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1941

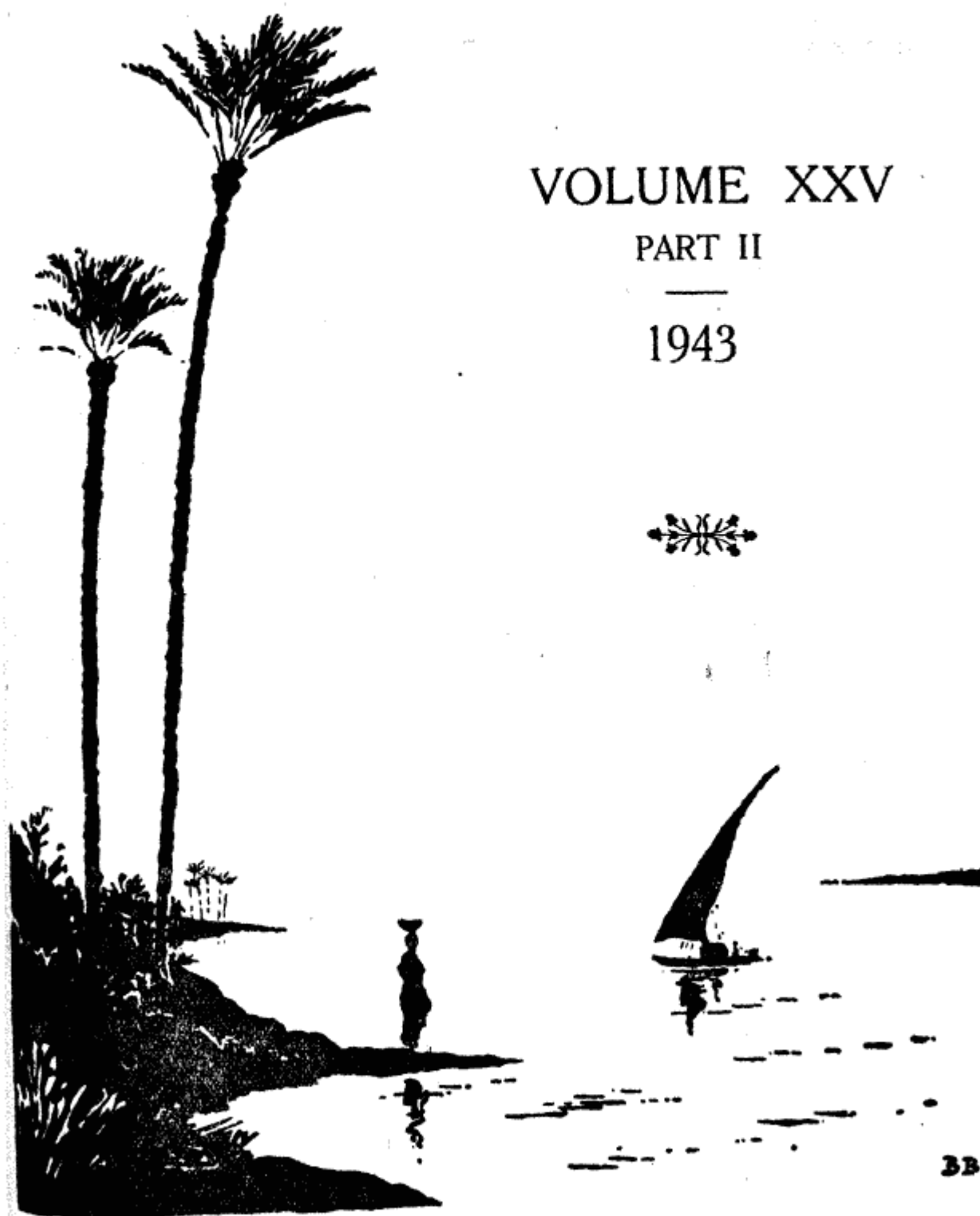
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SUDAN NOTES & RECORDS

VOLUME XXV

PART II

1943



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ERRATA.

PAGE 3. last paragraph, fifth line *for* "1914-1944" *read* "1914-1922."

PAGE 6. fourth line from end *for* "to is" *read* "is to."

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THE EBOUE MEMORANDA OF 1941

INTRODUCTORY.

It is thought that the four documents which have been translated or summarised below are of sufficiently general interest to justify their issue in the form of a special number. They embody the theory and to some extent report the progress of a new administrative policy in French Equatorial Africa, mainly conceived and carried out by one remarkable man.

African in origin, West Indian by birth, and French by upbringing, Felix Eboué illustrates by his career a sphere in which the French colonial system can claim to have succeeded in part where we have so far failed. These papers reflect his endeavours to follow our lead where we have been successful and, more important, to suggest answers to problems which are still unsolved by either France or Britain.

He was born at Cayenne in French Guiana on 26th December, 1884 and entered the colonial service in 1909, serving for more than twenty years in the Ubangui-Shari province on the south-western borders of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. From 1932-36 he held the rank of Secretary-General, first in Martinique and then in the French Sudan. He returned to the West Indies as Governor of Guadeloupe in 1936 but was transferred to Fort Lamy in 1939 and was Governor of Chad at the time of the Petain Armistice.

No one has better reason to appreciate the importance of Chad to the Middle East war effort than we have here in the Sudan. If M. Eboué had followed his Governor-General, Boisson, and the rest of the French colonies into the Vichy camp, the year 1940 might

well have ended in a much less satisfactory manner. Instead he and the Chad garrison declared for De Gaulle on August 27th, thereby giving a lead to the other Equatorial colonies, closing the Axis road into Central Africa and putting new heart into patriotic Frenchmen all over the world.

However we are not concerned here with the man who saved the honour of the old French Empire but with the man who is trying to lay the foundations of the new.

His preceptors are Lugard and Lyautey, the apostles of indirect rule, and although a lot of what he says has long since become familiar policy to us, no one with any administrative experience can fail to be struck by the shrewdness and perspicacity which foresees difficulty after difficulty. He is continually pegging down the balloon of theory to good solid earth.

" Native customs are always changing. Let us not freeze them into immobility."

" Changes of chief are not just deplorable. They are absurd."

" The office of chief is not a suitable reward for old soldiers or faithful corner boys."

The chapters on indirect rule are instructive therefore as well as interesting, but for us the chief value of the memoranda lies in the treatment of the still unsolved social problems of urban communities, of native and foreigner, of the discontented intelligentsia, of floating labour and falling birth-rates, of the break-up of tribal society and of the impact of Christian teaching and western commerce upon primitive communities.

M. Eboué's underlying principle for the solution of these problems is that of Trusteeship, but instead of converting the administrative service into a board of guardians, anxiously eyeing the disruptive missionary or the profit-seeking merchant-venturer, he calls upon all three to co-operate since their interests are ultimately identical, the prosperity of the country in which they serve. It should be remembered when reading the Memorandum on Native

Policy, the fourth paper in this collection, that it was discussed in advance and revised and reworded by a committee which included the Heads of the Missions and the representatives of Chambers of Commerce and other commercial interests.

It might be supposed that a country which produced Felix Eboué and promoted him to his present office, that of Governor General of French Equatorial Africa, has solved the problem of the intelligentsia. Yet in point of fact French policy has failed in two ways. The number of actual or potential African-born administrators is infinitesimal compared with the population of French Africa, and the product is no longer an African but a Frenchman.

It was, I think, Elizabeth Munro who quoted "Air France" and "Imperial Airways" as titles typical of the outlook of the two imperial powers which bestowed them. The French Empire is regarded as an extension of and corollary to France much as outer Europe was to be corollary to Germany under the New Order. The African has duties to France. He must fight for her and he must produce for her, and in return he is given security and a theoretically wide but actually very restricted potential access to French civilisation and French citizenship. Centuries of intellectual domination of the western world have convinced the French people of the intrinsic superiority of their culture over any other, even for a society based upon entirely different principles. An English parallel is the conviction of the absolute rightness and applicability of English Law and English Legal Procedure, which was reflected in some of the proceedings and findings of the Bushe Commission in East Africa in 1934.

France's main solution, then, for the political needs of her native subjects was simply to open the door of French citizenship to such as could make their way up the front steps. Since of the 14 million persons in French West Africa only 94 did this during the years 1914-1944¹ it can fairly be said that a measure which has great propaganda value for France in the countries of the colour bar has not in fact proved effective in educating the bulk of sophisticated

1. See Lucy P. Mair—Native Policies in Africa, p. 191

native society up to an appreciation of or a desire to share in the civilising mission of France. So the paradox arises that with a few remarkable exceptions the intelligentsia in French Africa are less educated, less Europeanised in the full sense of the word than their opposite numbers in the British Colonies and yet by reason of their acquiescence in the status quo and their appreciation of a theoretical privilege which few of them consider in practice to be worth striving after, are more loyal to and less critical of their rulers. At the same time the rural communities, hitherto neglected and left to their own devices, have lost their will to survive and when they are in close proximity to British colonies are continually hankering after the happier conditions they see obtaining there.

Thus the collapse of France and the slow decline of Vichy produced in 1941-42, not a demand by an educated minority for immediate post-war independence but an increasing unrest and disillusion amongst the tribes along the Niger, which is likely to present France with a serious problem after the war. Loyalty and prestige can only be restored by a vigorous and new native policy, so in a sense the future of French Africa depends upon the success of the experiments which are now being carried out in "F.E.A."

The French system has always been highly centralised. The smallest change had to be referred to Paris and there was little room for the wide variation of policy which distinguishes, for instance, Nigeria from Kenya. The fortune of war thus gave M. Eboué an opportunity denied to his predecessors. It is particularly fortunate that he should have had the experience, the ability and the will to set to work at once.

The co-operation of the commercial community was doubtless more easily forthcoming in that the shrinkage of labour had begun to be ominously apparent to all. Equatorial Africa had been spared the alternatives of military conscription or compulsory service in a labour corps¹ imposed upon the other African colonies but had become in compensation the happy hunting ground of the concessionaire. The

1. "SMOTIG": Service de Main d'œuvre Obligatoire des Travaux d'Intérêt Général. For details see L.P. Mair loc. cit.

cause of the lack of one and the presence of the other was under-population. "A.E.F."² has 3 million inhabitants to the 14 millions of "A.O.F."³ and is about the same size. The concessionaires were let loose to exploit the wild products of the country as best they might with such labour as they could get, and absolute rights to the products of not less than one third of the entire area of A.E.F. were granted to the forty odd interested companies. They and their successors "bled the land and put nothing back." For a parallel conceive of the gum forests of Kordofan being granted to a monopolist British company which would hire the local Arabs to pick gum for it. It may sound fantastic but it is not so very different from the Gabon timber trade, where the native employees earn about 6% of the value of the product.

This system of tapping natural products by concessions and of developing new crops by plantation labour, often imported from other parts of the country, instead of by peasant communities based on the village,⁴ has now proved itself to be uneconomic as well as inhuman, and conditions have of course improved considerably, especially in West Africa, where some of the ideas, political, social and economic, advanced by M. Eboué have already been put into practice. The idea of an "assimilated" class of emancipated native short of full French citizenship and the idea of village labour settlements have both been tried out there. The system, familiar in British West Africa, of encouraging native production, has now been carried out so widely and successfully that before the war exports of native crops (largely ground-nuts) were twice as great as those of concessionaire produce.

F.E.A. however lagged behind. In 1935 the concessionaires exported 366,000 tons of produce, the native less than 8,000. M. Reste, who came to Brazzaville from the Ivory Coast in the middle

2. Afrique Equatoriale Française.

3. Afrique Occidentale Française.

4. Compare the Gezira Scheme with the Niger Valley Cotton Irrigation Scheme, which employed in 1927 12,000 natives who had been forced to migrate. A scheme for family settlements was introduced later but it affected only a small minority.

thirties, did his best to stimulate the Moyen Congo into activity but in spite of his efforts the colony remained, in M. Eboué's words, the Cinderella of the French Empire. France's lack of interest laid its dead hand upon every project and most of the officials.

It is the more remarkable that Cinderella should have exchanged her broom for the sword of St. Joan what time her elderly ugly sisters were listening to the blandishments of fortune hunters from Berlin or Tokio. For a time the small colonial capital of Brazzaville became the de facto capital of the French Empire. It was well for France and for Brazzaville that she had men of the right calibre to guide her.

* * *

No attempt has been made at literal translation. Passages of no particular interest to the general reader have been summarised or omitted. Wherever possible the relevant British title has been used as the equivalent of French official phraseology. The main object of the translation is to put M. Eboué's ideas and expressions into a readable English guise.

The Editor wishes to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Mrs. N. Robertson and of Mr. L. N. Newell in preparing the translation.

K.D.D.H.

MEMORANDUM ON
THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF FRENCH
EQUATORIAL AFRICA

dated January 19th, 1941

The translation reprinted by kind permission of the Government of Nigeria, with the official titles altered to conform with those used in the later papers.

General de Gaulle has done me the honour to appoint me to the Governor-generalship of French Equatorial Africa. The significance of this promotion is unmistakable. The will to carry on the war, a firm refusal to admit defeat, the clear realization of the impasse to which the habit of compromise has inevitably brought France and her Empire ; all this, which has been so strongly typified in Chad and in the whole of French Equatorial Africa, constitutes the fundamental conception of General de Gaulle. Therein lies our natural bond with him, sharing as we do a common aim to reconquer France and save her Empire.

Faced with the alternative of capitulation or war we have chosen war. To-day, therefore, there is no escape from that fact for any of us. Whatever our job may be there is no alternative but to devote our utmost energies and our every thought to the prosecution of the war.

It is not a question of a platonic obligation. In breaking with a Government under enemy domination we did something that had to be done but which was nevertheless no more than a negative achievement. None of us should derive honour or glory from the fact that he has taken the side of France. Our first reaction was naturally one of joy at having escaped from the ranks of defeat, but now that the shouting is done we must turn our backs on non-essentials and devote our minds wholly to the serious aspects of war. Each

one of us, no matter what his station, will carry with him into the fight the knowledge of France's affliction, of the present threat to her Empire, and of the powerful part which a lucid and determined will may play in shaping the nation's destiny from now on.

Yet the resolve to continue the war should not prevent us from carrying on the work of administration. Quite the contrary. It would be a poor system which deferred all necessary reform until the day of victory.

We must be guided by two very modest yet very important precepts: to simplify the machinery of administration and to handle it with discretion. The simplifying process is under way and already former strongholds, bristling with taxes and girt with regulations, have collapsed to the joint relief of both public and officials. But that is only a beginning and I am anxious that in the administrative sphere the spirit of initiative, which in the last six months has already made considerable progress, should strive in particular, indeed almost to the exclusion of all else, to free the Colony from the fetters of paper work which serve only to impede its progress. All suggestions will be welcomed and from now on they are definitely invited. I cannot guarantee that all of them will be adopted but every time anyone comes to me with a proposal for the suppression of some useless form and the substitution of logic for routine I can assure you he will be given a hearing.

You will no doubt understand what I mean when I talk of handling the administrative machinery with discretion. It would be disgraceful, particularly at the present time, to abuse the privileges of office. I seem to have noticed, not indeed in the Provinces but in Brazzaville itself, a persistent tendency to confront the Treasury with a series of "acquired rights" and "prerogatives." I certainly do not mean to reproach you with a luxurious standard of living, which even here in Brazzaville is the reverse of excessive; but I am anxious that every individual, independently of any official pressure, should make it his business to husband the Colony's resources to the uttermost. We must all of us, of our own free will, turn our backs on

self-indulgence and laxity. You have seen the harmful results of such defects in France. We owe it to her, we owe it to ourselves to stamp them out.

