merged in a larger group, either as Europeans, or natives, or Asiatics. Lebanese immigrants, moreover, wanted privacy and seclusion, and many wanted their presence in any colony to be noticed as little as possible. Accordingly, many avoided registering with the authorities, and, as the census-taking system was loose, some escaped enumeration.

Recently the police took over the job of registering aliens, but the accuracy of their figures is also very doubtful. While the official number of Syrians and Lebanese registered in Sierra Leone in 1957 was 2,612, a high official in the Sierra Leone police force estimated the actual number to be as high as 6,000. Neither number is very accurate, that of the Immigration Authorities being low and that of the police official rather high. These numbers, however inaccurate they may be, help to give an idea of the rate of increase of Lebanese in West Africa.

The following table shows the number of Syrians including Lebanese in the various censuses taken in the Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria and Sierra Leone:

Year	Ghana	Nigeria	Sierra Leone
1901	—	—	41
1911	46	90	266
1921	234	143	563
1931	1,140	419	1,166
1948	1,370	—	1,116
1951-52	—	1,895	1,204
1957	—	—	2,612

Where no figure is given it is either because Syrians were not considered separately or because no census was taken that year in the particular area. The Emigrants Department of the Lebanese Foreign Ministry estimates the number of Lebanese in the three territories at 2,200 in Ghana, 1,650 in Nigeria and 2,900 in Sierra Leone. It may be of interest to mention the department's estimate of the number of Lebanese in French West Africa. It puts it at 16,295, the largest group of which is found in Senegal, where the Lebanese number 10,000.

As to the distribution of the Lebanese in each country, we find that in Nigeria they seem to be concentrated in the Western and Northern Regions with very few in the East. In 1952 there were 513 male and 262 female Lebanese in Western Nigeria and 379 male and 251 female Lebanese in Northern Nigeria, while there were only 60 males and 42 females in Eastern Nigeria. In Sierra Leone the Lebanese seem to be concentrated mainly in Freetown and the Southern Province of the Protectorate. In 1931 there were 282 males and 131 females in the Colony, 334 males and 149 females in the Southern and 227 males and 43 females in the Northern Province. In Ghana, the 1931 census shows 390 males and 180 females in the Accra area; 282 males and 114 females in the Colony and 100 males and 66 females in Ashanti, with only eight males in the North.

These figures show the large area over which Lebanese are distributed. Since their arrival in West Africa, they have ventured to move into the hinterland of whatever country they were in, at a time when European trading houses were confining themselves to the large seaports and

along the railway lines. As early as 1898 a Lebanese emigrant in Nigeria, Mikheal Elias, took a trading caravan from Lagos to Lake Chad, passing through Kano and Bornu at a time when British authority was not yet established in these areas. This penetration of the Lebanese to the hinterland was not only a great and risky adventure, but it was also a source of wealth to the Lebanese, the inhabitants and the European trading houses. But before going into that, let us have a look at what the Lebanese did when they first arrived in West Africa.

We have seen that one of the reasons which diverted the Lebanese towards West Africa was the fact that they did not have enough money to pay for their fares to the United States. Therefore we hardly expect them to have had any money when a ship put them on the West African coast. The name 'Coral Men' by which the local people used to call them for years reveals the sort of business they undertook when they first arrived. In those early years one would find them in the cities, round the corners of the trade 'stream-line' streets, sitting on small boxes in front of boxes a little larger on which they displayed imitation coral beads and other cheap articles.

From this humble beginning the Lebanese have become the most prosperous of the non-European traders in the West Coast of Africa; but they have had by no means an easy time. Whenever one succeeded in saving some money he used to buy more beads and cheap textiles and move with them to the interior to places which perhaps no non-African had reached before. 'But being Arabs and Moslems', says one of the early immigrants in Nigeria, 'was a great help to us with the Africans who, once they knew who we were, took us as their brothers'. They used to sell their goods and return to the city to fetch more.

In time the Lebanese began to sell their goods to the people in return for local produce, and take the produce to the city to sell to European firms. This individual 'going and coming' between the city and the hinterland proved to be dangerous, tiresome, and time-consuming. So the immigrants started to set up humble shops (mainly small round mud huts at the beginning), in which they displayed goods to appeal to local people and collected produce they bought. In the cities fellow immigrants undertook the business of supplying these petty traders and shopkeepers in remote villages with goods and bought produce from them.

