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PROFILE OF NIGERIA

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NIGERIA

BY LEONARD S. KENWORTHY



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By Leonard S. Kenworthy

LEADERS OF NEW NATIONS

PROFILE OF NIGERIA

TWELVE CITIZENS OF THE WORLD

Designed by Chet Gilbert

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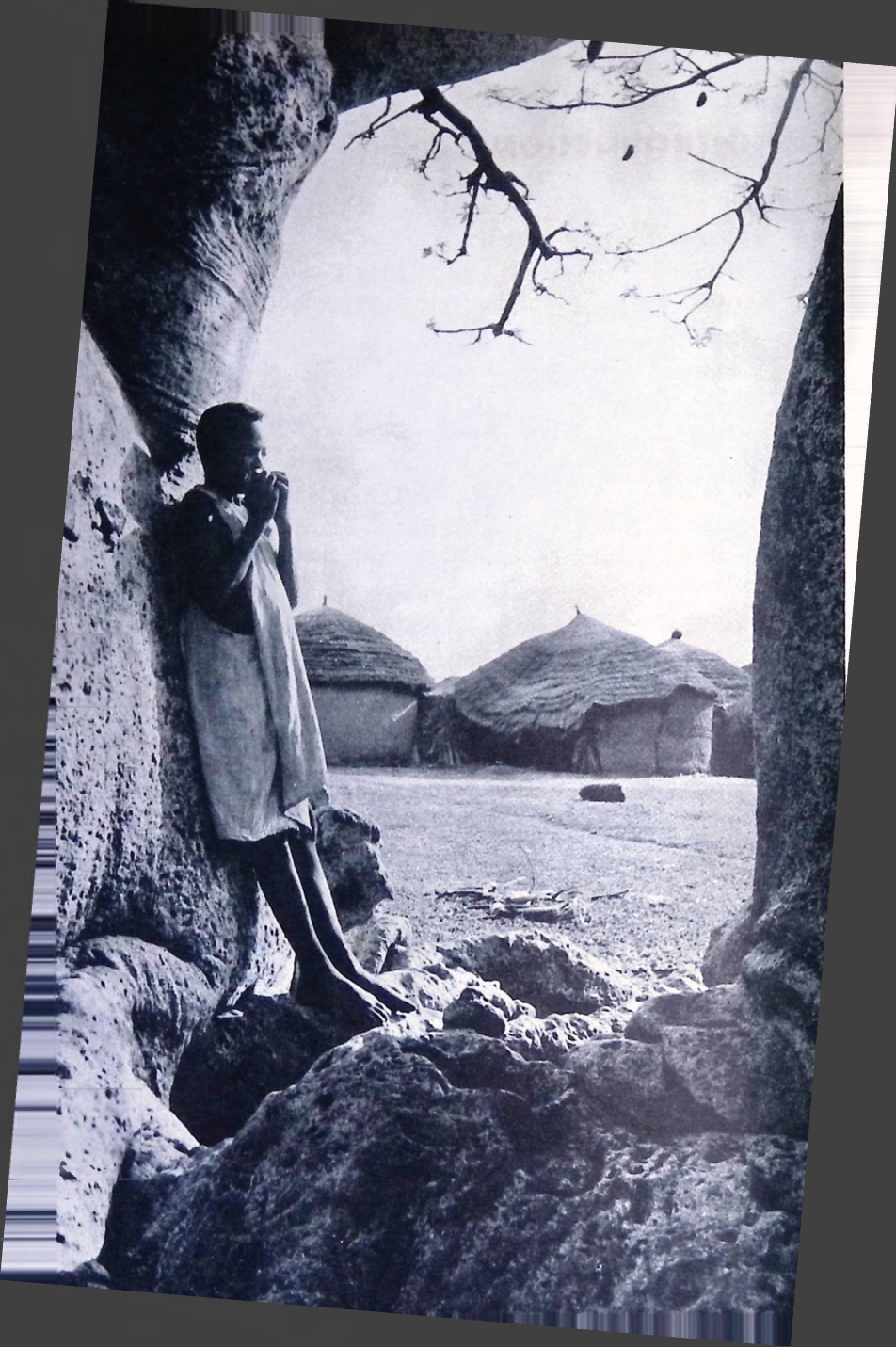
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CONTENTS

Introduction	7
Nigeria's Location and Size	9
Why We Have Never Heard of Nigeria	11
The Land and Major Regions	13
The People of Nigeria	18
Their Homes and Food	23
Their Clothes	30
How They Earn a Living	35
Their Markets	43
Their Transportation and Communication	46
Their Chief Cities	53
Their Health	58
Their Schools and Education	62
Their Religions	67
How They Have Fun	70
Their Arts and Crafts	74
Their History and Government	78
Their Political Leaders	87
Their Future	94
Acknowledgments	95
Index	96



INTRODUCTION

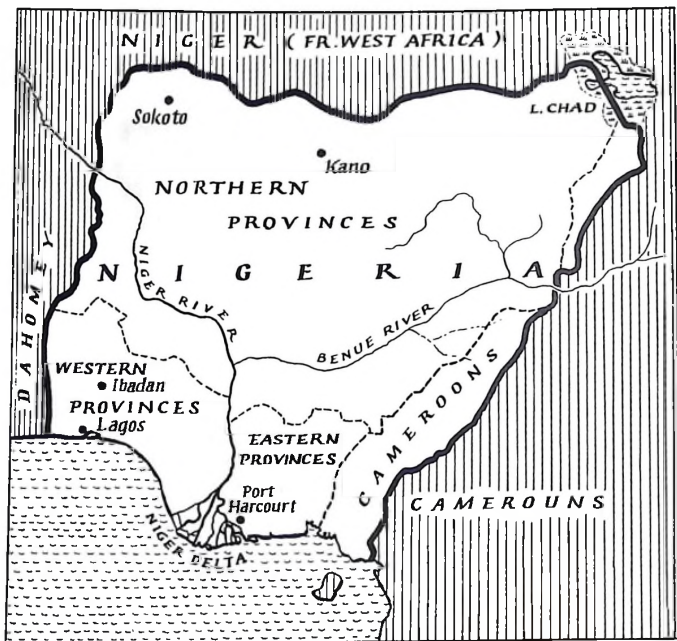
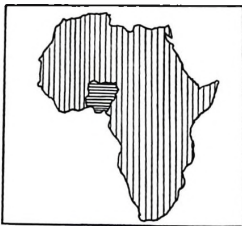
“Nigeria? I never heard of it.”

That is what a lot of people said until a short time before Nigeria became independent on October 1, 1960.

Then, all of a sudden, Nigeria shot into the news. Newspaper writers called it “Africa’s Biggest Country” or “The World’s Newest Nation.” Radio commentators talked about it as a “country of color, of contrasts, of change, and of complexities.” TV programs began to show pictures of its “mammy wagons,” its colorful dances, its music, and its leaders in their flowing robes or western business suits.

But all these accounts have given us only odds and ends of information about Nigeria. They have been like a jigsaw puzzle before it has been put together.

In this book we hope to fit the pieces into a brief, comprehensive picture of the new nation of Nigeria. We think it is a fabulous country with millions of fascinating people. We hope you will think so, too, when you have finished reading this volume.



NIGERIA'S LOCATION AND SIZE

On most maps of the world Nigeria looks like a speck. Even on most maps of Africa it seems very small. Though it is tiny, it can be found easily in at least four different ways.

One is by locating it at the southern tip of the big bulge on the western coast of Africa.

A second is by finding the Niger River, which flows through the heart of Nigeria and empties into the Gulf of Guinea.

A third method is to spot the equator and then to move your finger north a short distance on the map until you come to Nigeria.

A fourth and more accurate way to locate it is to find the area between meridians 3 and 14 east and the parallels 4 and 14 north. That is the method a geographer would use to describe it in professional terms.