II

But even when we have done all this, we shall have accomplished only minor reforms. There are other and worthier tasks ahead. It is well-known that the disasters of the first phase of the war were due not only to technical blunders but also to the internal corruption of a system in which initiative had gradually been ousted by the anonymous and irresponsible dictatorship of bureaucracy. Officials, including even those concerned with questions of national defence, were satisfied they had done their duty if by occupying their desks for the requisite number of hours each day they were able to forward to the so-called "competent" authority a periodical report compiled from other periodical reports which had in their turn been compiled by other official departments in which a similar spirit prevailed. The inevitable consequence of such a system, in which the best could find no scope, was a spirit of indifference leading ultimately to hypocrisy. We have had experience of this fundamental vice in this very Colony, though the geographical layout of its administrative divisions should have made it impossible. It is our business to-day to uproot it from Equatorial Africa altogether, not only for the good of the Colony itself, but also because Equatorial Africa, the first French territory to become free, must be the source from which example and progressive thought will gradually spread throughout the Empire, ultimately reaching France and thus assuring her internal re-birth after the re-conquest.

We shall endeavour to re-establish responsibility in all grades of the service. Each man must recognize certain responsibilities as being his alone, with the knowledge that it is his duty, according to his rank and functions, to act on his own initiative for the common good. In the service of the Colony each must understand the need for discipline, but also of cultivating a vigorous sense of responsibility worthy of the principles of liberty. Decentralization is essential if

we are to achieve this aim. General de Gaulle has already authorized the High Commissioner to enact legislation regarding matters which were formerly the monopoly of the home Government. Similarly it is the Governor-general's intention that the normal powers of Governors serving under him should be restored in full and that they should enjoy entire and individual freedom in the execution of general instructions. An official order will very shortly be issued to ratify this reform.

Centralization, being suppressed at Brazzaville, must not be allowed to re-appear in territorial headquarters. In what may be described as a hierarchy of responsibilities the relations between Governors and Provincial Commissioners and between Provincial Commissioners and District Officers will be similar to those existing between the High Commissioner, the Governor-general and Governors. It is essential moreover that the responsibilities of the various offices should be defined. The organization of the central services must therefore be modified to some extent. I know that wise regulations have been framed to co-ordinate the functions of the central services at Brazzaville with those of the provincial authorities. It is however by no means unusual for a central department to intervene in the organization or execution of a piece of work done two or three thousand kilometres distant from Brazzaville, the successful completion of which should have remained solely the responsibility of the local departmental representative working in co-operation with the local administrator.

In the place of centralized services whose responsibility can always be either invoked or contested, with equal dialectical confusion of purpose, there will be substituted the system of Inspectors-general. These Inspectors-general will not be charged with executive duties but will be the advisers of the Governor-general and will represent him in the general supervision of all local departments. Thus they will be able to inspire unity of action and insure personal supervision of all governmental activities without in any way encroaching on the functions or cramping the initiative of the heads of departments.

The Inspectors-general, freed from the details of management which tend to divert their attention from the real problems, will thus be enabled, by extensive touring, to devote their attention to the territory of Equatorial Africa as a whole and to foster that exchange of ideas and views which is so necessary for real development.

The organization of the central offices of Government will remain unaltered in essentials but must be developed in the spirit which will animate us all. These offices will study problems and formulate decisions. This they will do with the same conception of administration as the Governor-general himself, namely, by laying down broad lines of action and by intervening as little as possible in details of execution. The principle of decentralization requires that there should be a clear vision of French Equatorial Africa with its various problems as a whole and the conviction that all action taken will be in accordance with the principles of hierarchical responsibility. In these headquarter offices, which will be accessible to all and whose staff will take a broad view of all problems throughout the country, there will be room for much initiative and this will be promoted and encouraged by the Governor-general.

III

The re-affirmation of the importance of personality in the system of administration is only one of the gains of the peaceful but profound revolution which we shall accomplish. We must likewise overcome the selfish spirit which has been one of the most serious defects in French society and which must now give place, both in war and in the peace which will follow, to one of solidarity, generosity and sacrifice.

It would not be correct to say that France failed because she was too much addicted to pleasure and enjoyment; but it is certain that as conditions of life before the war grew narrower and more restricted for Frenchmen our country became paralysed by a narrow egoism, each person's sole pre-occupation being to preserve at any cost the few goods which remained to him. Yet there is no doubt that, given a spirit of mutual sacrifice, all could have been saved both within and without.

Against this blind egoism we shall strive with all the more vigour knowing that France to-day is suffering and in want. All the proudest claims to have remained true to France would be no excuse, when we return, for having spent the war in a condition of even relative ease.

Some of us have the privilege, the value of which we must never forget, of having our wives and children here, far from the menace of the enemy. But if others know the sadness and anxiety of separation we all have the advantage of an untroubled daily existence which we must justify by throwing all our efforts into the struggle.

I have spoken of solidarity. Already we have seen new regulations framed in this spirit. For example, we have just decided to raise small salaries to a reasonable level, to increase allowances for families and above all to grant this allowance in future to settlers.

But there is still more to be done, and our generosity must be more direct, our sacrifice more personal and palpable. A system of voluntary contributions to supplement the provision made from public funds for war purposes will be set up by the end of this month of January and will place before everyone the imperious duty of dipping into his own pocket to help the common effort. Completely independent of the budget, under the minimum of administrative control, and destined solely for war purposes and the purchase of war material, this fund, the proceeds of which will be offered to the Head of the Free French Forces or to the Allied Governments, will be the personal conscious gesture of the population of French Equatorial Africa.

Let no one pride himself on his generosity or on his self-denial for the common safety. Let no one expect any gratitude. These voluntary contributions will be regarded as a continuing obligation, needing no thanks, each one of us giving monthly in the full measure dictated by his conscience. General de Gaulle has said : *Cette guerre est une véritable révolution*. The new spirit of national unity must, with all the sacrifices it entails, enter deeply into our lives and replace the old selfishness. The days of August the 26th, 27th and 28th have not only marked the awakening of our conscience as Frenchmen ; they begin an era in which self-interest must be unknown.

This alone will give back life and nobility to our country. Just as Germany was only able to prepare for and win the first phase of the war by the complete renunciation of all rights of the individual, so France will re-establish herself in a sovereign peace only by practising the same renunciation unstintingly. But we must find in ourselves the source from which spring the qualities necessary for success and we must give freely of our best to France putting all thought of self behind. Thus shall we make of the words *Responsabilité* and *Générosité* the necessary complement to the motto *Honneur et Patrie* which has relit the fires of resistance in the darkest hour of defeat and re-awakened our consciences as men and Frenchmen.

IV

In this common adherence to a higher ideal in our national and social duties we are actuated by the same spirit which has animated us all since the armistice. On reflection we find that a deep spiritual force has led each of us to act individually ; a strong moral urge has forbidden us to capitulate and has compelled each one of us to take up the task of restoring France. So also have we all found, in spite of religious and philosophic differences which might have appeared irreconcilable, a common purpose and the energy to pursue it as one man. Here is a great lesson which we must not fail to turn to our advantage. If we have been able so simply and unanimously to resolve a problem which created a serious crisis in the conscience of others, it is because there was a solid foundation of national feeling upon which, in our different ways, we could all build. This feeling has made the Movement possible ; and it is this which must maintain it and make it ever more effective.

We shall therefore put aside all sectarian feelings and concentrate only on our common aim and the means by which we may achieve it. No one amongst us will be reproached for his philosophical or religious beliefs, whatever they may be ; for in these beliefs he has found the key to the problem set before the conscience of Frenchmen. Tomorrow we shall return to France and there we may find not only the heaps of ruins piled up by the enemy but deep sources of

internal conflict. It is then that we shall realize the necessity for and the value of an awakening spirit to which each of us, having uprooted all sectarianism, will contribute his share.

As from to-day let us free our souls of narrow and provocative tendencies so that we may be worthy of undertaking the task of rebuilding France with all our hearts.

V

Our anxiety to continue the war with all our strength and all our ardour must not make us forget the needs of the Colony from which the war is being continued. The natives of Equatorial Africa, realizing that a different French policy might have led to oppression, have given us many proofs of their affection. Yet the difficulties of the present time make it more than ever necessary to maintain a sound native administration. Self-seeking chiefs, who have distorted the meaning of French protection of African peoples and who have forced Africans to surrender their most vital interests and even to fight against their native land, will one day have the consequences of their conduct brought home to them. A terrible problem will arise in those colonies which have failed to adopt the true cause on the day when, their first fears abated and with all the violence engendered by resentment and disappointment, the people demand a reckoning with their rulers.

There is no doubt that it will fall to Free France to repair the harm done in this way and to re-establish that French unity which, given even a little sincerity, need never have been disturbed.

We who in Equatorial Africa have declined to make this betrayal have no need to re-establish a confidence which has always existed. We must, however, remove the last traces of the disorganized period which followed the armistice and we must do so with all the more care owing to the inevitable break in the continuity of native policy in Equatorial Africa which resulted from that event.

Very soon I shall address instructions to the Governors of Territory on the methods which I propose to follow as regards native communities. For the moment I would point out that in spite of the

economic progress of our times, family and tribal organization, as well as political institutions which are indigenous to the country, survive and that it is only by respecting them, nay by promoting their development, that we can hope to consolidate the natural social structure and preserve the life of the people.

The natives too have a fatherland and this fatherland is symbolized and maintained for them by political institutions, however rudimentary they may be. Even the corrupt practices of a legitimate chief are, in their eyes, preferable to the lack of a chief, because his subjects feel that in obeying him they are at home. Economic individualism, on the contrary, while appearing to favour the native brings him no real benefit; he may have acquired a measure of comfort but, on the other hand, the real meaning of his life is lost to him.

The Director of Medical Services, General Sicé, whose wide experience of the country is undeniable, has observed that wherever individualism has been grafted onto native society the practice of abortion becomes common. That is the physical sign of a dissolution the effect of which in the end is to produce a type of "proletariat," quite well dressed perhaps, but wretched at heart and coming ultimately to have the reactions of a mass of individuals, lacking cohesion and with nothing left in the world to which they can attach themselves. Then we shall be forced to admit that we have not brought them the universal infallible talisman, the touch of which assures happiness, but that on the contrary we have encouraged them to abandon their own lands, their huts or their tents, their customs and their chiefs, their confidence in life and any taste they may have had for real progress.

I know how liable at times administrators are to chafe against the delays and faults of native administration, how often they are tempted in haste to cut what appears to them a Gordian knot. They should struggle against this tendency, praiseworthy in itself though it may be, and remind themselves that more has been achieved by the preservation of a society true to itself, than by attempting to improve it under conditions which are no longer natural.

This does not mean that authority should not be maintained. Let no one expect from us any compromise on the principle of authority. It has happened that strange weaknesses of character have little by little been the cause of incidents in the Middle-Congo which could doubtless have been settled by adequate firmness. So long as strict discipline is necessary, we shall exercise it. But it will be accompanied by a corresponding care for the welfare of the people. The moral and material good we do must be in proportion to the discipline we exact. We must and we will show ourselves as rigorous in our duties as in the exercise of our rights as rulers.

VI

A great part of our attention will be devoted to the health of the native population. General Sicé, Director of Medical Services, and I are in entire agreement on the method which should be followed. For it is more a question of method than of funds. With the personnel at our disposal and a stock of medicines which remains constant, medical activities can in many parts of the territory often be increased if the doctor or the European nurse possesses and makes good use of a vehicle suited to the roads of the locality.

We must try to follow the only system which allows one to keep in touch with the sick until they are cured and which in French West Africa is called *Centres fixes de consultation*. Once a week, or if he cannot manage more often, once a fortnight, the doctor or the European nurse should go out to a "bush" dispensary and pass the day there giving consultations and administering medicines. In the intervals between such visits there is no need for native nurses to be in attendance at these dispensaries and it is indeed preferable that they should not be.

This method which has proved very effective and ought to become general can only succeed if the doctor's means of transport is reliable and allows him to make his weekly visits to the centres he has chosen with the utmost regularity and the least waste of time.

I hope that the motor transport services of the territories will soon provide efficient service and that they will be able to replace without delay any vehicle in need of repair. I can at least give the assurance that I shall pay particular attention to the question of providing the transport which is essential to the Medical Service. When this has been done all that will be needed is devotion to duty, competence and a capacity for organization ; and these qualities, it is well known, are not lacking.

VII

I wish before concluding to make an observation on the economic position. Too much modesty has been shown in the publishing of three months of arduous and patient effort, and it is my duty to explain to Equatorial Africa the work undertaken after his arrival by General de Larminat and so ably completed by M. Pleven.

At the end of August there was an economic dead-lock. Sea traffic had ceased and the Colony was no longer able by exporting produce to procure the foreign currency indispensable not only for buying new stocks but for paying for orders already placed. A commercial debt of thirty million francs was paralysing all exchange. There was only one solution, to draw on our gold. The risk which was taken by doing this will be understood ; it was a risk of destroying for ever the credit of the Colony.

That roughly was the state of affairs on the 28th of August. Negotiations with the British Government were opened immediately, then with French and Belgian producers and with the Headquarters of the Free French Forces whose business it was to ensure the re-equipment of our ships.

I cannot tell the full story of these dealings, but I will summarize the results. The Exchange Office has paid back the only advance made to it ; our gold, entirely free, forms a stock which is continually increasing ; the budget has found a natural balance ; in short the economic ship of French Equatorial Africa is slowly but surely getting under way again.

It was, above all, imperative to sell the produce in stock. That is to-day almost an accomplished fact. The cotton of the last harvest has been disposed of, the coffee is in process of being bought and the same applies to oil products. All that is not yet sold will soon be sold as the Government now has sufficient credit to open an account with Great Britain.

There remains the question of timber. This also will shortly be settled. The immediate purchase of 20,000 tons from existing stocks will insure to the Gaboon a working capital. An agreement is also being negotiated for the monthly purchase of 10,000 tons payable on the spot, this figure appearing to correspond fairly accurately with the normal production of the timber yards.

Not only is the immediate future of the timber cutting industry assured; other producers of French Equatorial Africa too will soon be able to receive payment for their products. The following are the main lines of an agreement which is now under discussion; unlimited purchase of all oil products, purchase of the cotton crop estimated at 20,000 tons, and the guaranteed purchase up to a given maximum of rubber, wax, copal and coffee. I make no mention of other products, such as butter and cattle, the sale of which for export presents no difficulty.

This general recovery has been effected with such confidence and goodwill that a considerable expansion of trade has followed and more money has been put into circulation by cotton growers and transport services. Though we have good cause to congratulate ourselves on these results the economic situation necessitates in addition abundant and varied imports. Our resources remain intact and it is to our interest to insure that they are used progressively for the benefit of the community and that money circulates freely. There is no lack of supplies: the Belgian Congo, Great Britain, South Africa and America are able to supply all our needs. A minimum of foreign currency outside the sterling bloc is still necessary and the Government is taking appropriate measures to meet both commercial and administrative needs in this respect.

Were it not for the limitation of tonnage we could count on imports sufficiently large to secure our prosperity. Though I can give no details here I do not wish it to be inferred that I am pessimistic on this count. We are already benefiting from the excellent work done by the Free French fleet and once again we see ships enter and leave our harbours. But, in common with the rest of the world, we have our difficulties and no one must expect miracles. Our most constant pre-occupation is to increase our tonnage and to make certain that it is used to the best advantage, having due regard to the prosecution of the war, which must take first place always.

Equatorial Africa, with the Cameroons, has re-entered the war with grim determination after learning a hard lesson. In the war of tomorrow, as in the peace of tomorrow, we mean by our efforts to set a high example. Having rid ourselves of evil habits and illusions we shall win the right not only to sit in judgment on traitors and to get rid of the self-willed, but also to take our place beside our martyred families on the glorious day of victory.

We assert again that, now and always, we will keep faith with our allies and will uphold the honour of France. England and Belgium, with their Empires, will find in this unconquered part of the French Empire the same resolve to destroy the enemy which animates them. Like them we shall know how to express it with the same courage and the same spirit. •

NOTE.