Because of their vigour, integrity, and astute business sense, European commercial firms, and the banks, trusted the Lebanese and extended to them credit facilities. At present the Lebanese, in many parts of British West Africa, have a near-monopoly of internal trade at the stage between the wholesale operations of the European commercial houses and the petty trading in matches and cigarettes of the African village trader. But still in the villages the Syrian shop remains the place where the husband, wife and children cook, eat, and amid all this, carry on selling coloured cloth, hurricane lamps, umbrellas and felt hats to people of various tribes, speaking different languages and dialects.

It surprised me very much in a recent trip to Sierra Leone to find that an old woman, whom I knew in my village in Lebanon to be illiterate, and who only emigrated in 1947, was speaking five or six local dialects in addition to Creole English. A different picture of the Lebanese immigrant is of the rich importer-exporter having his head office in the capital of the country and branches all over the hinterland, with an office, or at least an agent, in the United Kingdom. Many of these importer-exporters have set up their own firms which are by no means any inferior to the old-established European firms. Many have turned to industry, real estate, transport and similar operations badly needed by any under-developed economy.

A few words must be said about the social standing of the Lebanese immigrants. It must be remembered that the early immigrants, many of whom are still living, came to

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FRENCH AND CONGO NEWS

Opposition Wins in Togoland

THE Opposition has won French Togoland's general election. The former French Togoland Government's defeat has taken most political observers by surprise, and marks a defeat for French policy in Togoland. M. Sylvanus Olympio's *Comite d'Action Togolaise* (C.U.T.) has won 28 out of 46 seats to the new Chamber of Deputies. M. Olympio, who is expected to be elected Prime Minister, has stated that the new Assembly would be asked, as soon as it met, to discuss the future political status of the territory, and to seek independence. He will also seek continuation of U.N. Trusteeship status until the territory's future status is clarified. The C.U.T. has always sought independence for Togoland, rather than the close ties with France which the party of M. Grunitzky, the former Prime Minister, and his supporters, have wanted. The two former Government parties, who held all seats in the last chamber of deputies (whose election in 1956 had been boycotted by the opposition parties), have won only 15 seats in this election, fought for the first time under universal suffrage, and under U.N. supervision.

FOLLOWING THE FALL of the French Government, the executive committee of the R.D.A. party met in Paris last week under the chairmanship of their President, M. Felix Houphouët-Boigny, to decide on the conditions under which they will be prepared to participate in the next French Government. The party executive also discussed their disagreements on the question of federating the eight territories of A.O.F. under a responsible government at Dakar which have recently again manifested themselves within the R.D.A. Following the meeting, which was attended, among others, by M. Sékou Touré, leader of the 'federalist school', and by M. Auguste Denise, Vice-President of the Government of the Ivory Coast, which

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West Africa when the Middle East was under Turkish rule and education was a luxury enjoyed only by the very few rich people. We must therefore expect to find those immigrants illiterate and with no vocational or professional training. But the immigrants are great admirers of education, and there is rarely an immigrant of good means who does not send his children to be educated either in Lebanon or in the U.K. One regrettable fact, however, is that those children when they finish their higher education and are trained in professions such as law, medicine or engineering, do not think of returning to West Africa, but stay in Lebanon or go to other places. This problem will be dealt with, however, in a later article.

Another regrettable point is that many of the immigrants' children do not succeed in school and fail to get any professional qualifications. The reasons are many. First, the children are away from their parents' guidance and under the control of their loving, but illiterate, grandfathers and grandmothers in Lebanon. Secondly, they have lots of pocket-money sent to them directly, the spending of which naturally takes their study time. Thirdly, they are always thinking of their parents in Africa and of the easy way in which they could make money by going to the family business; so at the first failure they meet at school they decide to give up, satisfied with being able to read and write English or French, or both. Their parents who, being illiterate, are badly in need of a trustworthy son instead of a costly local clerk to take charge of the business correspondence, and who, faced with the strict immigration laws, are not able to get anyone to help them in their expanding business except a son born in the country, seem quite ready and willing to accept 'God's will' and bring their son back to Africa, instead of pressing him to try again at school.