To the north of Nigeria is French West Africa. To the east is French Equatorial Africa. To the south is the Gulf of Guinea. And to the west are Dahomey and French West Africa.

We have said that this country seems small on most maps. It is small if you compare it with Russia, China, Canada, Brazil, and the United States. But it is very big if you compare it with many countries we know in Europe. For instance, Nigeria is three times the size of Norway. It is four times the size of Great Britain. It is ten times the size of Portugal. It is nearly 32 times the size of Belgium.

You could place all four of these countries in Nigeria and they would still have room to bounce around.

It is also big in another sense. In it there are approximately 35 million people. That makes it the largest country in Africa in population. Its nearest rivals are Egypt and Ethiopia, and they are not even close competitors, for Egypt has about 25 million people and Ethiopia about 20 million.

Nigeria boys welcome British royalty.



WHY WE HAVE NEVER HEARD OF NIGERIA

Lots of people have asked recently, "If Nigeria is so big and so important, why haven't we heard about it?" The answer is fairly simple, even though it has several parts.

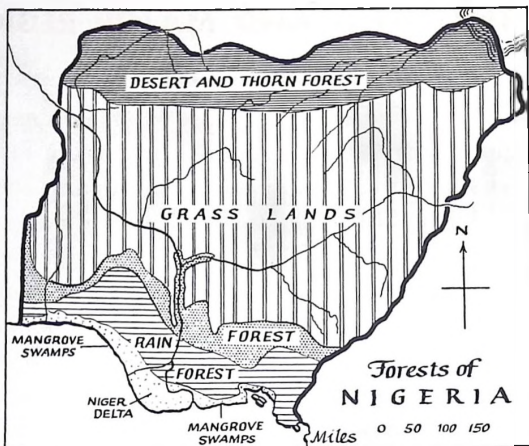
Actually most of us have known very little about the entire continent of Africa, let alone its individual parts.

We have heard about the Union of South Africa and Kenya because of the clashes there between the white and colored people. We have known something about the Belgian Congo and the Union of South Africa because of their gold, diamonds, and uranium.

We have kept track of Liberia because of our interest in its rubber and because some of its citizens are descendants of former slaves in the United States who went to Liberia a long time ago. We have learned a little about Ghana, Morocco, Tunisia, and a few other spots because they have recently gained their independence.

Nigeria, however, has not had racial clashes. It has not had tremendous mineral resources in which we have been interested. It has been a British possession and we have had no special political ties with it. And it has not been independent until recently.

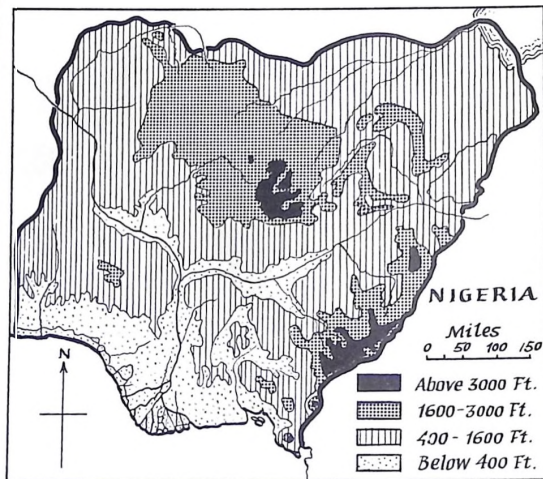
So it has been a blank spot in the maps of Africa which we all carry in our minds.



Above: Map of the major geographical areas of Nigeria.

Left: A typical forest area.

Below: Map showing the elevation of land.



THE LAND AND MAJOR REGIONS

Nigeria has at least five major geographical regions. For a quick and clear picture of the country, let's imagine that we are taking an airplane trip around Nigeria. Our first stop will be the mangrove swamps and delta area. Then we shall see the rain-forest section. Next we shall visit the giant grasslands or savanna area. Finally we shall fly over the Cameroon Highlands or Cameroon Mountains.

After that we shall come back to the earth and see the people and what they do, visiting them by foot, by canoes, by autos and buses, by train, and by donkeys and camels.

In a narrow strip along the seacoast in the south we find that the land is very low. Some of it is sandy. Other parts are swampy, with islands covered with mangrove trees whose giant roots reach out like tentacles to embed themselves in the swamps. In other spots there is mud which has been carried down by the Niger River, often forming mud banks. All this makes up the Niger delta, with hundreds of little islands and scores of tiny streams.

Since this part of Nigeria is near the equator and is low land, it is often very hot and very humid.

In the early days of exploration by Europeans, white people came to this part of Africa. But they did not stay long. They found it too hot and humid to live there. And they soon discovered that they could not withstand the diseases which were found here. But the Africans have been able to live here for centuries.



When we fly farther north, we soon begin to see giant ferns, canes, and palms along the banks of the streams and the river. Farther back from the water there are forests of enormous trees. We do not recognize all of them, for many of them do not grow in other parts of the world. But our local guides point out several species of mahogany, satinwoods, cedars, gnarled baobab trees, wawas, and ironwoods. Especially noticeable are the tall, giant cottonwoods with their lovely smooth gray bark and enormous trunks which are fluted like the buttresses of a cathedral.

Overhead there are giant creepers or vines whose stems look like ropes.

There is more rainfall here and much good earth where the land has been cleared.

Farther north is a vast plain which forms most of Nigeria. Because there are fewer trees but much grass, this section is often referred to as the savanna area.



This is good farming country, and yams, sweet potatoes, and oil palms are among the rich resources for the people who live here.

Unfortunately it is not yet a good place for animals. Most breeds of cattle cannot exist in this part of Nigeria because of tsetse flies. Experts in cattle raising have found some fly-resistant cattle and they hope that someday this territory can be used for cattle grazing.

As we continue northward the climate becomes drier and the trees fewer and fewer. But there are still grass and other kinds of palms like the fan palms. This is a good region for growing cotton and what Nigerians and other Africans call groundnuts and we call peanuts.

This is also excellent grazing land for cattle and horses. There are also sheep in this section of Nigeria. Consequently some of the people in this northern part are nomadic people, moving from place to place when their livestock need fresh pastures.



Camels in the northern part of Nigeria.

Almost in the center of this enormous plain is a plateau area. It is known as the Jos plateau and it rises between 3000 and 6000 feet above sea level. In this section there are tin mines as well as many good farms.

In the extreme north is a smaller area which is desert and thorn forest. In this part of the country there are still fewer people, as life here is very difficult.

Our plane veers to the east and we notice that the land begins to slope northward. Soon we catch a glimpse of Lake Chad, one of the largest lakes in the entire African continent.

As we fly back to our starting point, we pass over the Cameroon Highlands or Mountains, in the southeastern part of Nigeria. This is a very high point, for Cameroon Mountain rises 13,350 feet into the air.

Our guide tells us that there are active volcanoes here, although there have been only three eruptions since 1900.

At many points on this quick trip we have flown over rivers. It has not always been easy to keep them straight, so when we get home, we look at them on a map. We notice that the main rivers form a huge "Y" which cuts Nigeria into three parts.

The left fork of the Y is the Niger River. It starts in the highlands of Sierra Leone and flows through the northwestern part of Nigeria until it is joined by the Benue River.

The Benue has been making its way meanwhile from the Cameroons across the northeastern part of Nigeria until it meets the Niger.

When they join, they form the bottom part of the Y. This part is known merely as the Niger River.

With its tributaries the Niger is the largest river system in Africa. It provides Nigeria with a wonderful "highway" of water. On it dugout canoes, barges, paddle-wheel steamers, launches, and other types of boats carry people and products to and from many parts of the country. It is a tremendous asset to Nigeria and one of her great resources.

This giant "Y" also serves a political purpose.

Nigeria today is divided into three major sections politically. One of these is the Northern Region, which is roughly the part of the country north of the two arms of the Y. The second is the Eastern Region. It follows fairly closely the area cut off by the Niger and Benue rivers. The third is the Western Region. It covers most of the territory south of the Niger as it flows across the western and southern parts of the nation.