The Memorandum of January 19th was accompanied by an Arrêté re-defining the duties and authority of the administrative service. It was followed four months later by a progress report to which was prefixed the following letter from General de Gaulle :—

MY DEAR GOVERNOR GENERAL,

I am returning herewith your proposed circular letter. I approve of its substance as completely as I admire its form.

The spirit which underlies its precepts is the same spirit, indeed the only spirit, which will enable the French Empire to survive the war and revive with the coming of peace.

Yours etc.

C. DE GAULLE,

BRAZZAVILLE,

May 20th, 1941.

PROGRESS REPORT

Dated May 21st, 1941.

In my circular letter of January 19th last, I outlined my administrative proposals for the duration of the war, and also for the task of reconstruction which will confront us when peace comes. The circular was favourably received by the British Foreign Office, the Governors-General of the Belgian Congo and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and the Governor of Nigeria. I was, of course, deeply touched by the warmth of their reception, but I only mention it here because I recognise it as being a sign, not only of interest and appreciation, but of our common determination to tackle colonial problems both present and future with enthusiasm and an open mind.

Since it fell to me to express this desire for improvement I feel that it is my duty now to review our progress to date, and assess what we have done and what is still to do. I say "we" because I wish to emphasise that we are all involved in the task of colonial development and each one of us in his degree will be held responsible for its success or failure.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM.

Our guiding principle is Decentralisation, and with this object in view the organization of Inspectorates General is proceeding. The Inspectorate of Public Works is already functioning. The Railways Department has been made independent and the Director has been given wide powers, freeing him from the paralysing control to which he was previously subjected.

The Central Forestry Department has been suppressed, and essential freedom of action restored to the Forestry Services in the various Territories. Decrees constituting Inspectorates of Education and Agriculture will be promulgated shortly, and an Inspectorate

of Game Preservation, to name a less important branch of the administration, has been substituted for the old Department. Further decrees have provided for the reorganisation of the Native Gendarmerie (*Garde Indigène*) on a territorial basis with each unit under the direct command of the Governor, and the powers of the Governor have been clearly defined.

In short, decentralisation is already working, but it must be extended further, not only on paper, but in practice. The sympathetic understanding which I have met at Brazzaville must have its counterpart throughout the Territories, where we must strive unceasingly, not for a profitless independence but towards a policy which will fit into a framework for the whole of French Equatorial Africa. In other words the D.C. must work within the province, the Provincial Commissioner within the Territory, the Governor within the Colony as a whole, each on his own responsibility but in harmony with the general policy. The idea of solidarity must underline the initiative of each individual; too much independence of spirit can endanger the common effort as much as too little initiative.

To take a concrete example, while we await the reorganisation of the financial system individual territories must not indulge in unapproved expenditure. Each of us is personally responsible for the implementation of his own budget. The use of block grants is, of course, left to the discretion of the relevant authority, since in no other way can they be used to the best advantage.

A circular on NATIVE POLICY is in course of preparation. It is intended to be a comprehensive guide for administrative officials, based on actual experience, and it needs a great deal of preparation.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO WAR FUNDS.

My appeal for voluntary contributions has been answered. You have been able to read the Committee's Financial Report in the *Journal Officiel*, which in future will be published monthly. On May 11th we were able to give two more planes to General de Gaulle, and so complete the first French Equatorial Squadron.

In general, people have realised the necessity of offering their money where they have been unable to offer their lives. They have realised too that a regular monthly contribution, less satisfying perhaps to the donor than the limelight of a single spectacular gift, furnishes, by its comparative anonymity and regular recurrence, a valuable and constant reminder of duty in a war which has got to be won.

The question has arisen as to whether natives should contribute. In principle, yes. It is their war too, and we know, even if they cannot appreciate it themselves, what would happen to them if Germany were victorious. Nevertheless, they could only be asked to contribute if their means permit and they can understand why they are giving. There must be no competition between District Commissioners as to who can raise the largest sum. It is a question of people's circumstances. It would be strange to find some chief refusing to contribute, but it should be equally strange if pressure were brought to bear upon a district which is poor and backward.

PERSONNEL.

It has been decided to re-introduce promotion by merit ; and arrangements have been made for external leave. The needs of the fighting services force us to work with the bare minimum of staff. This state of affairs is likely to last a long time, and we must take steps to see that we last even longer. This means that tired officials, or officials who have been a long time without leave, must not wait until they fall ill before taking a holiday. They must start going now so that a relief scheme can be arranged. Governors and Heads of Departments will see to this without delay.

FINANCE.

A financial agreement was signed at the end of March between General de Gaulle and the British Government, to raise a loan for the financing of the military budget ; an equally important clause stipulates that our local budget shall be self-supporting. We are therefore bound by a pledge which can only be honoured if each one of us

keeps a sharp eye upon receipts and expenditure. Up to the present the situation is fairly satisfactory, though Excise receipts are down by two million francs, as a result of the continued non-export of wood from Gabon. Our accounting system has been simplified. Transactions involving sums of less than 500,000 francs no longer need approval by Council. The 10 per cent. tax on certain Government payments has been abolished. Payments up to 50,000 francs can be made on simple invoices. The daily rate of travelling allowance for duty outside a station has been replaced by a consolidated monthly rate. The regulation requiring payment certificates for sums above 500 francs issued to illiterates has been cancelled.

This is only a beginning however, and the Finance Department is busy on reforms which will simplify the work of us all.

We are carrying the cost of war damage in Gabon against our Provident Fund and have financed from our own resources the Extraordinary Budget of 1941 which was to have been carried by the home Government but will now be met from the surplus of the 1940 financial year. This surplus has also enabled us to open an account for the payment of arrears of salaries which have not been paid, or been paid in part only, by Vichy.

The P.W.D. have been authorised to place contracts immediately for the 1942 Works Programme. By ordering basic plant and equipment now we should ensure delivery by next January.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

Medical officers are being provided with adequate transport and our drug supply is now assured, but I should like to be sure that a sufficiency of outside dispensaries is being provided. Treatment must be regular if it is to be effective, and regular treatment cannot be secured by leaving the care of outside dispensaries to native dressers, who can only deal in a superficial way with endemic or social diseases. It is true that the medical officer on tour can find out the extent of an epidemic and take measures to prevent it spreading, but the only way of accomplishing the chief part of his work is by a regular weekly

or fortnightly visit to every bush dispensary. If there is no dispensary build one. It is cheap and easy. If there is no road of access make one. There is not and cannot be any valid objection to a system which has proved its value in French West Africa. Opposition was overcome there and can be overcome here, if Governors co-operate with chief medical officers and doctors with D.C's.

PROVIDENT SOCIETIES.

Here again I want to be sure that everything possible has been done. I know all the stock objections to these societies. "We had none of these new fangled schemes in the old days." Well the old days are gone, and rightly so. The initiative and perseverance of the administrative staff have brought personal liberty and prosperity to the Ubangui tribes by cutting roads through forests and introducing the cultivation of cotton by peasant communities on their own land. The same energy if it is honestly applied will bestow on them the benefits of the Provident Society.

Through these societies a Provincial Commissioner can transform his Province, by carrying out his own ideas of social and economic improvement. Government grants, which are of necessity assessed and earmarked in advance, cannot finance many projects which the Provident Society is able to carry out. One of the marks of a good administrator is a flourishing Provident Society. We must have energy, imagination, and continuity of policy to get these societies going and we must have genuine enthusiasm. The Provident Society must not be a facade erected for the Governor-general to motor past on tour. It needs work, and always more work. The instrument is in your hands, and if you do not use it to the full you are failing in your duty.

EDUCATION.

Our native education programme is undergoing a crisis owing to the calling up of so many teachers, but we are trying to find a solution. The Cameroons Mandated Territory is sending a number of pupils to the Edouard-Renaud School to make up the deficiency of candidates from F.E.A.

European education is carrying on under the supervision of a lady teacher who escaped from France, and secondary education at Brazzaville still approximates to the proper standard.

EXCHANGES.

The question of exchange has been dominated by the abundance of sterling, and the lack of dollars and other currency (with the exception of Congo francs). We have been obliged therefore to make large purchases in the sterling area, and this policy should and must be continued.

Nevertheless, the sterling countries cannot supply all our needs, and certain orders must be placed elsewhere, principally in the U.S.A. Our resources for these are limited, and we shall continue to refuse licences for dollar exchange for goods that can be bought for sterling. The necessity for other orders will be decided on their merits, and demands reduced where necessary. Claims which are allowed will be placed in order of priority according to their urgency, on the following principles :—

1. Military needs.
2. Needs of the Administration and the Provident Societies.
3. Mining and industrial equipment.
4. Equipment and material needed by the agricultural enterprises which cater for export.

I have just been informed of an agreement between Great Britain and Free French H.Q. under the terms of which French Equatorial Africa and the Cameroons are included in the sterling area which embraces the British Empire (excluding Canada) together with Egypt and the A.E. Sudan. This agreement does not modify our present position in any way, except that it may simplify the formalities for obtaining import licences. Special instructions on this point will be issued.

COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS.

Arrangements have been made and are being put into effect for the disposal of our accumulation of timber, cotton, palm oil, and other products. A commercial agreement with Great Britain will be signed shortly. All our oil products will be reserved for Great Britain, who also guarantees to buy the unsold residue of other agricultural products. There is a clause about Gabon wood confirming the previous agreement for the supply of 10,000 tons a month. The price per ton is being discussed at the moment.

As far as imports go, local business men have placed a number of important orders, some of which have already been filled. England, South Africa, India, Portugal, the Belgian Congo, and in certain specific cases, the U.S.A., are supplying the greater part of our needs. Cheap consumer goods will, however, become more and more difficult to obtain, and the natives will have difficulty in spending their money. The only remedy for this lies in obtaining and marketing a medium quality article, better than the shoddy Japanese product, but lower in price than the European. Commerce should devote itself to supplying this need. The present situation gives us the chance to improve the native's taste and raise his standard of living. Everyone stands to gain if we can do this.

Various instructions have been issued for Price Control and further advisory circulars are in preparation for the use of regional committees and administrative staff.

AGRICULTURE, FORESTS AND STOCK-BREEDING.

The experience of the last four months has shown us that we have still a long way to go as far as quality and production costs are concerned. The price for palm oil products especially is very much higher than in the Belgian Congo or the British Colonies. It is this difference that has held up the signing of the commercial agreement with Great Britain.

I explained to you in a recent circular what must be done and how it must be done.

The same problem arises over coffee. Our coffee is expensive and of varying quality. A grading station has been started at Pointe Noire, and a factory is already in course of construction there. We shall thus be able to offer a product of good quality which can stand competition. For the time has come when we have to think of world competition since the preferential treatment accorded us by the mother country may never be ours again. Agriculture in F.E.A. must learn therefore to do without subsidies which without doubt have done more harm than good. The Agricultural Department is on the lookout for new resources which can stand free markets. I hope to make a pronouncement about this soon.

The cotton seed extracted in Ubangui-Shari amounts to 39,000 tons this year, and that of Chad, not yet officially checked, will probably be more than 23,000 tons, which gives us about 20,000 tons of lint cotton for the whole of F.E.A. We should maintain this figure but not exceed it.

Timber cutting has been resumed in Gabon. A quota system is to be established in the near future, which will include all exports, including those to South Africa. Production must be maintained and man-power reduced as much as is possible by proper organisation and equipment.

Stock-breeding in the Chad area must be encouraged by the digging of wells. The survey expedition undertaken last year was unable to finish its work, but we cannot further delay the ordering of plant and materials. Local budget grants, the funds of Provident Societies, and the revenue from local rates must be used immediately for this purpose, which is of benefit to the whole community. The stock breeder must learn to do without man-power which would be better employed on the land. The Department of Economic Development is now in a position to deal with applications for assistance and advice. An experiment in acclimatising Bororos cattle in the Bateke country is now in progress.

INDUSTRIAL POLICY.

French Equatorial Africa has practically no industries. In spite of the scanty population, this is a lack which can and should be remedied. It is irrational that Chad's butter should be made at Kano, that local saw mills are of such small capacity, that mechanical means of preparing oils are lacking, and that there is not a single cannery or textile factory.

We must aim, not at a profitless rivalry with neighbouring countries, but at a reasonable local organization. We must no longer leave the manufacturing of our products to the Mother Country, when we can do it economically here. We must work on the principle that an economically self-supporting colony, creating its own prosperity, is able to render greater help to France than one which is still on a leading rein. If the French possessions as a whole had been less tied to France economically and less dependent on France for leadership they would not have been infected with the paralysis which overcame the Mother Country at the time of the Armistice. Their own pride and esprit de corps would have made them refuse to admit France's capitulation, for the sake of France herself.

MINING.

The lead and diamond industries are being kept going. Prospecting for tin has been controlled to avoid indiscriminate development. The Petroleum Research Syndicate is being kept on a maintenance basis for the present.

Half our gold production is earmarked for the conduct of the war. We shall receive sterling in exchange. The balance goes to reserve and to the purchase of dollar exchange.

So F.E.A. is supplementing the immense moral effect of her adherence to the cause of Free France by a very material contribution to its expenses.

COMMUNICATIONS.

I can give no details about sea transport here. Suffice to say that our exports are being shipped abroad and that we hope soon to have our own merchant fleet. A Sea Transport Department is functioning at Pointe Noire.

Internal transport needs co-ordination and the Inspector General of Public Works will shortly be given complete powers of control over road transport, government, military, and private, rail and river traffic, and allotment of storage at ports and railheads. His agents will be the local P.W.D. representatives in each area.

Private and commercial interests must of course be subordinated to the war effort.

WORKS.

Road work is in full swing in Ubangui-Shari; less so in Chad. In Gabon we have to begin from the very beginning. Here labour is more difficult to find than money, but it must be found.

The building programme is far behind schedule. We lack good contractors and supervising staff, but some of us, I am afraid, lack the necessary drive.

I must again emphasise the necessity of carrying on our peace-time activities side by side with our war effort. After the war everything will be more expensive and we shall have lost our initial impetus and a good start. This applies especially to Chad territory, where our beginning is comparatively recent. We have suffered much from changes of policy and the abandonment of projects before they are complete. We have a surplus of energy at our disposal, we must use it before it is dissipated.

General de Gaulle has therefore prescribed a town-planning campaign. The need is urgent, especially in Fort Lamy. The work has begun and it must be carried through to a successful conclusion.

THE WAR.

I have purposely left the war to the end, because I want to emphasise the paramount importance of our war effort, and to pay homage to those who have given the simplest and finest interpretation to our decision to re-enter the war. The qualities of these men have thereby found their most fitting employment and their supreme sacrifice will not prove as vain as was the ill-directed valour of so many thousands of Frenchmen on the northern plains last summer.

This spirit inspires our war policy, which is simple, like Clemenceau's when he said: "I am at war. I shall suffer, but I shall strike back. Victory may be far off, but I am confident that victory will come."

We have just celebrated the fete of Joan of Arc. Let us try to emulate her faith. Given courage, our reward is certain, and it is to a France in mourning, that we, like Joan, shall bring back life and happiness.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

November 10th, 1941.

The opening passages of this address are devoted to a review of the progress made by the Free French during the past year with a tribute to Britain's lone stand against barbarism, "inspired by the indomitable resistance of the stricken peoples of Europe, when as yet there was no indication of the coming of effective assistance from across the Atlantic."

After welcoming the new arrivals to high administrative posts in the Colony and paying the tribute of a minute's silence to those who had died in action or in harness, M. Eboué proceeded to a review of administrative progress.

My circulars of January 19th and May 24th have laid down the outline of my policy and we have carried out the first steps in reform. A further circular at the end of the year will indicate progress to date and it will suffice for me to say here that we have not departed from our principles and that our various Inspectorates, Departments and Services are functioning in accordance with the flexible but definite framework already laid down.