MARWAN HANNA.

is opposed to French West African Federation, it was apparently decided that the R.D.A. would participate in a future French Government, provided an unequivocal understanding is given to revise first the *loi cadre* for French Africa and give each of the territories complete internal autonomy, including control over the judiciary, police and armed forces; and secondly to revise the French Constitution, at present unitary in such a way that the establishment of an Afro-French Federation becomes possible. It is believed that the R.D.A. would also wish that any new French Government left the door open for direct negotiations with Algeria, and recognised her right to independence. On the question of federating A.O.F. a compromise was once again reached. It was agreed that executive committees should be elected soon by the *Grand Conseils* of A.O.F. and A.E.F. to work with the High Commissioners for A.O.F. and A.E.F. respectively, but whose powers should not exceed those at present held by the administrative services now attached to the two groups of territories. It was recognised that responsible federal government at Dakar and Brazzaville could only be set up after constitutional revision in Paris; this would, under the best of circumstances, take many months; so that the R.D.A. can again consult its membership in the territories on this thorny question of whether they want to federate in Africa. Following this compromise solution, it is believed that the Ivory Coast leaders have agreed to continue co-operation with the *Grand Conseil* of A.O.F.

M. GABRIEL D'ARBOUSSIER, President of the *Grand Conseil* of A.O.F., and M. Hamani Diori, Deputy Speaker in the French Parliament, both of whom are R.D.A. members of the Territorial Assembly of Niger, are, this week, attending the current session of the Assembly, in which the R.D.A. is the minority party. M. D'Arboussier was thus not able to lead the French delegation to F.A.O.'s regional conference in Accra; his place has been taken by M. Modibo Keita, another leading member of the R.D.A.

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FRENCH AND CONGO NEWS

Mauritania Wants Independence

MAURITANIA'S main political parties, which have merged to form the *Parti du Regroupement Mauritanien*, held a congress at Alleg earlier this month. The new party favours 'unity of action' with the two major parties of 'Black Africa', the R.D.A. and P.R.A., but will seek merger with neither. This means that neither of the two major parties will necessarily be able to count on the support of the Mauritanian party in the *Grand Conseil* of A.O.F. where neither now has a clear majority.

The Alleg congress decided to reserve its views on the need for a federal executive for A.O.F., a point for which the P.R.A. presses unanimously, and on which the R.D.A. is somewhat divided. The congress discussed Morocco's territorial claims on Mauritania to which it was unreservedly hostile, but agreed to press for economic co-operation with Morocco. Finally, Mauritania is to press for complete internal autonomy and aims to achieve 'total independence'.

Mauritania, semi-desert country, three-quarters of whose inhabitants are Arab, borders on North Africa in the north, and Senegal in the south; at present it forms part of the group of eight French West African territories, and its government strongly supports this position. Some Mauritanian chiefs have, however, recently sworn allegiance to the King of Morocco, and there is no doubt that there is some Mauritanian support based on desire for Arab solidarity for Morocco's territorial claim. Mauritania is a bridge between North and West Africa, and the political future of this economically weak country is being watched carefully both in Africa and Europe.

THE BELGIAN CONGO'S pavilion at the Brussels International Exhibition has been officially opened by the Belgian Minister for Colonial Affairs. The exhibits are designed to illustrate the Congo's economic and social progress during the 75 years of Belgium's rule there.



M. Sylvanus Olympio who is shortly expected to be confirmed as French Togoland's new Prime Minister. The Premier Designate is reported as saying that while his aim is complete independence, he 'would like to follow in the footsteps of Nkrumah and not go too fast. Now that power is in our hands we shall have to look before we leap'.

M. FELIX HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY is Minister of State in the new French Government of M. Pflimlin, which was voted into office this week, while demonstrators outside the National Assembly were demanding a government of Public Safety and the army command in Algeria was joining settlers in refusing co-operation with M. Pflimlin. M. Houphouët-Boigny, who has been a member of every French Government since 1956, and who has figured on the list of every candidate for the Premiership, will keep a watching brief on the *loi cadre* for Black Africa, and for the constitutional revision aimed at redefinition of France's relationship with Black Africa, which M. Pflimlin has promised as a matter of urgency. However, the Algerian question overshadows all else in France, and action on Black Africa will, it is believed, recede into the background. The names of African state secretaries in the French Cabinet, of which there were three in the last government, remain to be announced.