Such is the land of Nigeria. Now let us look at the people of that land.

THE PEOPLE OF NIGERIA

Strange as it may seem, there were no "Nigerians" until very recently.

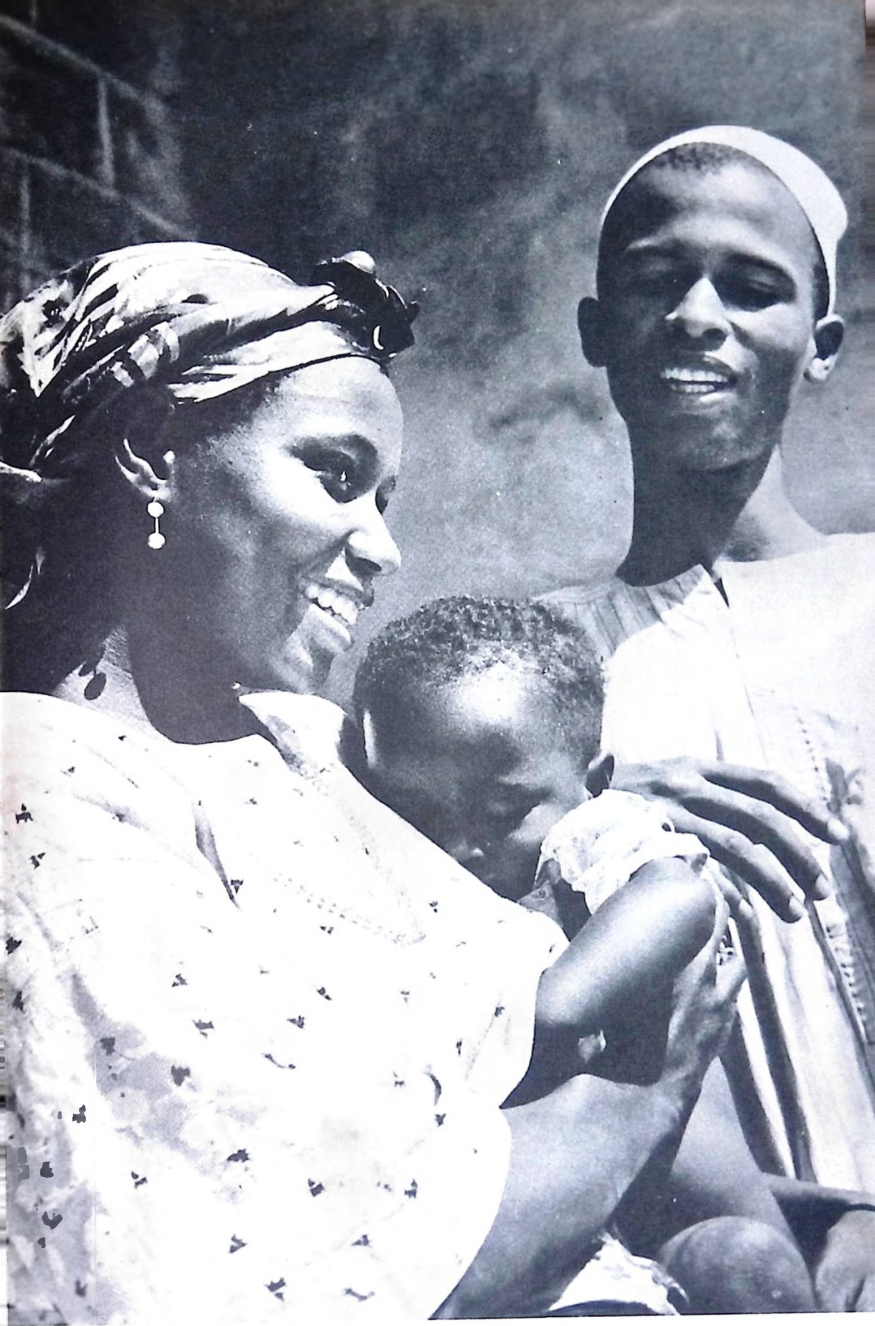
When asked who he was, a person from this part of the world would reply that he was a Hausa, an Ibo, a Yoruba, or a member of some other tribe. Or he might have answered that he was from Kano, Ibadan, Lagos, or some other town or city.

We have never had such designations in the United States, so it is a little difficult for us to understand. The nearest we have come to this was in the days when people identified themselves as Italian-Americans, Japanese-Americans, or German-Americans, or in the earlier days when people said they were Virginians or Pennsylvanians rather than Americans.

In order to understand Nigeria, however, one must understand the importance of these tribal groups. Sometimes we think of tribes as small groups of people who live together. Actually the tribes of Nigeria are very large. Among the largest of them are the following, with their populations:

Hausas	5½ million
Ibos	5 million
Yorubas	4½ million
Fulanis	3 million
Kanuris	1¼ million
Ibibios	¾ million

In the Northern Region the two largest tribes are the Hausas and the Fulanis.





At top right: Young men preparing for the future.

The Hausas claim to have come from Mecca and were the original settlers in what is now Northern Nigeria. They speak the Hausa language and are primarily farmers and traders.

The Fulanis probably migrated to this part of Africa from the north and from the Atlantic coast. At the end of the eighteenth century they conquered most of the north of Nigeria.

There are three groups of Fulanis. The first is the ruling class of emirs or tribal chiefs. The second is the learned class. They are teachers, Moslem judges, and "ihmans" or Moslem religious leaders. The third is the nomadic group. They use the Fulani language and are largely herders of sheep and cattle. Sometimes they are called "the cow Fulanis."

In the Eastern Region the largest group is the Ibo tribe. It has never been so closely knit together as the other groups and its members are more individualistic. There are even different dialects spoken in this one tribe.

Most of the Ibos live in small towns and villages where they work as farmers and traders. Usually they are thrifty and industrious. Their women have been given more rights than in most Nigerian tribes, and, in



fact, there are two women in the House of Chiefs in Eastern Nigeria. Many of the Ibo women have also been to school.

In the Western Region the largest group is the Yoruba tribe. The Yorubas claim to have come from the east, the Sudan or Upper Egypt, although no one is quite sure because they migrated so long ago. They are likely to live in larger towns and to be tradesmen. Many of the Yoruba women are traders, too, like the Ibo women.

The Kanuris live in the northeastern part of Nigeria around the province of Bornu and are of desert stock.

The Ibibios are the second largest group in the Eastern Region.

There are many other tribes such as the An-nangs, the Benis, the Ijaws, the Itsekiris, the Nupes, and the Tivs, just as there are many tribes among American Indians.

These varied peoples of Nigeria do not look at all alike. Some of them, such as the Fulanis, are very tall, with wavy hair and olive skin. Others, like the Ibos, are shorter, stockier, and darker in complexion. Many are mixtures between these two extremes.

In recent years there has not been any actual fighting among these different tribes but intense tribal rivalries still exist.

The whites, or "Europeans," have not been mentioned so far because there are only a few thousand of them in Nigeria. This means that there is little racial conflict here, in contrast to such places as Kenya and the Union of South Africa.

THEIR HOMES AND FOOD

Nigerian homes have even greater variety than there is among the homes of Americans.

Yet the Nigerians have one thing in common which we do not have. They all live in groups, whether they are nomadic tribesmen, farmers, or city people.

There are several reasons why they like to live this way. One is a historic reason. In the old days people built their homes close to each other for protection. Then, too, the Nigerians place much more emphasis upon close family relations than we do and most of the members of a single family usually live in one group of houses. A third reason is that they think it is more fun to live close to other people than to live in separate families. Another advantage is that the women can help each other more easily when they live close together. A fifth explanation is that they do not have large farms as we have in parts of the United States.