As regards social policy, the Central Government decided that although it could not divest itself of its responsibilities it could not inaugurate certain reforms without consulting every interest involved in the life of the Colony and profiting by their experience. Accordingly an advisory committee has been formed recently for the discussion of the main lines of our native policy and the problem of labour. Resolutions were passed which will shortly be published and which will reflect my own ideas as amended by the important suggestions which were put forward by this committee.

You will agree that we can construct no solid achievement save on the foundation of a sound native policy, allowing for the needs of the various communities and taking into consideration their relative enlightenment, the form of their culture, and the physical and moral security we are pledged to ensure them, all in the light of the necessities of administration. In fact our native policy must vary with local conditions, but for all their diversity certain principles are universally applicable.

The first of these is that all our efforts must be devoted to the moral and material progress of the native peoples. This is as true of planters, business men, and employers of labour as it is of government officials and missionaries. We form one united body devoted to this one end. If the consultation of all these interests is an innovation, I hope sincerely that it will also be a precedent.

There is of course a reciprocal obligation on the people themselves which I am continually pointing out to them, the obligation of effort. I tell them that there is only one road to progress and self improvement, the road of regular, disciplined, hard work. Off this road is a morass of misery and retrogression. I do not accuse them of laziness, because after long experience I do not believe that they are lazy. Their trouble is that their energy is spasmodic and uncontrolled, because they have not been trained and because they have no notion of the proper apportionment of work.

I have pointed out then to the native populations that they must assume obligations as well as responsibilities, and we have drawn up directions modifying our labour programme in order to provide the factories with more regular labour which will increase their output, and the villages with a closer control of local industries. These directions will hold the labourer to his contract and the employer to his social obligations to his employees.

That these measures will arouse violent criticisms from both sides I have no doubt, but if we have any real affection for the dependent populations, any real desire to see them get on, we must have the courage to say to them, as I did the other day :—

"Only by working and by working hard can you help us to help you. Labour is a noble thing and the labourer's heart must be in his work. The artisan is in no way inferior to the clerk, or the labourer in the fields to either. The honest pursuit of an honest vocation is an honourable thing, the greatest honour to be won in human life. We do not offer you in exchange for slavery a sterile idleness incompatible with progress, but the labour of free men.

If someone tells you that now you are free you may do nothing, he is your enemy because he is advising you to deprive yourself of the only real method of progress. It is our affection for you that makes us urge upon you the necessity, the dignity, the holiness of labour as the sole passport to contentment."

I have outlined my proposals for pursuing this social policy to which we are pledged. The chief means is of course Education.

Our present educational system is not unsatisfactory. Modern methods of teaching, which enlist the student's interest without losing their efficiency, are in force in all Government schools. We have even made a new departure by including Music in the curriculum, and excellent native choirs have been produced. But the Government schools alone are not sufficient. The Missions are temporarily cut off from their parent bodies and the subsidies paid to Mission Schools since 1920 are no longer adequate, so that we are budgeting for additional grants this year. I do not intend, however, that these grants should be withdrawn but rather that they should be extended after the war.

Attention is also being paid to the character training value of the Boy Scout movement and to the furtherance of physical culture by the organization of a Sports Federation.

The reorganization of the Social Services will be described in a subsequent report, but I must mention here the gravest of all our social problems, the disintegration of the family unit with its resultant evils of vagabondage, disease, and a falling birthrate. This can only

be solved by the co-ordinated efforts of every one of us. It has been discussed by the Consultative Committee of course, but I want to make a personal appeal to every man here, to act while we still have time to save native society. Tomorrow may be too late. Do not ask who is to blame. We are all to blame to a greater or lesser degree. Suffice it to recognise that the evil exists and to agree on what must be done to eradicate it. The answer lies in a new Native Policy and a new Labour Policy, for if the native family unit is destroyed, native society will disintegrate.

Some measures are already in train. The effects of high bride prices are being studied and General de Gaulle, who takes a keen interest in these problems, has opened a fund for advancing marriage loans to young men. This fund is being supplemented by a Government grant and one obstacle to early marriage may be said to have been removed.

The General has also emphasised the necessity of raising the standard of living for native urban society by improving housing and by supplying power and water. An initial grant has been introduced into the budget for these services. Building loans and arrangements for security of tenure are also in train. Last but not least we propose to set an example by providing comfortable houses for our native staff.

It is my most devout hope that we shall succeed in establishing close and sincere collaboration between the administrative and the commercial communities—each of which plays an integral part in the development of the country. Their interests and ours do not, as some suppose, conflict. They are workers with us in one field and as you know I have called them to council with us of late and have found their suggestions to be of the highest value. We need more, however, than mere co-ordination. We must share the same ideals and ideas. We must use our Chambers of Commerce and their

representative assemblies for direct economic control and for the drawing up of regulations for that purpose. We must have executive specialist organisations to carry out their instructions in each sphere of activity — mines, forests, plantations, stock-breeding, etc., working in close contact and collaboration with the administrative staff. I am putting these suggestions before you to-day so that those affected may study them. Any subsequent proposals they may put forward will meet a ready response from the Administration.

I hope that what I have said will dispose of the charge that it is my policy to favour the big combine at the expense of the small operator. It is not. In spite of war conditions and indeed partly because of the fraternal spirit engendered by the war, we have never omitted to consider the interests of both—as witness the acknowledged success of our Departments of Economics and Trade and Exchange Control.

But two facts must be taken into consideration. Firstly, we are short of labour and we have to use our inadequate supply as economically as possible. It is no good trying to build up a stable and willing labouring population if all our efforts and sacrifices are to be nullified by the non-co-operation of certain concessionaires. Secondly, the post-war economic situation will for a time be chaotic. There will be new methods of allocating raw materials, new fiscal systems, a new customs policy for the whole world. All these conditions should open wide the doors of F.E.A. Capital now frozen will be looking for fields of investment. F.E.A. will be one of the most promising.

In such a world the small operator will be at a hopeless disadvantage. His only hope lies in co-operation and collaboration (how that word 'collaboration' recurs!) and the time has already come for the process to begin.

To sum up—we cannot afford to disperse our limited amount of labour amongst a multitude of small operators and the operators cannot afford not to combine their interests.

Gentlemen, it is nearly 33 years since I first set foot in this country, and it has always been my endeavour when my advice has been asked to give the best advice of which I am capable. I am giving you now what I consider to be the best advice possible when I say that if the small concessionaires do not combine they will be ruined—not ruined by me or my administration but by economic facts. They must decide their own fate.

I hope I have made it clear by now that it is the object of my administration not to shirk its responsibilities nor to abandon its right of initiative, but to obtain the collaboration of all sections of the community in an endeavour altogether worthy of the generous spirit of our Movement. I want your collaboration, heart and soul and brains and common sense. I am sure that I shall have it.

M. Eboué then introduced the Budget which included considerable new expenditure on Social Services and Public Works, justified inter alia by the need to put money back into circulation.

The basic principle observed is that all civil expenditure must be paid out of revenue, although other votes have now to be met which were previously a charge on the Home Budget. After referring to the satisfactory relations with neighbouring countries he turned to the war effort.

Voluntary subscriptions totalling 9,376,318 francs (£E. 52,090) had enabled the colony to present Free France with a Spitfire Squadron and other war materials. This appeared to justify the Government's decision to rely on voluntary contribution instead of a compulsory levy, although there had of course been some omissions, which it was hoped would soon be made good. The target figure was 22 millions a year, 10 contributed by the Budget and 12 by subscription. He hoped it would be possible to raise this without a levy.

Tribute was paid to the achievements of F.E. A. troops on various fronts and to the success of a tried and depleted administrative staff in preserving internal security. There had been no lack of native support

of the war effort, no hint of political unrest, even in well-known danger spots like parts of the Moyen Congo—15 years ago centres of disturbance but now quiet, orderly, and productive.

He continued: We have had perforce to develop our economic resources to the uttermost, and our export and import figures bear witness to the resultant acceleration which has not only enabled us to carry on on our resources, but to progress far beyond our peacetime standard.

Nor have we forgotten our duty to our fellow countrymen at home. Those of them who have investments here will find their dividends waiting for them after the war, and we have built up from our own resources a reserve of food stuffs and necessities ready to despatch to France as soon as she is free again.

And that must always be our guiding principle and object—the freeing of France and of her colonies. It calls for complete co-ordination of heart and soul and for the elimination of petty political differences. As I said to you in a broadcast on August 27th: “Now that we have found ourselves, we must never again be parted.”

If we are to attain this essential object we must be tolerant, we must try and understand each other's point of view. Think only of France, think of the indomitable reaction of the people of France to suffering and oppression, hunger and humiliation, to the imprisonment of their best brains and the slaughter of their finest sons—helpless and unarmed but defiant—determined to show the enemy no collaboration, only resistance until liberty is won.

We here in Africa, who are sheltered from the war and lack nothing, who suffer mentally it is true but not physically, can we not follow their great example and retain, amidst our transitory differences of opinion, the overriding will to fight on in unison?

The example of the people of France, the growing power of our Allies, the unshakeable faith of our Chief, all these bear witness to the disorder into which they have already plunged our enemy, and as you know as well as I do, they are guarantees of ultimate victory and Freedom.

MEMORANDUM ON NATIVE POLICY

The new advisory committee already referred to sat for the first time on November 6th, 7th and 8th, 1941, to consider the Governor-general's proposals for native administration and to discuss his draft memorandum. The committee consisted of the Director of Native Affairs, the Governors of the four territories of F.E. A., two senior Commissioners, the Director of Mines, the heads of six missionary bodies (five of them being Catholic Bishops) and representatives of five Chambers of Commerce and eight commercial enterprises.

As a result of the discussions the original draft was modified and the proposed implementary legislation reduced to a more simple form. The labour problem was discussed at length and a suggestion for a Labour Office mooted and adopted.

CHAPTER I.

NECESSITY FOR AND BASIS OF A NATIVE POLICY.

The difficulties of wartime administration and the consequent financial stringency and shortage of manpower are no excuse for folding our arms. Instead our object should be to ensure that French Equatorial Africa which before the war was a liability to France should after the war be an asset.

To achieve this we must have a healthy contented and expanding native population, and we cannot rebuild native society by administrative effort alone. The task demands the collaboration of us all, manufacturers, planters, missionaries, traders and officials. We are a team already, united by our common desire to set France free. We must add to this a common desire to rescue French Equatorial Africa.

I use the term "rescue" advisedly, for the colony is menaced with the exhaustion of its resources through the plunderings of concessionaries, through economic exploitation, through sometimes misdirected missionary enthusiasm, through apathetic administration, but above all through ignorance and neglect and misunderstanding of native institutions.

The result of all this is a diminishing population, shortage of labour both unskilled and skilled, the disintegration of society, and a spread of venereal disease and anti-social practices like abortion amongst the new urban proletariat.

An experienced and more efficient medical service can cure some of these ills, but the root of the evil cannot be touched until a clear Native Policy has been defined and put into execution.

To try to build up a native society in the image of France is to invite disaster. The native has his own standards, his own laws, his own patriotism. His happiness will not be achieved by the imposition of the principles of the Revolution, or the Code Napoleon, or by the substitution of French officials for his own chiefs. The officials may think for him and feel for him, but they cannot think with him or share his feelings.

If we are to achieve stability for him, we must treat him not as an individual but as a member of a complicated society with a hundred duties and obligations to his family, his village, and his tribe, capable of progress in this environment but lost if he is removed from it. Where his environment has been altered by contact with us we must of course remodel his institutions but always in as familiar and natural a form as possible. We must offer him no illusive hope but we must restore to him his interest in life and his desire to perpetuate his race.

CHAPTER II.

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS.

I shall begin with a quotation from Lyautey, who in his turn was quoting his first instructor in colonial administration: Lanessan.

"Every country has its own social organisation and the greatest mistake the conquering European can make is to destroy it. The result is anarchy. You must govern through the mandarin, not in opposition to him. The European can control him, but, if only through numerical inferiority, he cannot take his place." Lyautey adds "Break no traditions, therefore. Change no custom. Every society has its governing class, born in the purple, without which nothing can be accomplished. See that the interests of that class are identified with ours."

Our duty therefore is to re-establish native institutions. It is of course quite wrong to treat them as museum pieces which cannot be changed. Customs are always changing and it is not our business to freeze them into immobility. But we must understand the real significance of a custom as representing the underlying traditions and feelings which produced it—tribal traditions and feelings of patriotism. To deprive the native of these would be like taking away a French peasant's farm and putting him into an industrial press gang.

Suppose we do not support these institutions. How are we to deal with the resultant herd of sanctionless individuals? When I see important administrative officials undermining the sanctions of the Chieftainship by making and unmaking, condemning and reinstating the chiefs, I wonder what they propose to do when they have succeeded by this means in entirely destroying its value. Would the only alternative, a petty native bureaucracy, be a better intermediary between the administrative officer and his people?

An administrator may succeed in reducing the chiefs into subservient instruments of his policy, but his successors will have no such opportunity since the instruments will have lost their value.

I speak of chiefs because most native societies are monarchic, but it must be remembered that some of our northern tribes live successfully under a system which might be described as a form of communism. Nor is the chief himself absolute. His powers are defined and circumscribed by many taboos and traditions. No existing restraint therefore, however ridiculous or irritating or even immoral it may appear to be, should for that reason be overridden or ignored. It must be taken fully into account and slowly moulded into a new shape.

Who then should be chief? Not the ablest man in the tribe. It is not a question of the ablest chief, but of the chief. We have no choice in his selection. Changes of chief are not only deplorable but absurd. The chief is there. Our business is to recognise him—to afford him official recognition, that is, in the diplomatic sense of the word. If we arbitrarily replace him we create a dual command—the government chief and the real chief. We may flatter ourselves that our chief produces better results, but all the time he is himself under the orders of the real chief. Sometimes we have great difficulty in finding out who the real chief is. From to-day onwards it is the business of the administrative staff to succeed in doing so. It is not only a question of giving no more posts as chiefs to corner boys and old soldiers (there are a hundred other methods of rewarding faithful service) but of seeking out the legitimate holder from the obscurity where our ignorance has hidden him and restoring to him his traditional honours. It is no good saying it is too late; that his power and prestige are gone. His power rests on sanctions too old for that. Put him back in his place in the light of day, pay him due respect, and educate him, and the result is not in doubt.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that the administrator should satisfy himself by exhaustive enquiry of the bona fides of his discovery before he installs him in office.

It will be objected "How can we install indirect administration in a colony where the natives are so extremely primitive?" The answer is that the time for indirect administration, save in certain parts of Chad Territory, is not yet, but we can none the less entrust chiefs with executive powers even in the most primitive districts. In other words we must cease our efforts to raise the vast mass of the population simultaneously and throw our weight instead onto the chiefs, the lever which will lift the whole. The model administrator will be the man who takes the chiefs whose power is greatest because they have the support and confidence of public opinion and educates them up into a state in which he need only give them his advice and direction and they will do the rest.

If I am told my hopes are illusory I will reply that such illusions have produced Morocco and Nigeria. Nor is this a false analogy, for degree of civilisation and incidence of population are irrelevant. Where there are men who respect an authority it is that authority alone, speaking their native tongue, which can lead them, provided that the authority itself is enlightened.

Our duty is therefore clear. Instead of letting contact with us produce a proletariat more or less clothed and more or less French-speaking, we must create an elite, an elite in the first place of chiefs and notables, which we can endow with responsibility and which will progress by sheer force of experience gained in meeting difficulties as they arise.

To achieve this we must continually hold in front of us the necessity that they should enjoy respect. They cannot enjoy the respect of their people unless they enjoy ours. We must learn to regard them as members of a natural aristocracy, the traditional rulers of the country, and we must treat them as such. We represent the sovereignty of France. They are the holders of local authority. Our authority is the authority of office, theirs the authority of birth.