DISCUSSING THE Ivory Coast's decision not to join a federal government which might be set up at Dakar, M. Houphouët-Boigny, President of the R.D.A., has said that the Ivory Coast has taken back her liberty of action, and is determined to join the Afro-French community as one individual, and not part of a group of territories. The other territories were free to do what they wanted; if they wanted to make up a group amongst themselves, and then join the community, that was their affair. But in M. Houphouët-Boigny's view, a democratic federal government at Dakar, on top of responsible governments at territorial levels would constitute a luxury in men and money which Overseas France could ill afford. He would like to see a 'federal executive' only in Paris, composed of all the members of the Afro-French community and with responsibility of mutually agreed common subjects.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of F.I.D.E.S., the French Fund for investment in French overseas territories, has recently voted money for the following projects: 240 million francs for a road in the Dubroka area of French Guinea; 1,900 million francs for access roads to the projected Kouilou hydro-electric dam in Middle Congo; 365 million francs for investment in Miferma, the international company which is to exploit iron ore in Mauritania; 380 million francs for construction of a bridge across the Niger at Bamako, capital of the French Soudan. Smaller sums have also been voted for various investigations into port extensions, etc.

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THE LEBANESE IN WEST AFRICA : 4

Problems and Criticisms

LIKE all minorities in a foreign country the Lebanese have earned during the 65 years of their stay in West Africa much praise, coupled with severe criticisms. Unlike criticism, praise seldom creates problems and, therefore, I will not describe the great achievements which the Lebanese immigrants have attained, or the wealth and prosperity which they have brought to West Africa. If their achievements are overlooked, the Lebanese immigrants lose little; but if the causes of the people's distrust of them are not pointed out and discussed, so that the issues may be clarified and remedied, the whole position of the Lebanese, and their future in West Africa, may eventually be in jeopardy. Even though in the past 30 years disturbances and open attacks on the Lebanese have taken place, yet the tension was never as high as at present and the problem was never as acute.

Criticisms against the Lebanese immigrant could be broadly divided into three categories. First there are those criticisms emanating from trading and commercial practices; secondly, criticisms based on the social and moral practices; and, lastly, criticisms pertaining to a special situation in particular territories—such as the diamond smuggling in Sierra Leone. I propose to investigate very briefly each of these causes and to try to determine how valid they are.

Trade and Commerce: The most common criticism of the Lebanese is that they are foreigners who come to the country for a short period, with the intention of collecting money by any possible means, and having done that they take their money and return to Lebanon. By doing this, the critics say the Lebanese displace the native African of his chances in trade and, by taking the money out of the country, they reduce its national income. At first sight, and unfortunately many people rely on superficial evidence, these allegations seem to be true. The Lebanese have arrived in the country poor and with no capital, and now they are rich. It must be, the critics therefore conclude, that the money they have amassed is the money of the native population and would have gone to them had there been no Lebanese. Yet the critics seem to ignore the fact that the Lebaneses mainly benefit from the trade they themselves have generated. In the short space of this article no detailed economic discussion could be undertaken, but it should suffice to say that it is completely wrong to assume that the money which the Lebanese immigrants have earned would have been apportioned among the natives if the Lebanese were not there. Income can only be created by capital, skill and hard work, and when these three factors are present profits accumulate—irrespective of the race or nationality of the trader. Neither restrictive immigration laws, nor racial antagonism can generate income. The allegation that the Lebanese displaced the native trader is not valid either. If we admit that the Lebanese were poor when they arrived, so runs the argument, then how could a few penniless persons take away the trade from well-established native traders? Perhaps the answer is that when the Lebanese arrived there were no native traders for, if there were, the Lebanese without capital could never have established their position in the face of native competition. This position was made clear to me when in a recent visit to Sierra Leone the manager of a big European firm assured me that the Lebanese did not displace the Creole traders in the Colony, but simply picked up the market left vacant by the movement of the Creoles to the protectorate and elsewhere so as to avoid the Hut tax. He further added that had it not been for the Lebanese the country would definitely not have reached its present stage of economic and commercial development. Further proof that had not the Lebanese been in West Africa, or supposing they leave tomorrow,

their share of trade will not devolve on Africans, is furnished by Dr. N. A. Cox-George's report on African participation in the commerce of Sierra Leone, 1958.

He shows that where in 1953 the share of the Lebanese total tonnage dropped from 14.1 per cent to 11.7 per cent the difference was not picked up by the Africans but by the European firms, whose tonnage increased by two thousand at a time where total tonnage dropped by about a thousand and a half. Such figures indicate that an elimination of a middle competitor does not help the smaller one, but on the contrary, increases the power of the larger. The Lebanese in West Africa are, in fact, the only group able to face the dominance of the big firms and obtain for themselves, and other petty traders of all races, a secure place in a highly specialised competitive market.