The Nigerians call a cluster of houses a compound. Often there is a wall around a group of houses, and some of the married sons have their homes close to their parents and grandparents. Until recently the eldest son was the most likely to live in the compound in this way.

Nowadays some of the sons frequently move to the towns or cities. But if they can afford it, they keep a small house in their local village where they can return from time to time.

There are a large number of towns and cities

in Nigeria, as we shall see in a later chapter. But most Nigerians still live in hamlets or villages. These range in population from 50 to 500 or more.

A great many of these villages are in the forest. Often they are almost hidden by tall trees and tangled creepers. If possible, they are located near a stream or river. That gives the villagers a good supply of water for cooking, drinking, and bathing.

And what a variety of houses there is in Nigeria!

Some of the nomadic people live in tents or in flimsy "igloos" made of light branches and grass. They live out of doors most of the time and move often, so that is all they need.

In other parts of the north there are people who build their huts from rough, unmortared stone. These are often very attractive buildings.

The majority of houses in the north, however, are made of mud. Often the mud is made into bricks and left in the sun to dry. Plaster is sometimes placed over the mud bricks. The roofs of these houses are sometimes made of mud, too, stretched out on timber beams. Almost always they are flat on top. Usually these houses are made without windows, which makes them cheaper and cooler.

If people can afford it, they like to have corrugated iron roofs on their houses. And if they are richer, they build their homes of wood, concrete, or other building materials.

A special feature of some homes in the northern part of Nigeria is the art work on the outside walls. Geometric designs, pictures of animals, and occasionally drawings of people are made with sharp-pointed



Above: Making a mud house.
Below: Village compound.





sticks in the mud walls before they dry. Or these designs are made with the fingers, like finger-painting.

In the south the houses are more likely to be made of mud and wattle, the mud being plastered onto a bamboo frame. The roofs are woven from thatch and so cleverly done, the rain cannot penetrate.

In the larger towns, however, there are more houses which look like American homes, and often these are made of concrete or of concrete blocks.



People like to make their houses beautiful on the outside as well as inside.

Inside most Nigerian homes there is very little furniture. The beds may be built into the mud walls or they may be mats placed on the floor at night. There may be a few chairs or stools, a shelf for pots and pans, and a few knobs on the wall for clothing.

The cooking in an average home is either done out-of-doors in a corner of the compound or in a separate building. This special kitchen is usually shared by all of the women in the compound.





An outdoor Laundromat.

Most Nigerians go to bed early, so that lighting is not a major problem. Tiny smoky, hand-made lamps are common in the villages, and in the cities many homes now have electricity.

In the villages, laundry is usually done in a nearby stream or river. This is the Nigerian version of the "Laundromat," but it is free to everyone! The clothes are spread out in the sun to dry on the banks of the stream or river.

Perhaps the most important household utensil is the large stone or wooden vessel which looks like a huge mortar and pestle. In it the yams are crushed and made into fou-fou, a dough-like substance which takes the place of potatoes.

In large parts of the country, corn is the most common food. It is pounded and boiled and served with palm oil, spices, and soup. Often a little dried fish

is eaten with it. In the Northern Region many people eat their corn as a cereal, with milk and sugar.

Another staple in most parts of Nigeria is cassava. This is a vegetable root which is dried in the sun and then grated on the side of a kerosene tin made rough with a hammer and nails. It is then fried in earthen pots.

Rice is also popular and fruit is plentiful and often delicious. This is especially true of the egg-shaped mangoes, which taste like plums, and of the melons, which they call pawpaws.

Fish is common and inexpensive, but meat is a luxury except in the north.

Since most Nigerians are poor and the climate in many places is hot, many of them eat only two meals a day.

Another unique feature of Nigerian homes is the calabashes, which are enormous gourds that can be used for anything from carrying water to serving meals. Sometimes designs are carved on them to make them more attractive.

Hand-made baskets and trays are also used a great deal. They can be made for nothing from the reeds and vines in the neighborhood by anyone who has been taught to weave.

One of the special customs of Nigerian homes is the offering of kola nuts to visitors when they arrive. These nuts are an especially rich food which satisfies hunger and thirst at the same time. Sometimes they are used in administering an oath or uniting people in friendship. They are also offered in ceremonies of different kinds.

THEIR CLOTHES

Did you ever see a girl or a woman dressed in a "wrapper"? Probably not in the U.S.A. But in Nigeria this is the most common dress for girls and women.

A "wrapper" or a "wrap-around" is a bright-colored skirt about three yards in length. Sometimes it is doubled, with the under layer serving as a petticoat.

Most of them are made from hand-woven strips of cloth, with 16 or more strips needed for a single "wrapper." But a great many wrappers are now made from goods produced abroad, like Manchester cottons and Dutch wax prints.

You can tell where a person lives or the tribe to which she belongs by the design on these "wrappers," by the material used, or by the make of the skirt.

With them many Nigerian women wear light-weight blouses. In the Western Region, blouse sleeves are full and long, and in the Eastern and Northern regions they are shorter and tighter. In the north many women do not wear blouses. They place their "wrap-arounds" high on their bodies, leaving their necks and the upper parts of their bodies bare.

For hats most women wear "head-ties." In the Western Region these are made of strips of bright-colored cloth about ten yards long. If they are woven, there are about seven strips in a "head-tie." These are tied each time a woman goes out. In the north the "head-ties" are only about a yard long and are tied tighter and with less flourish than those in the south.





In the past educated women usually wore western-type dresses to show that they had been to school. But today almost all women wear the national costume of the “wrapper,” the “head-tie,” and the blouse.

There are no official colors for different tribes, but certain colors are popular in each tribal group. The Yoruba women prefer blue, the Kanuris blue or black, and the Itsekiris red and yellow.

Shoes are expensive and uncomfortable in this climate, and women often go barefoot. Others wear sandals, slippers, or shoes.

Jewelry is popular in Nigeria, especially bracelets, necklaces, and earrings. Gold is worn frequently, and gold with coral beads is seen often in the south.

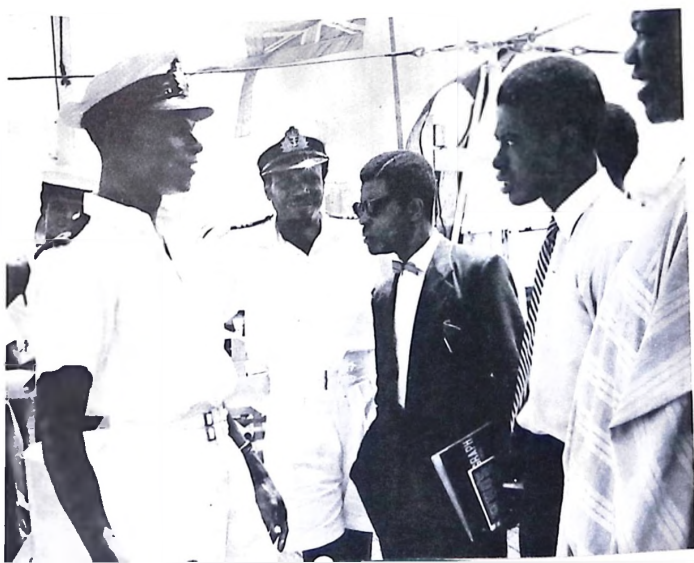
Nigerian women arrange their hair in many different ways. Among the northern tribes it is usually plaited and decorated with strings of glass beads or shells. The women who wear “head-ties” put their hair up so that their bandanas can be put on easily.

There is even more variety in clothes among men than among women. Some of the men in the nomadic tribes wear only a small loincloth made of leather, and a chain around their necks.

In the Northern Region long, flowing robes are very common. They are often white, although they may be of other colors. They are usually worn with leather sandals open at the toes.

In the Eastern and Western regions many men have adopted western-style pants and shirts. Others wear a pair of baggy trousers with a string taking the place of a belt. Some have a loose-fitting robe over their pants in place of a shirt. In these regions more shoes and slippers are worn, although sandals are also popular.