But, it will be objected, such and such a chief is a savage. His authority is based on poison. Indulgence in drink and women have aged him prematurely. His ill disposition is evident. He cannot begin to understand the purport of our instructions. How can we honour a man of this kind?

I know all that. I didn't spend 23 years as an administrative officer in Ubangui for nothing. But I repeat—his office must be respected. He may not deserve it but his son or nephew may, and how can we help his successor if we have discredited the office in advance?

Of course I don't mean that respect for a chief should involve approval of everything he does. I have already said we must teach them and no one can teach without using the rod occasionally. The secret lies in only using it when it is necessary and then only in the right manner—that is in private. The services of the interpreter, unhappily necessary so often, should be dispensed with as far as possible. If remonstrance is unavailing more severe measures may have to be taken but it must always remain a personal matter between the chief and the officer. Suspension of remuneration is one method of bringing pressure to bear and a good administrator will know more than one way of touching a sensitive place without unnecessary publicity. He will in no circumstances regard dismissal or imprisonment as an easily available solution. It is only to be used for exceptional offences even for a minor chief, let alone a big chief or a Sultan. All such cases will in future be referred to me before action is taken.

Another error to be avoided is treating a chief as though he were a government official, which he is not. He is not covered by administrative regulations. He receives a remuneration as a mark of honour and as a prerogative of office, but he is not salaried and he is perfectly entitled to supplement his income by legitimate means. The most able and senior of native officials is in a different category to the chief. He may be equally deserving of esteem and solicitude but not the same esteem or the same solicitude. There are abuses of course but they are not as great as we suppose, and would they be less or more if the chiefs were replaced by native bureaucrats, whose only curb is fear of imprisonment if they are found out? The chief has his tribal sanctions and his tribal pride and feelings for his people. A man may ruin his family by his folly but he seldom sets out to destroy them deliberately. And are these abuses any more tiresome to the people than the innumerable restrictions of life in a modern state?

The answer should be clear enough to us French who are so anxious to preserve our own way of life, however inefficiently organised, rather than accept the new order imposed by a foreigner. Like us the native prefers the faults of his own people and country to a course of treatment which will end by eliminating his national entity. If he loses his chief—and his chief personifies his national entity—he ceases to beget children and even emigrates to re-form his national life elsewhere. I have seen this myself in Eastern Ubangui, whence peoples of great possibilities have been forced by too diligent an application of the Colonial Ministry's doctrine of protective justice to find in the Sudan or the Belgian Congo asylum from our unwelcome solicitude.

What in any case are these abuses? They are usually well within the bounds laid down by local custom. A chief's cruelties are practised with a wary eye on public opinion and there is always a certain method in his madness. Can we always say the same? Our good intentions are patent but how often do we not in our ignorance commit unwitting crimes? The well meaning administrator often does more harm than a notoriously bad chief because he doesn't realise what he is doing. Let the man who does have his chance, therefore, and if he abuses his power, use tact and patience in putting him right. The real answer to the problem is of course education.

I have referred throughout to chiefs because they are the commonest native institution, but my remarks apply of course equally to other forms of control and it is a great mistake to think exclusively in terms of chiefs or try to establish dynasties where they have not existed previously, as we did for instance amongst the Arabs and the Goraan of Chad and elsewhere, mistaking a sultan's governor for a local chief. Whatever the native system the foregoing remarks apply to it and its solid qualities must be retained to the exclusion of any artificial substitutes invented by us. Chiefs, notables or councils, compelled to act on their own initiative and working in collaboration with us soon learn the responsibilities of office and gain in dignity as well as humility as they learn.

The first step, which I propose to take at once, is to hand over to native courts wherever circumstances permit a share in the administration of justice for penal offences. It goes without saying that their civil jurisdiction, which they have in fact never lost, will be officially restored to them. So the administrative officials will begin to be supervisors instead of executives in this sphere at least. This policy, if carried out methodically and ungrudgingly, will set French Equatorial Africa on the road of human progress again, and restore to its people the desire to perpetuate their race.

CHAPTER III.

POLICY TO BE APPLIED WHEN TRADITION HAS BEEN RADICALLY ALTERED.

So far I have considered only such native institutions as have been strong enough to survive the consequence of our ignorance or misconception. Many have failed to do so. The mere fact of our presence in the country modifies some of them profoundly. Our economic requirements, for instance, destroy social units. Our unco-ordinated encouragement of new ideas upsets traditional morality. Intermarriage of white and black creates a whole new class of person. Our principle remains the same—that no right shall be granted without the imposition of a duty—but we must find a different method of implementing it where the old sanctions have lost their validity. When we introduce these detribalised elements into the government of their country we must take care that they are made immediately aware of the problems that face them. We must arouse their interest and win their honest co-operation. The vague ill-thought-out conceptions which give the appearance of associating a few individuals with the sovereign government of France and the Empire must be abandoned, and instead we must strive to transform them into good citizens of their own country.

They fall into three categories, for the towns of Fort Lamy and Abeche with their solid Islamic background can be classed with the rural communities. There are two other kinds of town, the one local and homogeneous, the other containing varied immigrants from all parts of the country. The third category is that of the isolated individual who lives alone in the country and who cannot be absorbed into the local community because he is comparatively emancipated or is a half-breed.

The first class comprises at present only the towns of Libreville and Bakongo* which have developed their own character distinct from that of local tribal tradition. The inhabitants have acquired the urban outlook and have rapidly developed through contact with us the characteristics of a native bourgeoisie.

We must be careful to avoid the common error of expressing amusement or annoyance at the pretensions of these semi-sophisticated people.

Instead we should recognise the effort they are making to rise to our level, while reminding them that their effort is only a beginning. Their naive self-satisfaction will disappear as soon as they are brought up against serious problems and obliged to solve them. So far they have acquired only the externals of European civilisation—fine clothes, flowery language, free and easy manners. In future they must be brought up against facts and made to realise that the public esteem on which they set so much store can only be achieved by a great deal of hard work. With this object in view we are going to create institutions of municipal self-government which will give the township a corporate character. These councils will draw their personnel from the class of enlightened notable (described below) and will have jurisdiction over all citizens living within their boundaries. A European will be chairman, and the councils will not at first have any financial powers, but will be responsible for town planning, road construction, adult education and sports—that is, for the moral, intellectual and physical welfare of their people. Each council will work in close

* A tribal settlement outside Brazzaville. Ed.

collaboration with a Provident Society which, under its guidance will provide for its members such solid advantages as building loans. The development of a sense of property is a necessary foundation for urban society, providing it with that inducement to individual advancement which so many town dwellers lack at first. The control of a simple police court will give the council an added feeling of responsibility towards the people under its charge.

The class of enlightened notable will not be restricted to the local French citizens, black or half-breed. It will include all who rise to a certain position in the town. It will constitute a new social status providing an opportunity for the more advanced persons to show their worth, under our supervision, in administering their own districts and so to become real citizens of F.E.A. The titles and privileges which have hitherto been handed out indiscriminately will in future be conferred only as a reward for personal efforts displayed in the execution of a specially designed programme of duties to the community.

The enlightened native's personal status will remain unaltered. He will not (like the French citizen) be exempt from customary civil and penal law. This restriction is necessary in his own interests. Experience in Senegal (*All Senegalese have been French citizens since 1833. Ed.*) has shown the necessity of retaining Sharia Courts in spite of the fact that Mohammedan Law differs in many points from the French civil and penal code. This proof that French citizenship must in Africa be a more flexible institution than in France would serve as a warning were it not that we are already aware of the value of native traditional law, which has a natural assimilative power and can readily absorb the moral principles to which we ourselves attach value. Here again the basis of native education must not be the French outlook on life, but the African.

Not all these notables will of course be resident in the towns. Many live by themselves in rural areas where no place can be found for them in the tribal hierarchy. All we can do for these at present is encourage them to form groups or associations for purposes of study, sport, music or the like.

One privilege will be granted to all alike, that of exemption from the Indigenat (*a summary punishment up to 2 weeks imprisonment which administrative officers may inflict on any native.* Ed.) Their status is conditioned by the withdrawal of their rights and title if they show themselves unworthy. This penalty, which must only be used in exceptional cases, should provide a more suitable and effective sanction.

The problem of the half-breed requires special consideration. Our national feeling of sentimental responsibility for half-caste children abandoned or not recognised by their fathers must not mislead us into trying to take them out of their natural environment where the mother's family has absorbed them. The child will probably be less discontented there than striving for a higher position in society which, even when attained, carries social ostracism with it. The gift of French citizenship seems to me a poor reward for all that the child loses by being cut off from family life and security. Moreover anything that tends to isolate the half-breed from native society whilst he cannot be absorbed into European society creates a dangerous rivalry between black and half-black without conferring any benefit on the latter.

Assuming then that the European father has neglected his duty, which is to bring up the child in his home and treat him in all ways as he would any other of his offspring, it is our business first of all to find out if he has been accepted by his mother's family and if he is happy there. If he is we should leave him alone. If he stands out from the crowd, in school or elsewhere, we should keep an eye on him, but it is his own merits that earn him the distinction, not the fact of his being a half breed. If he is found to be an outcast the administration or the religious missions will look after him, but they must take care not to turn him into a marked character, living on the fringe of society, too much alone if a boy and too much sought after if a girl. For this reason I am doubtful of the wisdom of setting up special orphanages for half-castes. It would be wiser to admit black children as well, to avoid jealousy and make the half breed's position less equivocal.

Finally we must realise that the mere gift of French citizenship solves none of the half breed's difficulties. If he is a boy he must be taught that he has a job to do and that his advancement depends on his doing it well. If she is a girl we must find her a husband while she is young, and so save her from the position of "keeping house" for a European.

The young man must be surrounded by a friendly atmosphere of mutual support and protection. Missionaries, teachers, and administrative officers must combine to effect this, by persuading him to join a scout troop or a games club, a recreation or study group or a mutual aid society. These will give him the social contacts without which he will be a nuisance to himself and to the community.

But he must not lose contact with his black equivalent. In Gabon a regular half breed class has grown up, and come into conflict with the educated black population. This rivalry must be eliminated from our municipal councils, from the provident societies and from all the activities in which we demand the same initiative and responsibility from both classes. Both are to be inducted into the administration of their country and both are to share equally in the benefits they produce. A society built up on these lines should be able to absorb the half caste once he has learned the meaning of service.

We have left till last the second category of town—such as Bangui and Pointe Noire, Poto-Poto* and Port Gentil—which has come into existence as a result of our presence and our requirements. These usually contain a stable element of Government officials, pensioners and ex-soldiers, artisans and commercial employees, together with a floating population of house boys, casual labourers and camp followers. Neither category has any roots or any homogeneity. The quarters in which they live jostle each other with no common characteristic to give birth to local patriotism or civic consciousness.

* A mixed settlement outside Brazzaville. Ed.

The former element drains away the pick of the native population and gives in return no compensating benefit to society, while the floating population leads a gipsy existence as a parasite on the community. It is lost to village society and to productive agriculture and by its nomadic habit decreases the reproductive capacity of the race. Its physique is undermined by venereal disease and its morals by its feckless mode of life and lack of social discipline. It supplies us, no doubt, with labourers and servants but for each one who works there are five who are idle.

Administrative and police officers deal with them as vagabonds and certainly rigorous punishment can reduce the incidence of theft, but it does nothing to cure the disease itself. Nor is it any use to deport them to their own country since they slip back again as soon as the escort has departed. The cure seems to me to lie in discipline. I don't mean simply the discipline of the prison and the police court and the prostitution laws, all of which must of course be firmly enforced. I mean the kindly discipline of sports club and recreation centre, of the scout movement and even of military service. It is for the leaders of these movements and for the missionaries to introduce in this way the children and adolescents to a decent and orderly way of life until the incorrigibles are forced to choose between endless punishments and a return to their own village, while those that remain acquire—however gradually—first the habit of conformity to the judgment of their fellows and later the sense of responsibility which these institutions inculcate by practising the boys in the exercise of authority.

This is a task in which employers of labour have also a part to play. It is up to them to keep their workmen in permanent settlements and to employ a minimum of casual labour. This is not of course always possible. Labour in docks for instance must be fluctuating, but even so it can be disciplined to a certain extent and every effort should be made to attach the worker to an employer and discourage the idler who works only when it suits him. These remarks apply, of course, to the floating population of the polyglot townships. I shall deal below with the more complex problems of the regular employee.

CHAPTER IV:

DOMESTIC LIFE.

In discussing political institutions we emphasised the dependence of the native upon a system of communal ties and taboos, and we deprecated any attempt to treat him as an individual apart from his social group. This is still more applicable to his domestic life.

Customs are of course innumerable and diverse, and the administrator or missionary, employer of labour or business man, must study for himself those of the area in which he works. But there are some principles that apply everywhere and the chief of these is this—to leave questions of status—marriage and divorce, bigamy, affiliation and inheritance—to the native courts, who will deal with them a great deal more competently than we can.

One mistake of this kind which we have made is to give far too much freedom to the married woman because we consider that the unmarried girl gets too little of it. The native courts with their revived civil jurisdiction will know how to put this right but we must avoid imposing our ideas on them and be content to make sure that they apply their own ideas justly in such form as they may have attained under the influence of Christian ideals. If Christian teaching has not yet succeeded in producing a general recognition of the desirability of obtaining a girl's consent before marriage, we cannot obtain it by ordinance. The Christian ideal of course imposes in exchange for liberty of choice a binding obligation to eschew divorce or bigamy, an obligation more calculated to maintain the sanctity and unity of the family than that imposed by any other ideology of which I am aware.

Polygamy again is supposed to cause a reduction in population through the accumulation of nubile maidens in the harems of wealthy dotards. If so the evil cannot be cured by legislation. The remedy lies partly in the spread of Christian ethics and partly in improved economic conditions.

Bride-wealth undoubtedly stands far higher than it should, and is often quite disproportionate to the general economic level. In such a case efforts may be made—with extreme tact and discretion—to get the figure lowered. The practice of encouraging suitors to bid against one another for a daughter's hand may be opposed as being both immoral and anti-social. But that is as far as we may go. No attempt should be made to alter the customary rate so long as conditions are good and marriage normal.

These customs hang together and to single out one of them for reform because it happens to strike us as immoral is to intrude our prejudices upon the native's whole logical scheme of life. Nine times out of ten he will fail entirely to appreciate our desire to remedy an abuse and interpret the act as part of a general campaign against his customs as a system, which for him could only end in the destruction of everything he holds sacred.

There are exceptions—I have mentioned bride-wealth and will refer later to Christian marriage—but we must avoid generalising from the exceptions and attempting the impossible. By all means assist those whose customs are changing for the better, but don't imagine that you can change the corpus of Custom by legislation.

The corpus of Custom is in fact native civil law and we can find no substitute for it. The introduction of our own would be patently absurd, and so would any code invented by us for African use. Native custom may be reformed or transformed by the native himself (the Christian or other emancipated individual has often to devise his own personal code) but it is still native custom. It will be a most excellent thing if the ideal of monogamy becomes embodied in native custom; but it would be most unfortunate to attempt to apply our civil law to all who followed our lead in the matter of marriage while remaining faithful in other respects to the traditions of their own country. Africa must retain and perfect her own African theory of Rights.

CHAPTER V.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Our system of mission education covers the greater part of the population of Gabon, Moyen Congo, and Ubangui-Shari and can be left out of consideration only in the Muslim bloc of Chad Territory, where missionaries are few. It is this diffusion of Christian ideology which is the most potent influence in the development of native thought and custom.

Is it then one of the influences which endanger the fabric of society by forcing the native to run before he can walk? I think not. I know we often smile at the newly converted, who shuttle to and fro between the church and the witch doctor, collecting sacred relics or charms and fetishes and disobeying the Commandments with such childish effrontery that one is forced to doubt whether they have even a spark of faith. We are wrong to smile, but we should be more wrong if we ignored the truth. Primitive man finds self-control a most difficult task—a fact we must always bear in mind in this context if we are to avoid treating them as though they were young Europeans impregnated with eighteen centuries of Christian tradition.