As for the allegation that the Lebanese remit their savings to Lebanon, one could hardly expect them in the first instance to do otherwise. It should be remembered that the main cause for Lebanese emigration was their misery and poverty under the Ottoman Turks. Each emigrant had a family which was solely dependent for its living on what he sent from abroad. In recent years also, emigrants had to send money to maintain their children at schools in Lebanon or the U.K. as there are no suitable schools in West Africa. However, although one must admit that these remittances should not develop into a large-scale outward movement of capital, as this would certainly be injurious to the economy, it must be pointed out that there is no indication that this is done. Whenever the law permits, the Lebanese invest in real estate, which in recent years is gaining more and more prominence as an important commercial enterprise. Family concerns and firms dating as far back as the beginning of the century are another indication that the Lebanese do not tend to move their capital out of the country as long as it is secure.

Social and Moral Practices: Socially the Lebanese form a distinct group; however, this is not their fault alone, and both the Africans, Europeans and the Government are partly responsible. The Lebanese are criticised by the Europeans for their habits, especially where the wife and the husband cook, eat and carry on their family gatherings in the shop. They also blame them for living at a lower standard than their income and resources entitle them to. This criticism was true 10 or 20 years ago, but not any more, as anyone who knows the Lebanese social and domestic life in cities like Accra, Lagos, Kano and Freetown is able to see for himself. Much of this allegation is still true, however, of those Lebanese living in the remote rural areas; but in time they too will surely follow the lead of their compatriots in the cities. The native population does not seem to have many objections towards Lebanese social life, and I have been delightfully entertained by many African barristers, merchants, and other representatives of the middle class. Assimilation, however, is not complete, and although it cannot be immediately expected, harmonious relationships should and could be developed between the three groups or, at least, between the Africans and the Lebanese.

Diamond Smuggling: This is particularly limited to Sierra Leone, where the Lebanese are surely taking part in the game. They are by no means however the only group, and court and police records show that many others of all races and nationalities are involved. It is, I think, a mistake to pin on the whole Lebanese community the acts of a few of its members. I have met many Lebanese in Sierra Leone who were disgusted with the acts of their fellow countrymen and were prepared to do anything to help the authorities in punishing the offenders. Every society has its bad members, and the Lebanese Government on its part is doing all it can to ensure that future immigrants will be honest, reliable persons. The co-operation of the two governments—Lebanese and Sierra Leone—should, as I will indicate in my fifth article, benefit all concerned.

MARWAN HANNA.

PORTRAIT

The Obi of Onitsha

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

THE Eastern Region of Nigeria does not have a system of chiefs to compare with that of the powerful Emirs of the North, or the Obas of Western Nigeria. On the whole chiefs in the Eastern Region are of small importance both territorially and in the extent of their power. However, the influence of Benin, with its great and powerful Oba, has been strong on the North-Western Ibos, and at Onitsha is to be found the most important and influential of all the chiefs of the Eastern Region: the Obi of Onitsha. There, as Miss Lucy Mair put it in *West Africa*, is a chief 'as Europeans normally have understood that word'.

Until recently chiefs have been almost entirely politically discounted in the Eastern Region, which unlike the North and West does not yet have an upper house, where chiefs, representing the traditional rather than the democratic forces in the country, can deliberate. Thus a chief, even as influential as the Obi was of little political importance. Yet it would be a mistake to think that chiefs have no function in the life of the Eastern Region. Indeed, as the Jones report, published last year, showed, a lot of people in the East feel that democratic forces have steamrollered the old social system out of their life, and that there should be a place for the traditional authorities in the life of the country.

Mr. Jones went so far as to recommend the establishment of a House of Chiefs, and this is, in fact, to be created by the Regional Government fairly soon. The interest of the Obi of Onitsha then becomes obvious. As probably the most senior of all Eastern chiefs he will play, if not as president of the House, a leading vote in its early development.

Like Father, Like Son

James Okosi succeeded his father as Obi in 1935, though the title is certainly not hereditary, for in theory it is meant to be held in turn by a representative of each of the six wards of the town. The appointment is, however, for life, and the Obi's father held the throne for 31 years.