Skullcaps are very common for men and boys in Nigeria and may be of almost any color. Some will be plain and others ornamented with colorful embroidery.





In the rural areas many babies go without any clothes or wear just a short dress. Small boys may also go without clothes until they are five or six years of age.

Even the policemen are dressed in colorful costumes. They usually wear khaki shorts, short-sleeved shirts, long stockings, and heavy shoes. Sometimes they have bright-colored berets for head-coverings.

The most gaudily dressed people in all Nigeria are the chiefs. In the north they sometimes wear enormous bright-colored turbans and robes of many colors.

Put all these costumes together in a crowd and you will see how colorful a display of dress the Nigerians can produce.



HOW THEY EARN A LIVING

“How in the world do so many people earn a living?” you may have asked.

As a matter of fact, most of them do not earn a very good living. They have a simple shelter, a few clothes, and enough to eat, even though it is not often a well-balanced diet.

Their per-capita income each year is about \$75. That is quite a little better than the people in China and India and some other parts of the world. But it is very small compared to the \$800 per person in France and Great Britain or the \$2200 per person in the United States.

All this means that if they want better homes or more education or even a bicycle for transportation, they cannot afford them. In the old days the Nigerians did not know such things were available or they did not care about them. But today most people in Nigeria want the things that people in Europe and North America have.

That means that people are pressing for a higher standard of living, and in order to achieve such a standard, drastic changes are necessary. Some of them are already under way, as we shall see in this section of this book.

In most of the villages of Nigeria today life still goes on as it has for centuries. The men till small pieces of farmland with hoes, and the women and children almost always work with them.

Women spin yarn from cotton grown nearby or

bought at the market and the men weave it into cloth. Pots are made from gourds or from the clay found near the village.

There is usually one man who is a good carpenter and often someone who is a blacksmith. Houses are built by the people themselves or by the entire community.

The few extras which are needed are obtained at the market. Often this is done by trading or by barter.

Thousands of Nigerians lead such simple, happy lives in the villages.

But thousands of other people do more specialized work.

Since Nigeria is primarily an agricultural country, let us look first at the special kinds of farming.

The largest amount of money earned by Nigerians in trade abroad is from the products of oil-palm trees. These trees produce bunches of palm fruits which yield palm oil and palm kernels. Both of these products are in great demand. Palm oil can be used for food and it can also be made into margarine, into glycerine for soap, and into medicines and explosives.

Palm oil and palm kernels are produced all over Nigeria, but they are processed in the largest quantity in the Eastern Region.

The next most important product of Nigeria is peanuts. Since they grow in the ground like potatoes, Africans and Europeans call them groundnuts. They grow very well in the Northern Region and are a source of a great deal of income for people in that part of the country.



Above: Pyramids of peanuts.
At left: A cacao tree.
Below: Threshing cacao beans.

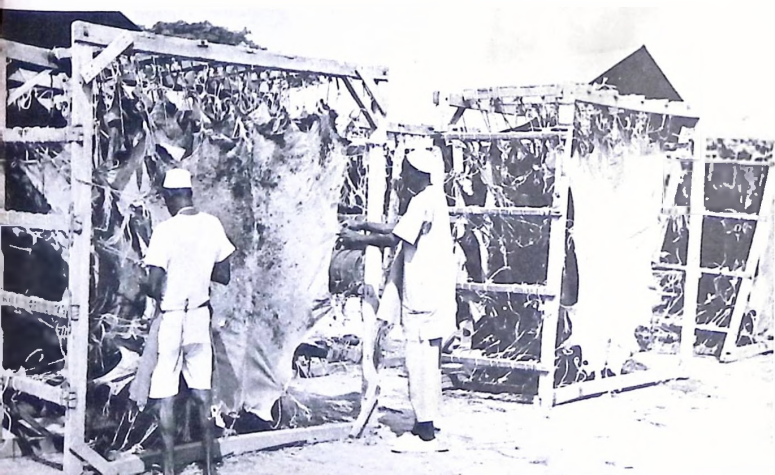




Picking cotton.

A third important product of Nigeria is cocoa. All over the Western Region there are cocoa trees, which look a little like our white birches. Right next to the trunks of the trees are the cocoa pods, which are bright yellow and resemble squashes. Inside the cocoa pods are little brown beans from which the cocoa for drinks or for chocolate is obtained.

Other products which bring in cash are cotton, hides, and skins. These are products of the Northern Region. The cotton grows there because of the warm climate and type of soil. The hides and skins are obtained from the cattle and sheep of that area.



The trees mentioned earlier are still another crop which can be sold for money. Often the lumber is sold abroad. These trees grow in both the Western and Eastern regions, but the Western Region produces more than any other section of Nigeria.

Bananas are a specialty of the Cameroons, where they are grown on plantations, then shipped abroad for sale.

Often Nigerian farmers grow only one crop. If it fails, they are very unlucky. Many of them still use very poor methods of farming and are afraid to try new crops. So one of the big jobs of the various governments of Nigeria is to help the farmers to improve their methods and to encourage them to develop new crops.

Regional and federal governments are introducing metal plows and tractors and selling fertilizers at a very low cost. They are setting up co-operatives so that farmers can buy and sell and share in the profits. And they are encouraging farmers to grow more rice, tobacco, coffee, tea, cashew nuts, soya beans, copra, and other lesser-known products.

Trees being prepared for use abroad.

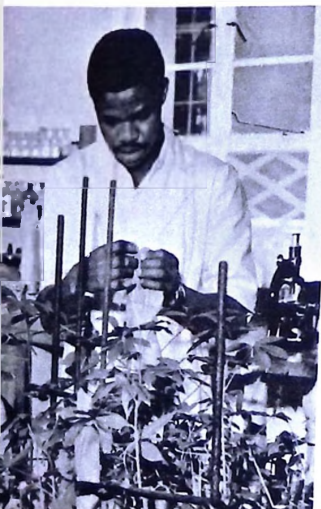




Agricultural specialists are also experimenting with types of cattle which will resist the dread tsetse fly in the southern part of Nigeria, and with improved grass for the grasslands of the north. They have started experimental fish farms and a famous farm near Sokoto in the north where rice is being grown on thousands of acres of rich, black soil.

All this means that Nigeria is beginning to move into a better day in the field of agriculture.

Experimenting to improve plants.



Inspecting a coal mine.



Many Nigerians make their living as miners, since Nigeria has excellent deposits of tin and columbite. These are found near each other in the Jos Plateau in the Northern Region. Tin is used for many purposes, from making cans to roofing buildings. Columbite is less well known. It is a rare metal which is found in the same ore bed as tin and is used for making steel which will withstand high temperatures. It is especially good for jet engines and is much in demand. Nigeria is fortunate in having about 95% of the known deposits in the world of this precious metal.

There is also a little coal in Nigeria near Enugu in the Eastern Region, but with the introduction of Diesel engines, coal mining has become a depressed industry.

A few lead and zinc deposits exist in the Eastern Region, and recently engineers from abroad have discovered oil near Port Harcourt.

There is also supposed to be some low-grade uranium, although it has not yet been used. And it may not be used for a long time, as there are better deposits in such places as the Belgian Congo and Canada.

Since the middle of the nineteenth century almost all of these important products have been exported. The profits have gone chiefly to Englishmen. For example, the cotton grown in Nigeria has been shipped to England for processing in the textile mills there, and the profits have remained largely in England.

Now that Nigeria is independent, most Nigerians feel that the products of their land should be processed at home and the profits kept in the country, so there is a great demand for more industrialization.



A modern textile factory.

A number of factories were begun before the English left, and some Englishmen have stayed to help with the industrialization of Nigeria. Already there are fruit canneries, oil mills, a couple of textile factories, several cotton gins, soap plants, a small margarine factory, and several other "infant industries."