Africa is becoming receptive to evangelisation no more rapidly than to other progressive influences and this process like the others cannot be rushed or imposed by force and without regard to African custom. Our aim is evolution not revolution. After all, it took Christianity three centuries and more to assimilate Gaul and it only did so by taking into account pre-existing institutions and *converting them to its own use*. Druid sanctuaries became places of pilgrimage which are still frequented and sacred springs were placed under the patronage of saints. I say nothing of the customs which the church allowed to exist although they were based upon a pre-existing religion—like the bunch of mistletoe which we hang up at Christmas time. Social life and family life were respected and the development of the Christian ideal was so gradual that there was no overt breach with tradition until the day when it was realised that the Church of France had become a complete and living entity.

We must do the same for Equatorial Africa. We must recognise existing institutions, and political institutions before all. Missionary enterprise must never contribute to undermine the power of the chief. It must instead strengthen his position by giving him additional authority.

In family and social life we must of course remember that salvation is a matter of individual souls and that it is sometimes necessary in a child's own interest to remove it from the influence of a corrupting environment but we must make it our main principle and object not to produce a specimen of a good Christian character here and there but to influence the mass of the population and lead it, as a body and with all its constituent organisations, up to the Christian ideal.

This must be our method of approach to the major problem of Marriage. Our object is not to produce a certain number of exemplary Christian households but to diffuse the Christian idea of marriage throughout a society which is living under a different code; to make that society understand little by little the sacred and indissoluble character of monogamous marriage freely entered upon; and yet to modify as little as possible existing ideals of family life. We must do nothing which can possibly be interpreted by native opinion as a move towards an entirely new society in which every traditional belief will be called in question.

It is when this stage has been achieved, after much labour and with keen attention to social repercussions, that I shall be prepared to agree to deny to Christians the right of divorce and to prosecute them for bigamy by virtue of the change in public opinion brought about by Christian influence. Note that here, as always, the change in opinion must precede the law which takes it into account and gives it official sanction. The new law is still Customary Law, re-dressed in Christian guise and symbol of a better but still African Africa.

It may well be pointed out here that the African obtains from Christian education not only spiritual support and consolation but that very sense of personal responsibility which all of us are so busy trying to inculcate. If we realise this we may well cease our disputes,

for whether we are missionaries or administrators we are travelling the same road, using the same methods, striving for the same ends. Our labour is one of guidance and control. Our aim is not simply to perfect the character of individuals, but to raise up native society in all its ramifications; to develop it and lead it towards prosperity and happiness, but not to endanger its equilibrium in the process.

CHAPTER VI.

EDUCATION — ITS AIMS AND METHODS.

Even to-day education is far too little considered in French Equatorial Africa. Methods have improved in recent years but the low standard of native teachers was a drag on progress and since the war the calling up of European staff has imposed further delays. As a result the lower grades of the various services are very much under strength. We have no native doctors or veterinary inspectors and we are extremely short of skilled artisans and foremen. Leaving out of consideration the lack of engineers and editors how many clerks or accountants have we worthy of the name? A bare few. Mediocrity is the rule.

To form a new cadre of skilled natives will take at least ten years, which is perhaps why it has never been attempted. It is certainly a reason for us to begin at once. We shall not see the result, but it will come all the same and then at last the European staff will cease to be cluttered up with routine and double its efficiency without increasing its numerical strength, while the native staff will cease to be content with mediocrity and acquire a sense of responsibility and service.

I have approached the French religious missions with this object in view and I have found them fully alive to the situation and more than willing to help me put it right. We are all of opinion that mission schools and government schools, organised on similar lines

and aiming at similar ends, should share equally in the Government's attention. The financial grants in aid which the Mission Schools receive should be recognised by more intense scholastic activity and by improvement of the standard of the native teaching staff. I dislike all forms of dictatorship and I would not agree to state control of Mission Schools but their liberty of action must be circumscribed by the requirements of public interest.

Our educational object is two-fold, to ensure a suitable education for as many children as possible, and thereafter to specialise. Our choice of subjects must be based on French standards. However short of men we are in the technical grades we must aim at quality rather than quantity to fill them. If we relax our standards we shall find ourselves trying to work with workmen and clerks who are only 50% competent.

This policy means that a large proportion of the children will be left to continue their education in the villages—continue for as long as possible, chiefly with training in agriculture and small trades built up on the foundation of their own traditional crafts. The remainder will be brought up to the standard of the school certificate, subject of course to a constant selective inspection to weed out the incompetent at an early stage before they can hold back the rest of the class or produce a generation of failed B.A's. At this stage begins the specialisation in subjects selected with a view to subsequent employment. Both we and our pupils and their parents must make it clear that there is no professional aristocracy. The good ironworker or mechanic or mason must feel that his profession is no less honourable than that of the good clerk or secretary. This professional pride can be created only by us. It is not that we have intellectuals and lack craftsmen. We lack both, but because of this lack of all we must make equal provision for all.

When our adolescent has started to learn his craft he must go right through with it—he must know his subject from A to Z before he starts to practise it. I appeal to all employers not to take on young men who have not completed their schooling unless they are themselves prepared to complete their training and competent to

carry it through successfully. The Railways School for Apprentices is an excellent example of what can be done in this respect. I recommend it to the notice of all employers—including the Administrative Service.

The Edouard Renaud College will retain its controlling function and until French Equatorial Africa can furnish it with its complete annual quota we shall continue to draw upon the Cameroons as we have done this year. The college by itself however will not suffice and I wish to create a Higher School for each Territory just as there is one for each Colony in French West Africa. This is especially necessary in Chad Territory, whose children have a strong distaste for study in the absolutely foreign and uncongenial atmosphere of Brazzaville.

Each of these High Schools will include a special class for the sons of chiefs, who, like the scholars and craftsmen, must learn the elements of their job at school. This is an old and oft-expressed idea but it has been very rarely put into practice with confidence or method. We shall put it into effect just as soon as we can be sure of doing so successfully—when, that is, we have the necessary staff and equipment at our disposal—but it must be realised now once and for all that the sons of chiefs must receive a special education under special discipline. Any attempt to avoid this obligation would be contrary to the whole policy which we have laid down.

We shall enter then upon our era of progress by the door of education; working in close collaboration with the French Missionary bodies. No teacher, churchman or layman, must forget that he will be judged by results. French Equatorial Africa must find amongst its native population the vigorous and ample aid for which until to-day no one has seriously searched. The duty of search is now the school-master's. His diligence and sincerity are indispensable for its success.

Nor will the result benefit us alone. The native will gain both materially and morally. The awakening of responsibility will be the reward of a good education, and the various social organisations

for sport, for scouting, or for music, of which I have already spoken will contribute to raise his moral standards. I have more than doubled the subsidies to boy scout organizations for 1942 and I am sure the money will be well invested. I have complete confidence that those who control these movements will ensure the full application of Baden Powell's educative principles in French Equatoria Africa.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NATIVE'S ECONOMIC POSITION.

We look then to education for the not inconsiderable number of Africans required to fill our expanding Government cadres ; but large as that number may be it can only represent a very small minority of the population. The majority will remain on the land within its traditional tribal framework, and our whole policy is based on the assumption that in no other way is social progress possible for the native.

We have a striking object lesson in the success of our collective cotton growing experiment in Ubangui-Shari, which has raised poverty stricken and primitive tribal groups to a level of prosperity which is astonishing. The absence of disorder or interference with customs or institutions which has characterised the economic revolution is due simply to the fact that it took place in the native's home where the requirements of labour could be met without migration and the resultant benefits adapted to pre-existing conditions.

What has been achieved with cotton in Chad and Ubangui-Shari can be achieved with other cash crops elsewhere until every district has its own means of producing wealth as well as food. A circular on palm oil has already been issued and others are in preparation covering products which command an assured market. We must have no more fiascos like the castor-oil experiment which

depend for their success on preferential facilities in France. The same method will be followed in each case—village or district cultivation developed by the collective labour and in the collective interest of the local farmers*. This will bring with it an increase in population in situ and an improvement in economic and social standards and amenities without loss of tradition.

Development of native agriculture on these lines is a sure^r guarantee of the Colony's prosperity than any European exploitation with its inevitable corollary of hired labour. The recruiting of labour disturbs the balanced development of the local community and the necessary alienation of land cramps its potential growth. I do not say that no concessions at all should be granted to Europeans but I maintain that it is in principle more profitable to assist the independent native farmer.

The role of the European planter must therefore be transformed. Instead of developing his concession entirely for his own benefit he must make it a model farm for local native producers and act as their adviser and as the middleman for the marketing of their produce. His purely agricultural activity will be confined to experiment and selection, the provision of a nursery garden for the district and the creation of model plantations; but his activities will extend beyond the limits of his own property. He will supervise all aspects of local agriculture, help the villagers to sow new crops, advise them in their difficulties, and get them the seeds, plants and implements they need. His own remuneration will be in the purchase of their products at a fair price. His farm will be the nerve centre of the district, radiating energy into the surrounding countryside and sharing with the natives the profits of successful enterprise. He will be fully supported by the Dept. of Agriculture, which will advise him on his experiments, help him to get the necessary equipment and supply him with European assistants.

* The success of the Gezira Scheme in the Sudan is ascribed in part to its combining the advantages of cooperative agricultural machinery and cooperative marketing with the incentive to individual effort provided by individual tenancies and accounting for crops. Ed.

This has already been done, of course, for cotton, but the cotton companies have not always paid enough care and attention to local agriculture.

The European clearly requires some sort of guarantee in his partnership with the native, but this can be better provided through a freely negotiated contract than by the grant of a unilateral concession. The Provident Society, for instance, can contract for the sale to a given individual of the whole crop or series of crops produced by its members. Such a contract may be of any duration and will contain detailed conditions for the mutual benefit of the contracting parties. The Society will have sufficient capital behind it to enable it to decide the extent of its own active participation. There may be an infinite variety in the types of contract drawn up and I shall object to none of them provided the programme of the enterprise is sound and well thought out. These Societies must look to the future on a long term policy if they are to realise prosperity for the colony on a large scale. They lack the staff and the capital for the more ambitious undertakings, and since they will in any case require a marketing agent or middleman it is only fair that he should be brought in in the initial stages and should take his share in at least a part of the preliminary work and expenses.

I must repeat here my dictum that the progress of the colony depends on Cooperation—the planter's cooperation with the Government is just as necessary as the missionary's or the mining engineer's. There was a time when the Administration insisted on handling everything itself, and the non-official community either shrugged its shoulders or waxed indignant. That time has gone. Coordination everywhere is indispensable.

I might remark that the mining companies, by reason of their privileged position, could set a good example here. I suggest for their consideration the possibilities of a working combination of mining enterprise with regional agricultural development.

Agriculture apart, there are certain economic activities which can be undertaken by the European alone. The minerals and timber of this country can be exploited, its factories managed, its public works carried out only by European technical knowledge and European capital. The native can provide neither of these necessities until present conditions are radically altered. The necessary qualification for a European concessionaire is of course an adequate supply of both.

All these enterprises are intrinsically affected by the labour shortage—perhaps the greatest problem in the country. The lack of skilled labour will be met as time goes on by the combined efforts of educationalist and employer, but the shortage of unskilled labour will grow steadily worse because the way we are using it at present is the main contributory cause of the fall of the birthrate. In these conditions it is no exaggeration to say that the more the country is developed the less will be its actual wealth.

Recent legislation to protect the worker from exploitation has undoubtedly resulted in a great improvement in his physical well-being, as anyone can see who compares the average factory hand with the average villager, but these measures leave the population problem untouched. The countryside is being drained of its manpower because we are employing more labour than is economic and that in the wrong conditions.

We are employing too many men because we are making the old mistake where labour is cheap of thinking men are cheaper than machines. This is false as a general proposition and nearly always of doubtful validity even in exceptional instances. We go on extending projects all over the country on the basis of a limitless supply of black muscles and drawing away the maximum available from the recruiting areas, when we could substitute machinery for manpower and site our factories carefully in suitable zones.

We are employing labour in the wrong conditions because we are removing the young men from their wives and children and herding them into promiscuous camps to become detribalised, and morally weakened, and to be infected with venereal disease by sterile prosti-

tutes. In exchange for wages and their fine new muscles they lose the foundation of their life and the means of perpetuating it through their children. Meanwhile at home the women can have no children, the villages stagnate and the race slowly dies out.

Sometimes the young men go home when their contract is over but even so the best years of their lives have been lost to the community and the evil is but little alleviated. More often they are lost for ever in the flotsam of the town slums, with no ordered way of life, no moral values, and no incentive.

The situation is worst of all in Gabon. There may be, indeed I hope there are other remediable causes for the decline in population there, but bad labour conditions are undoubtedly the chief. The timber industry did harm enough, but mining development has made it worse. The mines too are often remote from the roads and the consequent portorage demands have deprived the villages of their small residue of manpower. The portorage problem can and will be solved easily enough by opening up new roads, but the main general problem remains.

Our first reform must be, as I have already pointed out, to avoid a wide distribution of enterprises over the countryside. The lumber companies and gold mining corporations should be combined into syndicates for better organisation and economical working. Secondly we must mechanise. Starting from to-day every industrial concessionaire must start working out his plans for the substitution of machines for men. The change over is required in the public interest and the Government will assist to the best of its ability during the transition period. Temporary difficulties may impose delays but the end must be achieved notwithstanding.

Machines, however need men to run them, and some jobs can still be done by manpower only, which brings us back to the core of our problem. The solution should be clear in the light of what has gone before. Labour must be recruited and used in such a way that the equilibrium of native life is not disturbed. This means that the labourer must bring his wife and children with him. Better still,

he should take all his people with him to form in the industrial area a new village, tribal and homogeneous. There must be no indiscriminate herding together of men from all parts of the country, and no more sterile labour camps. Men from the same part of the country will live together and in their off-time prepare the ground for cultivation just as they do at home, except that their employer will be there to supervise. The women too will take their customary share in tilling the soil. The employer will be a sort of village squire, building their houses, directing their sowing, buying their crops, arranging for medical attention, drugs and mosquito nets and improving their stock—in fine he will see that the village leads a normal African life with additional advantages and possibilities of progress.

The presence of the women—not as idlers in the house nor as workers in the factory but as busy housewives, preparing the worker's food and helping on his allotment—is absolutely vital if we are to preserve the essence of village life. Equally important is homogeneity. A village can be transplanted but it cannot be created out of nothing. It may be necessary to use compulsion at first in some instances but this is justifiable if it achieves the restoration of the desire and the ability to perpetuate the race, by retaining the natural environment.

The Government cannot of course do all this for the employers. Nor have I been wrong in supposing that I could count on their support. They have appreciated where their duty lay to society and they have willingly accepted the sacrifices asked of them—sacrifices which will none the less soon bring their own reward.

There remains one other branch of the Colony's economic system in which the European holds a preponderating influence—Trade. In a Colony like this where the bulk of the customers are natives and the seller imposes his choice on the purchaser instead of vice versa, the trader can have a very strong educative influence on society.

The days of exploiting the negro's childish passions by bartering gin and beads for gold and ivory are of course finished, but we can still tempt him with shoddy and make our profit out of his ingenuousness. Hideous headgear, shirts that fail to survive their first washing,

knives that turn at first use, all the trash on which Japan has founded her prosperity—are still to be seen in every shop as evidence that we have no respect for our native customer and still regard Africa as an easy disposal place for any junk from firemen's helmets to celluloid combs.