For 17 years James Okosi worked in government service, before becoming Obi. He had experience in the marine department and the administrative service. He spent much of his time in the North, at Kaduna, Zaria, Minna, Bida and Ilorin, and became a 1st class clerk.

During the 23 years he has been Obi of Onitsha, his position and power have changed considerably. He will remember the days when his father ruled the people of Onitsha directly. Today the Town Council, on which he sits as President, together with his chiefs, or Ndichies (aged ones) is dominated by the democratically elected members. About this the Obi has never been really happy. Partly it is because by character, like many other chiefs, he is inclined to believe in the values of the past, but more than this he stands on this matter for the feelings of many of his people. The very cosmopolitan town of Onitsha is divided into the Inland Town where the indigenous Onitsha Ibos live, and the Waterside—the home of non-Onitsha Ibos. Unfortunately for the peace of the town the latter outnumber the former. If James Okosi opposed the extension of suffrage to the Town Council—which anyway the non-Onitsha Ibos for long boycotted—it was because he did not want to see his town swamped by strangers.

The Obi of Onitsha, as one of his red-cap chiefs observed, is very broad-minded. He was one of the first in the East to admit non-titled men to his councils and to the Native court. He has always encouraged intelligent young men



James Okosi, Obi of Onitsha.

to come into his government. Indeed, chiefs from the West have come to Onitsha to study his system, and he has even allowed Yorubas, Hausas and Nupes to his councils.

The Obi's own Council supplements that of the Town Council. It is very much reduced in its powers, and consists of about 20 Ndichies, or counsellors divided into three groups, the senior of which represents his 'executive'. It is a system several centuries old, evolved in an important trading city on the Niger, which today has one of the largest markets in Africa. It is exclusive to Onitsha men of the 'patrician' classes. Much of the Obi's power is judicial, although even this is restricted. He has jurisdiction over land disputes, and some have found his land litigation obscure and tiresome. However, he is much sought in Onitsha as an arbiter, especially in private disputes.

The Wisdom of The Elders

There are those who think the Obi reactionary. Certainly there is elaborate ceremonial in his court, but unlike many Emirs he will break that awkward rule about indirect conversation through his translator and speak to you frankly in English. He does not think of himself as reactionary, but feels he represents a much neglected force in Eastern Region life. He feels that young men, influenced by democratic ideals may have all the ideas; but the chiefs have the wisdom of age and experience. He thinks the House of Chiefs will be an invaluable check on the excesses of democracy, and even if, like the House of Lords, it will have little real power, if only it can delay controversial measures and give the lower house time to think it will serve its purpose. Furthermore, he believes a House of Chiefs will lend dignity to the constitution.

THE LEBANESE IN WEST AFRICA: 5

Suggestions and Recommendations

IN concluding this series of articles, I would like to make a few suggestions which in my opinion will help to improve relations between the peoples of West Africa and the Lebanese immigrants. Some of these suggestions may seem rather radical, but on closer examination their benefit and practicability should become apparent, provided that trust and goodwill prevail among all concerned.

One of the sore points that is always causing anxiety to the Lebanese emigrants is their feeling of insecurity and isolation. Such isolation and sense of 'separateness' is often held against them by their critics, but it is not solely the fault of the emigrants. The West African Governments did nothing to make the Lebanese feel that they are, or might even become, full citizens—with all the rights and duties of citizenship. Moreover, a Lebanese, even though born in a West African territory and entitled to its nationality, still faces numerous restrictive laws and ordinances in a country that is supposed to be his. The generally adopted definition of a West African, whether Ghanaian, Nigerian, or Sierra Leonean, as a person who is a British subject or British protected person and is a member of a race, tribe or community settled in the territory other than a race, tribe or community of European or Asiatic origin, is a significant example of the exclusiveness of West African nationality laws. Legislators may have purposely used this definition to exclude members of certain ethnic groups from the benefits or the obligations of the law in order to avoid the creation of a multi-racial society composed of whites and blacks; yet no matter how good the intentions, such legislation cannot but create a feeling of insecurity among the Lebanese immigrants.

For several reasons the fear that the Lebanese might simply regard themselves as white settlers is definitely unfounded. They have proved in their past relations that they do not have any colour or racial prejudice; their number is small; and they are of recent arrival to a country with comparatively well developed legal and social systems which they have to accept. They cannot alter, nor do they want to alter the laws for their private benefit. All they want is equality before the law: once this is granted I am sure the Lebanese will prove themselves to be good, industrious, and devoted citizens. They have proved themselves all over the world from the United States to Brazil, from Argentina to Japan, and there is no reason why they would not prove it in Africa—if they are given the chance.