But it takes a lot of money to start such plants. Since Nigeria has very little capital, the government and private industry are encouraging foreign investors to aid them in their industrialization of the country.

Prospects are good for attracting foreign capital. Nigeria has a wealth of agricultural and mineral resources. She has a large labor supply. She is free from racial strife. All these factors make investment in Nigeria's future a good risk.

If Nigeria can sell more of her products abroad, she will be able to strengthen her economy and raise the standard of living for millions of people. At present most of her trade is with Great Britain and with Japan, her second largest customer. She also has a fairly large trade with West Germany, the United States, the Netherlands, India, and Norway.

THEIR MARKETS

A walk through a Nigerian market is a unique experience. There you will see all kinds of sights, hear varied sounds, and smell many different odors—some good and others not so pleasant.

These markets are usually out-of-doors, with the wares spread out on the ground or placed on mats or cloths. They are open-air supermarkets or outdoor department stores.

There are hundreds of these markets in Nigeria. Some are small and serve only the people within walking distance. Others are huge, extending for a mile or two in all directions from the center. People come to them from distances of hundreds of miles, traveling by donkey or camel, canoe or boat, auto or jeep, or truck.

Two of the largest markets are at Kano and at Onitsha.

The market at Kano has existed for centuries. It is almost completely out-of-doors, although there are a few stalls made of packed mud and some wooden platforms. The tradesmen sit on these platforms with their feet tucked under them and their wares around them.

Here at the Kano market one can purchase almost anything from a camel to a "Coke." Almost all currencies can be used, with money-changers acting as bankers. Sitting on their haunches, they clink the silver coins or crumple the paper money which has come from all over Africa and Europe.

The market at Onitsha is a mammoth building

with a corrugated iron roof and concrete floors. It extends for miles along the waterfront, with stalls spilling out into the streets.

Each of the smaller markets in Nigeria has a special day on which it is open. In that way people know when to go to market or can visit different ones on different days of the week if they want to. Many of them are open every fourth day.

Most of the produce is brought to these markets on the heads of the shopkeepers or traders. Some is brought in canoes or boats. Other produce is brought by bicycle, donkey, or camel, depending upon the region where the market is located.

People arrive early in the morning and usually stay all day. They chat with their friends and haggle over prices with the buyers. Prices are seldom fixed in advance, and the buyer and seller bargain with each other until a compromise price is reached. This bargaining is a kind of game which both sides enjoy.

In most markets there are sections for various kinds of products. Meats are in one part of the mar-





The famous market in Kano.

ket, farm tools in another, food in a third, and cloths and clothing in another spot. In a large market there is a seemingly endless variety of goods—raffia bags and trays, caps and footwear, bolts of cloth and suits, peppers and spices, yams and cassava, needles and sewing machines, radios and victrolas.

Many of the shopkeepers work when they are not selling. There are carpenters sawing, planing, and finishing furniture; dressmakers treading sewing machines in the open air; calabash workers carving kitchen utensils; and butchers dressing chickens and beef. In other places women are pounding cassava roots or yams while they chat with their neighbors, shouting to each other over the sounds of their work.

If you are thirsty, you can stop at the palm-wine bar or sip a cup of tea. And if you are hungry, you can have a snack or meal in an outdoor restaurant.

We have called these market places, but they are also social centers where one is sure to meet his friends and pass the time of day with them.



THEIR TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

If you stand by the side of a road almost anywhere in southern Nigeria, you will be amazed at what you see. Scores of people pass by in a short time. Often they walk in single file and almost always they are barefoot.

Women carry their babies on their backs while the older brothers and sisters walk beside them.

Most unusual, however, are the loads on their heads. Some carry calabash bowls or trays filled with tiny tomatoes or peppers. Others have wicker baskets filled with palm fruit. Still others have enamel pans of yams or cassava roots.

You will see women returning from the nearby stream or river, balancing earthen jugs filled with water on their heads, or carrying the week's laundry.

Even young children carry small packages on their heads as if they had known how to balance them when they were born.

This is the cheapest means of transporting goods. It is very common, especially in the south.



Water transportation is also cheap, and throughout the southern part of Nigeria you can see all kinds of boats on the streams and rivers. There are old-fashioned dugout canoes, waterproofed with pitch or tar. There are tiny sailing boats with homemade sails. There are large canoes holding many people. There are rafts. There are paddle steamers, launches, and boats. And there are big, modern steamers on the Niger River at places like Lagos and Port Harcourt.



Since roads were built, the rivers and streams are not used as much as they once were. But they are still a very common mode of transportation.

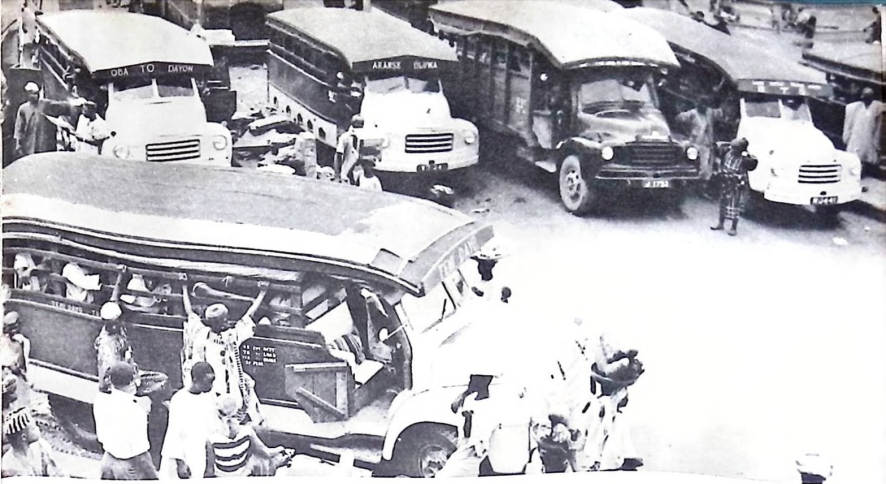
A visitor may also be struck by the absence of animals in the south. They are a rare sight because the tsetse fly has killed almost all of them.

In the north transportation is quite different. There you see hundreds and thousands of animals. The most common are donkeys and camels. But you can also see oxen and horses hauling all kinds of products. And you see people riding on these animals or in carts and wagons as in most other parts of the world.

Good roads are still the exception in Nigeria, although the government is rapidly building them all over the nation. On them one sees many small European cars, trucks, and buses.

But the "mammy trucks" are something new to visitors. Fitted with tarpaulin roofs and wooden benches, these trucks carry people from town to town. They are almost always packed to overflowing with men, women, and children, and often the passengers





"Mammy wagons" or buses.

sing and shout at each other like school children on an excursion.

On the front or on the side of each truck you will notice a motto or name. Move closer and you will be able to read legends such as "Safe Journey," "God Is Love," "No Sweet, No Sweat," "Blessed Kid," or "God's Time Is Best." Each owner selects a motto or name which suits his fancy and paints it somewhere on his truck as a means of identification. This is certainly a novel idea and often reveals much about the truck owner.

In the larger cities there are hundreds of bicycles. In fact, the streets in Lagos are as crowded with bicycles at five o'clock in the evening as the streets in an American city are with cars.

Very few people can afford an automobile, but many middle-class people and some poorer ones can scrape together enough for a bicycle. Some of them are even fitted with an extra seat and are used as taxis.

Nigeria has a fairly good system of railroads compared to other economically underdeveloped countries. But it needs still more and better rail transportation as the country becomes industrialized and travel increases.

At present there are two major lines which are like a big X cutting across the entire country. One of these lines starts at Lagos and crosses to Nruru in the northeastern part of Nigeria, passing through Ibadan, Zaria, and Kano on the way. The other starts at Port Harcourt and goes north to Kaduna and then northwest.