It is not only that this degrades the black and makes him ridiculous—it teaches him to squander his money on trumpery pleasures, it teaches him to be selfish, useless to his village, a second-rater. It must therefore come to an end as soon as possible. The trader must realise that he has a mission to perform. He must educate the native, teach him to prefer good quality goods of moderate price to glittering trash, encourage him to be house-proud and farm-proud and to buy decent furniture and implements. He will find this profitable enough for the customer's demand will improve with his taste. He will work harder to earn more and improve his standard of living. There need be no intermediate stage of trash-loving if an intelligent trader is there to guide the community from primitive nudity to reasonable comfort. Such a trader, I repeat, will not find that his profits have fallen.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRINCIPLE WHICH MUST UNDERLY OUR POLICY.

Lyautey wrote once of a resident in Annam "He has plenty of brains but he will never achieve anything because he lacks that quality of loving kindness without which no great task of man can be accomplished."

I opened with a quotation from Lyautey and I am closing with one, but it is his whole life which I should set before you as an example. Lyautey succeeded in Morocco because he had a kindness for its people. He made mistakes, and the Protectorate has had its unhappy days as well as its happy ones—but the people esteemed him because he was fond of them and his partial failures have passed into affectionate oblivion.

So we must grow fond of our Equatorial negroes. We have them in our trust—and we kept that trust last year when we kept the honour of France. They are bound to us and we to them. All of us, missionaries, planters, officials and business men, who spend more than half our lives out here, whose interests are nearly all in this country, must view its people with clear-sighted friendship. We have drawn up together the rules which are to guide them to prosperity. We must infuse into these rules the spirit of our affection.

Other colonies have passed us on the road by virtue of earlier or more careful adoption of similar measures. But we can be assured that in the end we shall reach a finer goal notwithstanding, because none know so well as we do the secret of that quality of loving kindness without which no great task of man can be accomplished.

BRAZZAVILLE,

November 8th, 1941

APPENDIX.

IMPLEMENTARY LEGISLATION.

Extracts from the issue (No. 23 of 1942) of the Journal Officiel de l'Afrique Equatoriale Francaise dated November 1st, 1942.

PARTIE OFFICIELLE

ACTES DE LA FRANCE COMBATTANTE

A l'occasion de la signature des trois décrets publiés ci-dessous, le Général de Gaulle, Chef de la France Combattante, a adressé au Gouverneur général Eboué le télégramme suivant :

Londres, le 1er août 1942.

Gouverneur général EBOUÉ,

Brazzaville.

Sur la proposition du Commissaire national aux Colonies, je viens de signer avec grande satisfaction vos trois décrets sur le régime du travail, le statut de l'indigène évolué et la création de communes indigènes. Je tiens à saisir cette occasion pour vous dire combien j'apprécie et approuve les principes de la politique indigène que vous poursuivez en A.E.F. et qui trouve son expression dans les décrets dont vous avez pris l'initiative. Grace à vous et aux fonctionnaires coloniaux de tous rangs qui vous assistent, les sujets et protégés de la France n'auront subi malgré la guerre aucun retard dans le progrès de leur développement et de leur statut conformément à la politique traditionnelle de la France.

Général DE GAULLE.

ARRETE promulguant le decret No. 376, en date 29 juillet 1942, portant modification du régime du travail et de la main-d'œuvre en A.E.F.

LE GOUVERNEUR GENERAL DE L'AFRIQUE EQUATORIALE FRANCAISE,
OFFICIER DE LA LEGION D'HONNEUR,

Vu le décret du 15 janvier 1910, portant création du Gouvernement général de l'A.E.F. ;

Vu le décret No. 73, du 27 février 1941, portant réorganisation administrative de l'A.E.F. ;

ARRETE :

Art. 1er. — Est promulgué en A.E.F. le décret No. 376, en date du 29 juillet 1942, portant modification du régime du travail et de la main-d'œuvre en A.E.F.

Art. 2. — Le présent arrêté sera enregistré, inséré au *Journal officiel* de la colonie et communiqué partout où besoin sera.

Brazzaville, le 16 octobre 1942.

F. EBOUE.

DECRET No. 376, portant modification du régime du travail et de la main-d'œuvre en Afrique Equatoriale Française.

LE GENERAL DE GAULLE, CHEF DES FRANCAIS LIBRES,
PRESIDENT DU COMITE NATIONAL.

Sur le rapport du Commissaire national à l'Economie, aux Finances et aux Colonies ;

Vu l'ordonnance No. 16, du 24 septembre 1941, portant organisation nouvelle des pouvoirs publics de la France Libre ;

Vu l'article 18, du sénatus—consulte du 3 mai 1854 ;

Vu le décret du 4 mai 1922, fixant le régime du travail en Afrique Equatoriale Française ;

Vu le décret du 22 octobre 1929,

DECRETE :

Art. 1er. — Il est institué dans chaque territoire de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française un " Office du Travail et de la Main-d'Œuvre indigène " destiné à mieux assurer l'observation du principe de la liberté du travail et à contrôler l'embauchage et l'utilisation de la main-d'œuvre indigène.

Art. 2. — L'Office du Travail et de la Main-d'Œuvre indigène est composé de représentants de l'Administration et de représentants des employeurs, les premiers désignés par les Chefs de territoire, les seconds par les Chambres de commerce.

Il est présidé par l'Inspecteur du travail et de la main-d'œuvre du territoire, s'il en existe un, ou à défaut, par un fonctionnaire désigné par le Chef du territoire.

Les représentants de l'Administration, président compris, et les représentants des employeurs sont en même nombre. En cas de partage égal des voix, celle du président est prépondérante.

Art. 3. — L'Office du Travail et de la Main-d'Œuvre indigène est consulté sur toutes les questions se rapportant à l'embauchage et à l'utilisation de la main-d'œuvre dans le territoire.

Art. 4. — Les Chefs de territoire détermineront, après avoir pris l'avis de l'Office du Travail et de la Main-d'Œuvre indigène, le nombre maximum de travailleurs engagés par contrat ou journaliers, que chaque exploitation agricole ou industrielle pourra employer, en tenant compte des possibilités de rendement de chaque exploitation, déterminées par un rapport des services techniques compétents, ou par les contingentements qui pourraient être fixés.

A la demande de l'employeur intéressé, le chiffre fixé pourra être révisé tous les six mois.

Art. 5. — L'Office du Travail et de la Main-d'Œuvre indigène reçoit les demandes de travail et en tient registre. Il en examine le bien fondé et l'urgence. S'il est reconnu qu'une demande n'excède pas les disponibilités de la subdivision ou du département, l'embauchage est autorisé.

Art. 6. — L'utilisation de la main-d'œuvre dans un territoire autre que son territoire d'origine est soumise à l'autorisation du Gouverneur général qui prendra l'avis des Chefs de territoire et des Offices du Travail intéressés.

Art. 7. — L'Office du Travail et de la Main-d'Œuvre indigène veille à ce que les embauchages pour le compte d'une même entreprise aient lieu, autant que possible, dans la même tribu, afin de permettre aux travailleurs de constituer des villages de formation homogène, composés d'indigènes d'une même origine et de mêmes coutumes.

Art. 8. — Le Chef de département, au reçu de l'autorisation d'embauchage donnée par l'Office du Travail et de la Main-d'Œuvre indigène, avisera les Chefs des subdivisions intéressées, qui la porteront à la connaissance des Chefs et des populations.

L'autorité administrative du lieu recevra les engagements et les contrats de travail dans les formes prévues par la réglementation en vigueur.

Elle vérifiera si les engagés sont mariés et, dans ce cas, mettra en route, en même temps que l'engagé, sa ou ses femmes et ses enfants.

Ni l'engagé, ni sa famille, ne pourront renoncer au bénéfice de cette disposition sans l'agrément donné par écrit du Chef de subdivision.

Art. 9. — Tout travailleur qui désire s'engager par contrat doit subir au lieu de rassemblement du groupe de travailleurs dont il fait partie, ou en cours de route, dans le premier centre où se trouvera un médecin, ou au plus tard à son arrivée au lieu d'emploi, une visite médicale afin qu'il soit vérifié s'il est apte à remplir l'emploi qui lui est destiné.

L'engagement ne devient définitif qu'à partir du moment où le travailleur a été reconnu apte. Les travailleurs déclarés inaptes sont renvoyés, ainsi que leur famille, dans leur village d'origine, aux frais de l'employeur si la visite n'a pas eu lieu dans leur subdivision d'origine.

Les résultats de la visite médicale sont consignés par le médecin sur le livret-contrat du travail.

Art. 10. — Le voyage de l'engagé et de sa famille du chef-lieu de leur subdivision d'origine au lieu d'emploi est à la charge de l'employeur, ainsi que le rapatriement des uns et des autres en fin de contrat.

Art. 11. — En aucun cas un contrat ne pourra être passé pour plus de deux ans, sauf prorogation consentie d'un commun accord entre les parties. Dans ce cas, le nouveau contrat donnera lieu aux mêmes formalités que le contrat primitif.

Art. 12. — Les tribunaux indigènes connaîtront les délits d'export d'avance prévus et réprimés par le décret du 22 Octobre 1929, même si un européen ou assimilé est partie au procès, lorsque l'euro péen ou assimilé aura déclaré par écrit se soumettre à cette juridiction.

Art. 13. — La non-exécution par l'indigène des obligations pécuniaires ou en nature, résultant d'un jugement du conseil d'arbitrage, le rend passible de la contrainte par corps pour une durée qui n'excède pas trois mois, et qui dans tous les cas sera fixée par le jugement de condamnation.

Cette non-exécution est constatée par le ministère d'un agent de la force publique ou par un fonctionnaire de l'Administration, commis par le Président du Conseil d'arbitrage à la requête du bénéficiaire. La prise de corps est ensuite ordonnée par le Président.

La durée de la contrainte par corps est calculée par jour de détention selon les règles fixées par arrêté du Gouverneur général lorsqu'il s'agit d'obligations pécuniaires. Elle est calculée à raison d'un jour de détention pour un jour de travail imposé, s'il s'agit d'obligation en nature.

Art. 14. — Le Gouverneur général de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française fixe par arrêté les modalités d'application du présent décret.

Art. 15. — Sont abrogées toutes les dispositions contraires au présent décret.

Art. 16. — Le Commissaire national à l'Economie, aux Finances et aux Colonies et le Commissaire national à la Justice et à l'Instruction publique sont chargés, chacun en ce qui le concerne, de l'exécution du présent décret qui sera publié au *Journal officiel* de la France Libre et au *Journal officiel* de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française.

Fait à Londres, le 29 juillet 1942.

C. DE GAULLE.

Par le Chef des Français Libres, Président du Comité national :

*Le Commissaire national à l'Economie, aux
Finances et aux Colonies,*

R. PLEVEN.

*Le Commissaire national à la Justice
et à l'Instruction publique,*

R. CASSIN.

ARRETE promulguant le décret No. 377, en date du 29 juillet 1942, fixant le statut des notables évolués.

LE GOUVERNEUR GENERAL DE L'AFRIQUE EQUATORIALE FRANCAISE,
OFFICIER DE LA LEGION D'HONNEUR,

Vu le décret du 15 janvier 1910, portant création du Gouvernement général de l'A.E.F. ;

Vu le décret No. 73, du 27 février 1941, portant réorganisation administrative de l'A.E.F. ;

ARRETE :

Art. 1er. — Est promulgué en A.E.F. le décret No. 377, en date du 29 juillet 1942, fixant le statut des notables évolués.

Art. 2. — Le présent arrêté sera enregistré, inséré au *Journal officiel* de la colonie et communiqué partout où besoin sera.

Brazzaville, le 16 octobre 1942.

F. EBOUE.

Décret No. 377, *fixant le statut des notables évolués.*

LE GENERAL DE GAULLE, CHEF DES FRANCAIS LIBRES,
PRESIDENT DU COMITE NATIONAL,

Sur le rapport du Commissaire national à l'Economie, aux Finances et aux Colonies et du Commissaire national à la Justice et à l'Instruction publique ;

Vu l'ordonnance No. 16, du 24 septembre 1941, portant organisation nouvelle des pouvoirs publics de la France Libre ;

Vu le décret du 15 janvier 1910, portant création du Gouvernement général de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française ;

Vu le décret du 15 novembre 1924, portant réglementation des sanctions de police administrative.

DECRETE :

Art. 1er. — La qualité de " notables évolués " pourra être accordée aux indigènes des deux sexes, originaires de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française, ainsi qu'aux indigènes des deux sexes originaires des autres colonies françaises ayant 10 ans au moins de résidence ininterrompue dans la colonie, par arrêté du Gouverneur général en Conseil ou en Commission permanente pris à la requête de l'intéressé ou, si l'un des ascendants du requérant possédait lui-même la qualité de notable évolué, par arrêté du Chef de territoire pris en Conseil des Intérêts locaux.

Art. 2. — Les conditions que doit remplir le requérant pour que la qualité de notable évolué puisse lui être accordée sont les suivantes :

- 1° Etre agé de 18 ans au moins ;
- 2° Savoir parler, lire et écrire couramment le français.

Si le requérant ne peut produire un diplôme au moins équivalent au certificat d'études primaire ou s'il n'appartient pas à un cadre administratif dont les règles d'admission exigent des impétrants des connaissances au moins équivalentes, il devra subir un examen devant le Chef de subdivision, assisté, sauf impossibilité, d'un instituteur européen.

Sont dispensés de l'obligation de savoir parler, lire et écrire couramment le français, les requérants membres de l'Ordre national de la Légion d'Honneur ou de l'Ordre de la Libération ;

- 3° Posséder parfaitement un métier ou une profession, ou représenter des intérêts importants pour l'économie locale ;
- 4° Avoir satisfait à ses obligations militaires ;
- 5° N'avoir jamais été condamné par délit de droit commun ou pour crime ;
- 6° Etre de bonne vie et mœurs.

Art. 3. — Le requérant adresse au Chef de subdivision de sa résidence une demande indiquant ;

- 1° Ses nom et prénoms ;
- 2° La date et le lieu de sa naissance ;
- 3° Ses résidences actuelles et anciennes.

Seront joints à la demande les diplômes, certificats et attestations propres à prouver que le requérant remplit les conditions exigées par l'article 2 ci-dessus, ainsi que toutes pièces justificatives et renseignements touchant sa condition et son genre de vie.

Art. 4. — Le Chef de subdivision après enquête, transmet le dossier de la demande, avec son avis et les résultats de l'enquête, à son Chef de département qui le fait suivre au Chef de territoire avec ses propres conclusions. Le Chef de territoire le transmet au Gouverneur général avec son avis.

Le cas échéant, le dossier est transmis aux fins d'enquêtes aux Chefs des subdivisions dans lesquelles le requérant aura antérieurement résidé.

Art. 5. — Pour qu'une demande de reconnaissance de la qualité d'évolué puisse être prise en considération, les enquêtes administratives devront avoir démontré l'honorabilité du candidat, qu'il s'est élevé au dessus du niveau moyen des indigènes, et que sa tenue morale et son sens civique le rendent digne de l'honneur qui lui est fait et capable de participer à la gestion des affaires communales et publiques.

Art. 6. — Les notables évolués sont exemptés des sanctions de police administrative.

Ils paient l'impôt sur role nominatif et sont tenus au rachat des prestations.

Il peuvent être désignés pour faire partie des corps municipaux des communes indigènes.

Ils sont membres des collèges électoraux pour toutes les élections locales.

Art. 7. — Les documents d'état civil des notables évolués et les pièces d'indentité qui leur sont délivrés portent mention de leur qualité.

Art. 8. — La reconnaissance de la qualité de notable évolué n'entraîne pour les intéressés aucun changement de statut personnel ; les notables évolués restent soumis aux dispositions coutumières qui leur sont propres et en particulier restent justiciables des tribunaux indigènes.

Art. 9. — La qualité de notable évolué peut être retirée, pour indignité, par arrêté du Gouverneur général, en Conseil ou en Commission permanente.