Another suggestion, whose enforcement is the responsibility of the Lebanese Government, is to ensure that only persons who are very clearly good citizens are allowed to emigrate. The Lebanese Government can and should control the number and calibre of emigrants. Fortunately, the Lebanese Government is already following this policy to some extent, and a special office was established last year in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigration to regulate the flow of emigrants. However, the emigrants also face the strict immigration laws in each of the West African countries. The effect of these laws is more extensive than appears at first sight. In the first instance they tend to consolidate in the receiving country the old immigrants who are the products of the Ottoman Turks' Lebanon, and their relatives and descendants. At present no immigrant is admitted unless an already established immigrant obtains permission for his entry and this is usually granted only on very strict conditions. In these circumstances it is only natural, therefore, that the established immigrant should bring a relative of similar education and outlook.

Another unfortunate effect of the immigration laws is felt by the children of the immigrants who are born in West Africa and sent abroad for their education. Having been born in the country they are allowed to return, and as a result, most Lebanese traders in their pressing need for someone to help them in their businesses call their children back before they even finish their secondary education.

If the parents were able to easily recruit a fresh assistant from Lebanon these children would have the chance of finishing their education and would thus be able to return to Africa with professional training—as barristers, doctors, engineers. With the establishment of the Lebanese Office to scrutinise future emigrants, and as the fears of a multi-racial society die, a relaxation of the immigration laws should be possible and will certainly help to improve the situation of the Lebanese and raise the social, moral, and cultural standards of the community.

The arguments against restricting Lebanese immigration to preserve trade for the Africans were brilliantly presented by Mr. P. T. Bauer, of Cambridge University, in his book *West African Trade*. There he conclusively shows that a relaxation of the present laws will help to increase the volume and kinds of trade, and reduce the monopoly of the big firms, thus indirectly creating more jobs for Africans.

Lebanon is saturated at present with people with professional and technical skills who are seeking work in all parts of the world but especially in the underdeveloped Arab States like Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the Trucial coast sheikdoms. The Lebanese Government might recruit through its emigration office some of these and direct them towards West Africa. Naturally it can only do this if the West African Governments are ready and willing to receive them. All agree that the West African countries are very much in need of technical and professional men. I do not see why they should not look for assistance from Lebanon. The work of Lebanese technicians in other countries could be studied and will certainly furnish an evidence of their efficiency and skill. While the historical ties of the Lebanese in West Africa and the existence of common interests in the development of West Africa should stimulate the Lebanese technicians to work with more vigour and sincerity than other foreign technicians. However, the responsibility of the Lebanese immigrants is no less than that of their Government: it is sad to observe that most of the children of immigrants who succeed in getting a professional training rarely return to West Africa. Once their security is guaranteed, the immigrants should accept responsibility towards West Africa and return there to serve the country which enabled their families to finance their education. Fortunately, some signs of this development can be observed in recent years and many Lebanese lawyers and doctors are now beginning to return.

One point which struck me in my recent visit to West Africa is the Africans' ignorance of Lebanon and the Lebanese, other than those they see daily. As a result, most Africans have in their minds only a stereotyped picture of the Lebanon and the Lebanese—using the traders as examples. It is the duty of the Lebanese Government and Lebanese community in Africa to tell the Africans of all aspects of life in their country. This could be done in a number of ways: foremost in importance is the establishment of diplomatic relations on an Ambassadorial level. In addition, the Embassy should be efficiently staffed, and documents and literature about present-day Lebanon should be freely available. Secondly, the Lebanese community should create a fund, through contributions from its members, to grant scholarships to African students to study in Lebanon's three universities, two of which are reputed to be among the best in the Middle East and Africa. Thirdly, the Lebanese Government should continuously extend invitations to West African officials and civic personalities to visit Lebanon as guests of the government. Trade and cultural agreements should be entered into by both governments, and with the help of the immigrants' capital joint Lebanese and West African companies, both private and public, could be formed. For example, an airway company, a steamship company, etc.

These are but a few of the many ways in which the general situation may be improved; there are certainly many others. My sincere hope is that these suggestions will stimulate both Lebanese and Africans so that in discussions between them it will be possible to find other solutions which, I am sure, will be even more efficacious than mine.

MARWAN HANNA.