These railroad lines connect with the wharves of Port Harcourt and Lagos, which serve as centers for another means of transportation—shipping. As you wander around the wharves of these two cities you see bags of salt and peanuts, bales of cotton, casks of tobacco, piles of hides and skins, bunches of bananas, and bags of tin ready for shipment abroad.

On other parts of the wharves are huge bundles of rayon and cotton goods, cases of kerosene, crates of automobiles and bicycles, and other products which are being imported.

Still another means of transportation in Nigeria today is air transport. Lagos and Kano have great modern airports for international travel. And throughout the country there are many smaller fields and terminals. These are run by W.A.A.C. (West African Airlines Corporation)-Nigeria Limited, a new national airline owned by the federal government in partnership with the British Overseas Airways Corporation and the Elder Dempster Group.



Communicating with the people of Nigeria.

Probably the oldest and most commonly used communication center is the village well or the stream where the women go to get water for their homes. In Nigeria this often takes the place of a telephone system—and is a lot more fun.

Newspapers exist, but there are only a few of them. They are not widely read because so few people read yet. They are smaller in size than newspapers in the United States and printed on poor-quality paper. Otherwise they look much like American newspapers. Their names are also similar to ours. One of them is the *Daily Times*, run by the London *Daily Mirror*. The *West African Pilot*, the *Eastern Nigerian Guardian*, and a few other newspapers are run by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe and support the policies of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons—the party he heads. The *Nigerian Tribune* and the *Daily Service* are organs of the Action Group. In the north the best-known paper is the *Nigerian Citizen*.

Many people rely on the government-owned Nigerian Broadcasting Service for their news, especially

those who cannot read. It also broadcasts music, religious services, quizzes, and Listeners' Letters and is a very important part of the country's communication system.

In some villages there is only one radio and it is listened to by all the people. Many families, however, have cheap battery sets. The government has sold them inexpensively in order to provide the people with entertainment and with educational programs.

In 1959 television was introduced for the first time in Nigeria in the Western Region. Plans are now under way for its introduction in the Eastern Region.

In the larger cities and in some of the smaller towns there are movie theaters. Most of the films are British or American.

The question of language is one of the biggest problems in Nigeria. There are ten or a dozen major languages and hundreds of dialects. Consequently the radio programs have to be translated into a variety of tongues. Programs are likely to be broadcast in Fulani, Hausa, Ibibio, Kanuri, Yoruba, the three major dialects of Ibo, and a few other languages.

Fortunately a large number of people speak Hausa, which is a fairly easy language to learn. And more and more people are speaking English—or at least pidgin English. But Nigeria has no national language which everyone speaks or understands.

Many solutions have been suggested, but so far no proposal has been presented which pleases a majority of the people. This is a problem which faces the new government of Nigeria, and the sooner a solution is found, the better for everyone.



The tin-top city of Ibadan.

THEIR CHIEF CITIES

One of the striking features of Nigeria is the number of cities and their variety. Altogether there are 15 of them with over 50,000 inhabitants and six with over 100,000.

The largest of them is Ibadan, with a population in the city proper of 500,000 and in "Greater Ibadan" of 800,000.

Unlike most large cities of the world, Ibadan is not located on any body of water. It has grown to its present size as a military and commercial center.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was the military base for the Yorubas in their resistance to the invaders from the north. Then it became a major trading center for cocoa, timber, and tobacco.

Its name indicates its strategic location, for Ibadan means "by the side of the field." Located on the edge of the forest belt and at the beginning of the grassland area, it is able to draw upon the trade from

both regions. It is also on the main railroad line from Lagos to the north as well as on the main highway north and south.

Today it is the capital of the Western Region as well as one of the main trading centers of Nigeria.

Ibadan is not a beautiful city, but it is an important one. It might well be called the city of "tin-tops," for almost all of the houses are built of mud and plaster, with corrugated iron roofs for protection against the sun and rain and against fire.

In striking contrast to the "tin-tops" are the buildings of the University College and the University College Hospital. These are ultra-modern buildings, constructed of steel, concrete, and glass.

The next largest city of Nigeria is Lagos, the capital. At the time of independence its population was about 350,000. But it is growing so rapidly that it now shows just how many people there will be in a few months.

Originally Lagos was settled by the Yorubas, who found this spot a relatively safe retreat from their enemies. Soon they were joined by settlers from Benin. They lived peacefully with the Yorubas for a while and then gained the upper hand over them.

Eventually the Portuguese discovered this port city and made it one of their centers for slave trading. They were joined by the British, who also indulged in the slave trade for nearly 250 years. Then, in 1862, Lagos became a Crown Colony of the British.

Lagos is situated on a lagoon and connected with the mainland by a bridge. It is low land and near the equator. That makes it a hot, humid, steamy



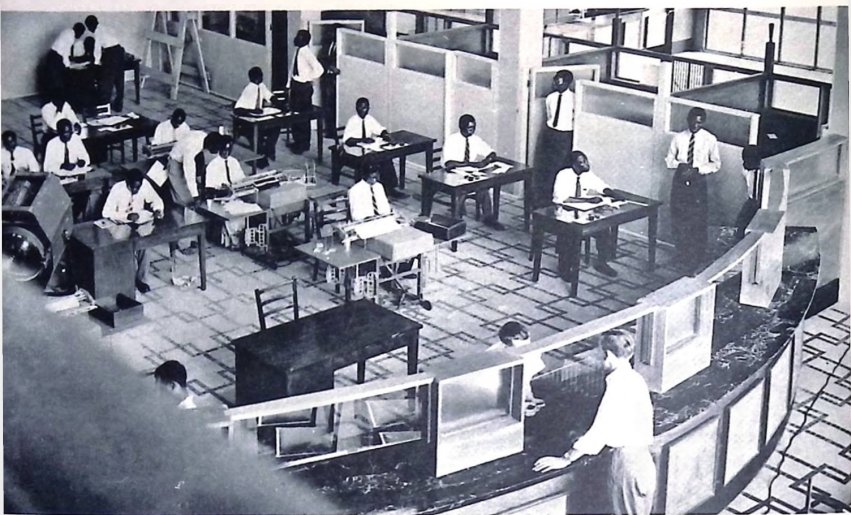
The mud-wall city of Kano.

swampland. Its quick, unplanned growth has added to its woes. The “slummiest capital of Africa” was the title given to it by a Nigerian Commission in 1958 which studied cities all over the African continent.

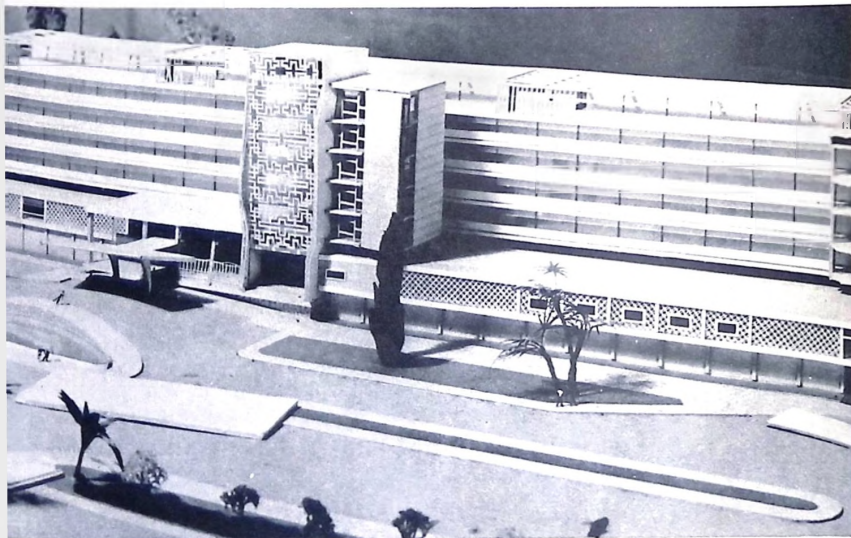
There are ambitious plans, however, for the renovation of Lagos and extensive slum clearance began even before independence. Within a few years it is hoped that Lagos will be able to live down its past reputation and gain a new and better one as a clean, modern city.