Art. 10. — Le Commissaire national à l'Economie, aux Finances et aux Colonies, le Commissaire national à la Justice et à l'Instruction publique, sont chargés, chacun en ce qui le concerne, de l'exécution du présent décret qui sera publié aux *Journaux officiels* de la France Libre et de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française.

Fait à Londres, le 29 juillet 1942.

C. DE GAULLE

Par le Chef des Français Libres, Président du Comité national :

*Le Commissaire national à l'Economie, aux
Finances et aux Colonies,*

R. PLEVEN.

*Le Commissaire national à la Justice
et à l'Instruction Publique,*

R. CASSIN.

ARRÊTE promulguant le décret No. 378, en date du 29 juillet 1942, fixant les règles d'institution, d'organisation et d'administration des communes indigènes en A.E.F.

LE GOUVERNEUR GENERAL DE L'AFRIQUE EQUATORIALE FRANCAISE,
OFFICIER DE LA LEGION D'HONNEUR.

Vu le décret du 15 janvier 1910, portant création du Gouvernement général de l'A.E.F. ;

Vu le décret No 73, du 27 février 1941, portant réorganisation administrative de l'A.E.F. ;

ARRETE :

Art. 1er. — Est promulgué en A.E.F. le décret N. 378, en date du 29 juillet 1942, fixant les règles d'institution, d'organisation et d'administration des communes indigènes en A.E.F.

Art. 2. — Le présent arrêté sera enregistré, inséré au *Journal officiel* de la colonie et communiqué partout où besoin sera

Brazzaville, le 16 octobre 1942

F. EBOUE.

Décret No. 378, *fixant les règles d'institution, d'organisation et d'administration des communes indigènes en Afrique Equatoriale Française.*

LE GENERAL DE GAULLE, CHEF DES FRANCAIS LIBRES,
PRESIDENT DU COMITE NATIONAL,

Sur le rapport du Commissaire national à l'Economie, aux Finances et aux Colonies ;

Vu l'ordonnance No 16, du 24 septembre 1941, portant organisation nouvelle des pouvoirs publics de la France Libre ;

Vu le décret du 15 janvier 1940, portant création du Gouvernement général de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française ;

Vu le décret No. 73, du 27 février 1941, portant réorganisation administrative de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française,

DECRETE :

Art. 1er. — Le Gouverneur général de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française peut, par arrêté en Conseil ou en Commission permanente sur la proposition du Chef de territoire, ériger en communes indigènes les agglomérations indigènes où le sentiment de l'unité et le sens de la vie citadine sont suffisamment accusés

Les limites de la commune sont fixées par l'arrêté d'institution.

Art 2. — Les communes indigènes sont des unités administratives autonomes placées sous le contrôle d'un fonctionnaire du corps des Administrateurs des colonies ou du cadre des Services civils.

Art 3. — Font partie de la commune indigène les originaires de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française ou des autres colonies françaises qui y ont leur résidence fixe, qu'ils aient le statut de sujet ou de citoyen français, ainsi que les indigènes étrangers qui y sont installés à demeure.

Art. 4. — Les habitants des communes indigènes âgés de plus de 18 ans doivent se faire inscrire individuellement sur les tableaux de recensement de la Commune. Les Chefs de famille doivent faire inscrire les membres de leur famille et les autres personnes vivant sous leur toit âgés de moins de 18 ans.

Art. 5. — L'administration de la Commune indigène est confiée à un corps municipal de 6 à 12 membres, nommés pour 2 ans par le Chef du territoire parmi les notables évolués ou parmi les citoyens français originaires de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française ou des autres colonies françaises.

Le Président est désigné par le Chef du territoire parmi les membres du Corps municipal.

Ces fonctions sont renouvelables.

Les membres du Corps municipal sont révoqués par le Chef du territoire.

Art. 6. — Il ne sera pas constitué de Conseil de notables pour les communes indigènes.

Art. 7. — Le Corps municipal se réunit aussi souvent qu'il est nécessaire soit sur la convocation de son Président par écrit et à domicile, soit à la demande de l'administrateur.

Le quorum est de la moitié des membres plus un, dont le Président, lequel peut au besoin se faire représenter par un autre membre, s'il est valablement empêché.

Lorsque, après deux convocations successives à trois jours d'intervalle ce quorum n'a pas été réuni, le conseil délibère valablement quel que soit le nombre de membres présents.

Art. 8. — Les fonctions de secrétaire du Corps municipal sont remplies par un de ses membres, élu par ses collègues, pour un an.

Art. 9. — L'administrateur assiste de droit à toutes les séances du Corps municipal.

Ces séances ne sont pas publiques.

Les délibérations sont inscrites par ordre de date, sur un registre coté et paraphé par l'administrateur.

Une copie de ces procès-verbaux est transmise dans les huit jours au Chef du territoire, par les soins de l'administrateur, qui y joint ses propres observations.

Art. 10. — Le Corps municipal est obligatoirement consulté sur :

Le taux et l'assiette de l'impôt personnel indigène ;

Le taux et les modalités du rachat de prestation par les indigènes ;

La répartition et l'exécution des prestations ;

Le programme des travaux qui doivent être exécutés soit par les prestataires, soit sur les crédits provenant du rachat des prestations.

La tarification des patentes indigènes.

L'exécution des travaux d'urbanisme intéressant la Commune indigène ;

Toutes les questions d'intérêt général intéressant la Commune indigène.

Il doit être également appelé à donner son avis sur la création des associations d'indigènes, et les institutions professionnelles indigènes, sur les mesures à prendre pour le développement de l'artisanat et des cultures vivrières ou maraîchères destinées à l'approvisionnement du centre indigène ou de centres européens voisins.

Le Corps municipal doit enfin donner son avis sur l'opportunité des prêts ou avances à consentir par la Société de prévoyance de la Commune indigène aux habitants de la Commune, sur le montant de ces prêts ou avances, les garanties exigées, les modalités de remboursement. Le budget et le programme annuel de la Société lui est soumis pour avis et le Président du Corps municipal fait de droit partie du Conseil d'Administration de la Société.

Art. 11. — Le Corps municipal.

Assure ou fait assurer l'exécution des ordres de l'autorité administrative ;

Maintient le bon ordre et la tranquillité publique ;

Assure la surveillance de l'hygiène publique ;

Veille au bon fonctionnement des marchés et en assure la surveillance.

Il participe :

A l'établissement des rôles et à la perception de l'impôt ;

Au recensement de la population, à la préparation des listes de recensement pour le recrutement et à la réunion des contingents.

Art. 12. — Les Communes indigènes peuvent être dotées d'un budget par arrêté du Gouverneur général en Conseil.

Le cadre, les postes et les modalités du budget seront déterminés par l'arrêté d'institution.

Art. 13. — Dans les Communes indigènes dotées d'un budget le Trésorier général ou le préposé du Trésor suivant le cas, remplit les fonctions de receveur municipal.

Il sera chargé d'effectuer les recettes et les dépenses de la Commune.

Il a droit en cette qualité aux remises fixées par les règlements en vigueur.

Le compte de gestion de ce comptable sera présenté au Corps municipal en même temps que le compte administratif et approuvé par le Gouverneur général.

Art. 14. — Quand la Commune indigène est dotée d'un budget elle a la personnalité civile et est représentée par le Président du Corps municipal. Toutefois, il ne pourra ester en justice soit en demandant, soit en défendant, qu'avec l'autorisation du Gouverneur général.

Cependant, il peut, avec l'autorisation de l'administrateur, intenter les actions possessoires ou y défendre et faire des actes conservatoires interruptifs de prescription.

Aucune action contre la Commune indigène ne peut être intenté, sans qu'ait été adressé préalablement par le demandeur au Gouverneur général, un mémoire dont le dépôt est interruptif de prescription.

Art. 15. — Dans le cas des Communes indigènes qui ne sont pas dotées d'un budget, les crédits nécessaires sont mis à la disposition de l'administrateur qui consulte le Corps municipal sur l'emploi qui en sera fait. La justification des dépenses est faite dans la forme réglementaire.

Art. 16. — Le Président et les membres du Corps municipal reçoivent une indemnité dont le montant est fixé par le Gouverneur général et est imputée sur le budget local ou sur le budget de la Commune indigène si elle est dotée d'un budget.

Art. 17. — Dans les cérémonies officielles il sera réservé une place au Corps municipal des Communes indigènes à la suite de la commission de la commune-mixte voisine, s'il en existe une ; dans le cas contraire, le Corps municipal viendra au rang des commissions municipales.

Art. 18. — Le Gouverneur général fixera par arrêté les règles et les détails d'application du présent décret.

Art. 19. — Le Commissaire national à l'Economie, aux Finances et aux Colonies, est chargé de l'exécution du présent décret, qui sera communiqué partout où besoin sera et publié aux *Journaux officiels* de la France Libre et de l'Afrique Equatoriale Française.

Fait à Londres, le 29 juillet 1942.

C. DE GAULLE.

Par le Chef des Français Libres, Président du Comité national :

*Le Commissaire national à l'Economie,
aux Finances et aux Colonies,*

R. PLEVEN.

*Le Commissaire national à la Justice
et à l'Instruction publique,*

R. CASSIN.

NOTE

In an Explanatory Note accompanying the decrees M. Eboué mentions the reluctance of some administrative officials to agree to the removal in toto of villages to other areas and reminds them that he will judge them not by their district revenue figures but by their successful implementation of his policy.

Meanwhile the issue of concessions and prospecting licences was suspended until Governors should have rendered full statistics under Article 4 of Decree No. 376.

A further review of progress was made in the annual address to the Administrative Council on November 19th, 1942. After paying a tribute to the loyalty of the native population and to the attenuated ranks of administrative officials who, working in obscurity far from the field of battle, have devoted themselves to the cause of France and Freedom, the Governor-general described how his proposals were examined by a special commission at French Headquarters in London and discussed and modified before they were embodied in the decrees. He emphasised the fact that artisans were equally eligible with clerks for admission to the ranks of the notables privileged under the ordinance, and again reminded his listeners of the necessity of treating them with respect. He then discussed the failure of the first attempt to introduce the new system of contract labour engaged through the Provident Societies. The experiment was vitiated from the start by native suspicion that it was a deep-laid plot to profit the concessionaire. The immediate project was to tap wild rubber in Ubangui for the war effort, and M. Eboué insisted on long term contracts. He refused to yield to pressure to change his mind, remembering the early days of his cotton experiment in the same area, the violent initial criticism and the final brilliant success. His object is to bring into existence before the armistice a system in which private enterprise

can find its role between the organised native producer and the inevitable Government control of overseas trade. The first big step was taken in October, 1942 when a Directorate of Agriculture and European Enterprise was created with full authority over production, agricultural credits, and the Provident Societies.

Considerable progress had been made during the year in the educational sphere. Four intermediate schools had been opened, one in each of the four colonies; two vocational schools were being organised; joinery schools under a European foreman-teacher had been started at Bangui and Libreville. The necessary masters were found from amongst educated Lebanese. The Edouard-Renaud College had been re-organised to absorb the best products of these schools, with a bias towards vocational training, and to the formation of a French African culture. Special courses were to be arranged for young serving officials with a passing-out examination qualifying them for a higher scale. Nor had the three R's been neglected. Including special preparatory sections attached to the intermediate schools there were seven regional elementary schools in existence and the native teaching staff had reached a high standard of professional *esprit de corps* and devotion to duty.

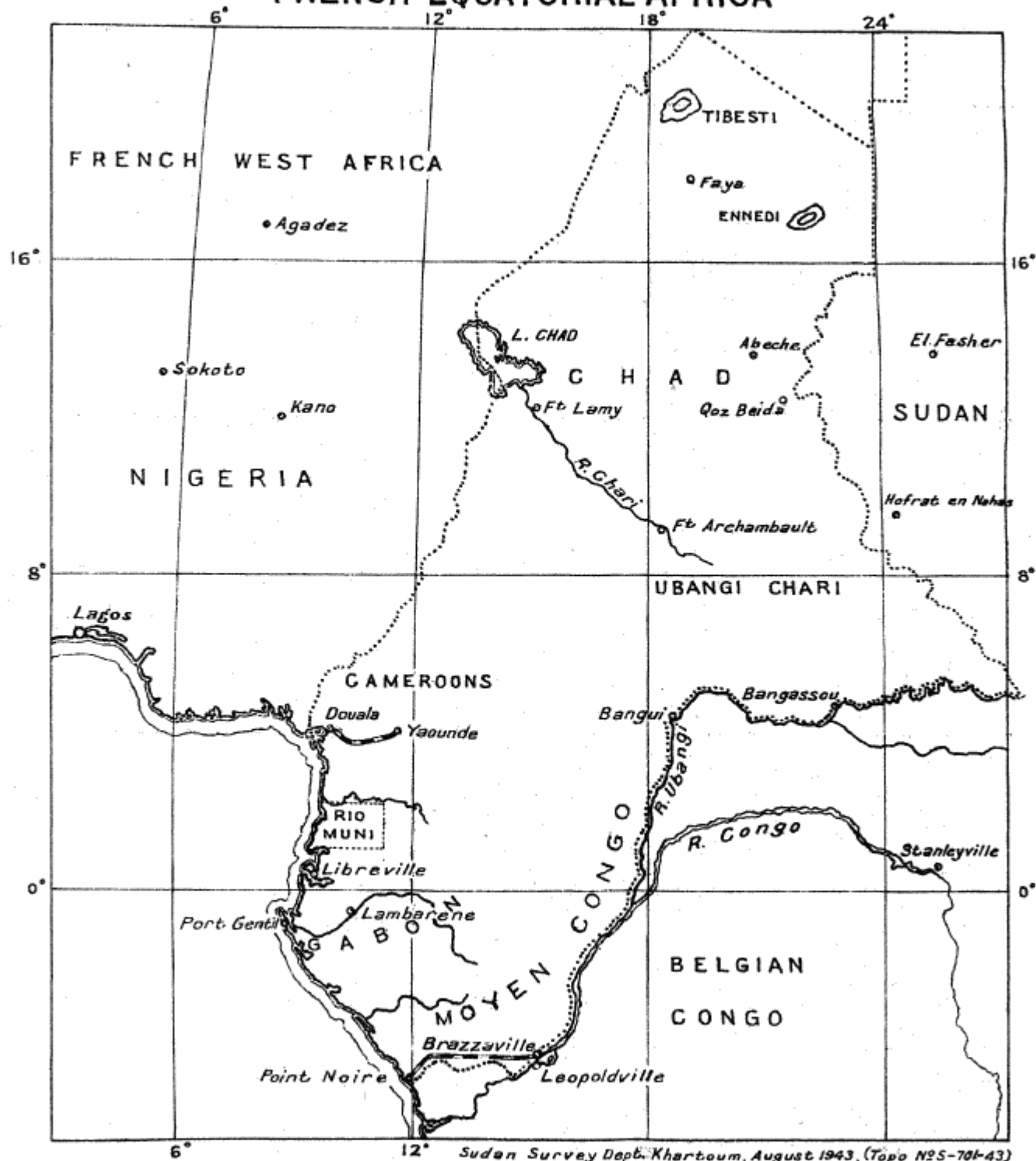
Arrangements had been made to subsidise good native craftsmen who were prepared to take apprentices. The Scout movement was extending rapidly. A Sports Federation had been founded and was making good progress. The standard of education of French children in Brazzaville had been maintained.

In a short review of the economic position, the main feature of which was the increased interest in vegetable oils and rubber, M. Eboué commented on the increase in total value of F.E. A. trade from 560 million francs in 1939 to 800 millions in 1941, which was most satisfactory even allowing for the increases in value of goods. Production of gold and diamonds had been increased, that of lead maintained, that of timber kept up to a reasonable figure.

The address concluded with a message of loyalty to General de Gaulle.

K. H.

FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA



Sudan Survey Dept. Khartoum, August 1943, (Topo N2S-701-43)