Nevertheless, it is a booming commercial and industrial center, the seat of the new federal government, and a port city. It is the terminus of the railroad system of Nigeria and for the country-wide system of roads. It handles 60% of all the important export trade for the nation, too.

Kano is quite different from Ibadan and from Lagos. For centuries it has been one of the major trading centers in Africa with an enormous open-air market. It is estimated that at the height of the season



A new, modern bank.
The model of a new, modern hotel.



30,000 to 50,000 people from all parts of the continent trade in this ancient market.

The city itself is a solid mass of one-story mud houses. Only here and there is this effect of solid brown broken by a white mosque or an occasional green tree.

Surrounding the old city is a massive wall 40 to 50 feet high and even thicker at the base. This wall is made of mud or packed earth and extends for 11 miles, broken only by the gates.

Among the many sights in Kano are the indigo pits, where men dip long pieces of cloth into deep, circular chambers in the ground, to dye them. Another striking sight is the huge pyramids of peanuts, made by piling bags of peanuts hundreds of feet in the air. Over them green tarpaulins are thrown to protect this valuable product of the northland.

Kano is also famous today as one of the great international airport centers of the world. The dry climate makes it a wonderful spot for planes to land, and its location midway between the capitals of Europe and the Union of South Africa enhances its importance. The airport terminal and the field are among the most modern and best equipped in the world. Today Kano is a city of about 150,000. Tomorrow it will undoubtedly be much larger than that.

There are many other important cities which cannot be described in such a short book as this. We can only mention a few of them in passing. In the Western Region are Abeokuta, Benin, Ilesha, Ife, and Oyo. In the Eastern Region are Onitsha, Owerri, and Calabar. And in the Northern Region are Kaduna, Sokoto, Maiduguri, and Jos.

THEIR HEALTH

A terrific battle is going on in Nigeria today. It is not being waged with tanks, guns, and bullets but with needles, syringes, and drugs. The battle is against disease and ill-health; the generals are doctors, aided by nurses and public health officers.

The enemies are sleeping sickness, malaria, leprosy, river blindness, bilharziasis, intestinal worms, yaws, and other better-known illnesses.

Unfortunately Nigeria has never had many doctors and nurses. At the time of independence there were only about 500 doctors in the entire country. The number of nurses was even smaller.

Until recently the Nigerian people have known almost nothing about modern methods of curing diseases and very little about the prevention of bad health. They have relied for centuries on the "cures" of witch doctors and on homemade remedies, often based on superstitions.

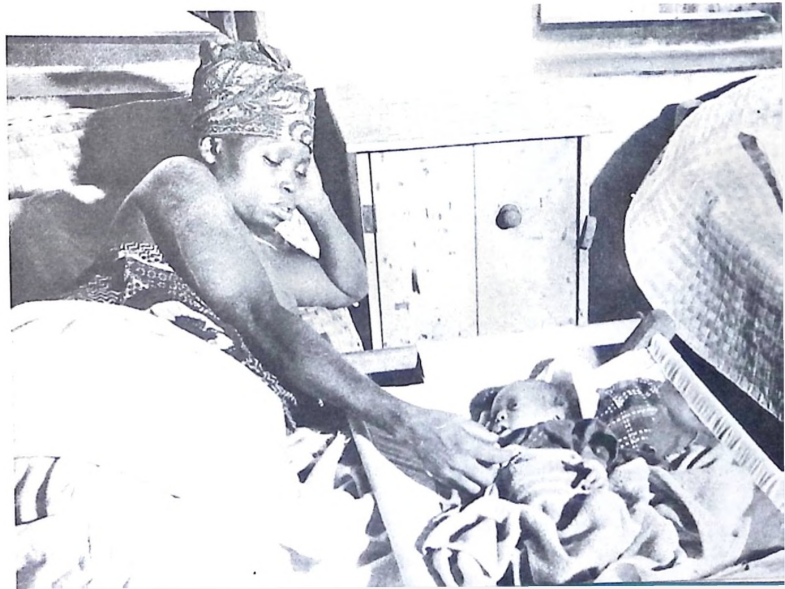
But today much progress can be reported in the all-out attack on one of the major problems of this new nation. Gains against some of the enemies have been spectacular. Against others the progress has been steady and encouraging.

In the last few years sleeping sickness and malaria have almost been wiped out. Leprosy has been dealt a death blow. Yaws has yielded much ground. Reports of progress against other enemies of the people are being made from time to time.

Not long ago, for example, there were about



A line-up for treatment to cure yaws.



100,000 lepers in Nigeria. Leprosy was a dread disease which left its victims with deformed bodies and distorted minds. All that could be done was to isolate them from other people in leper colonies.

Today thousands of lepers have been cured and each year more are being returned to normal life. Much of this is due to such wonder drugs as D.D.S. and D.P.T.

There are still hundreds of lepers in Nigeria who cannot be cured and who must spend the rest of their lives in institutions. But the number of new cases has dropped dramatically. Someday soon leprosy should be as rare here as it is now in Europe and the Americas.

Much of the progress against disease has been due to the help of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, both divisions of the United Nations. They have sent doctors, provided medicines, and helped with the training of local people as doctors and nurses.

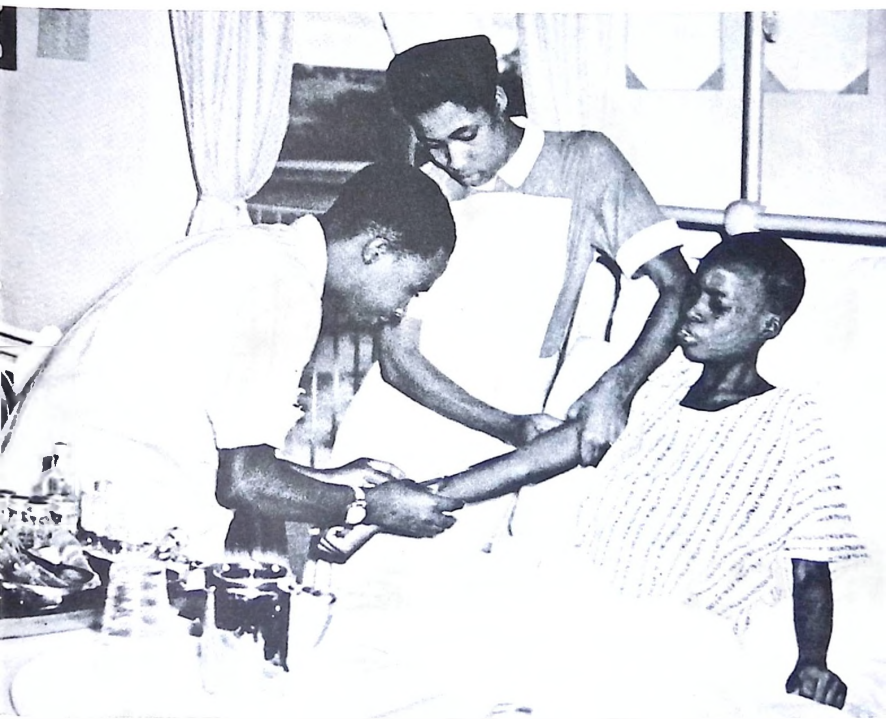
Now the battlefield has shifted to the prevention of disease. The federal government, the regional and local governments, private organizations, schools, clinics, and individuals are all trying to improve the general health of the people and conquer malnutrition, to build small health centers and maternity clinics, to drain the swamps and dispose of refuse and garbage, and to provide decent water supplies for the masses of people.

To many Nigerians the new University College Hospital in Ibadan is a symbol of the battle we have been describing. It is one of the most modern hospitals in the world, with 500 beds for patients and sev-

eral clinics to which anyone can come.

Next to it is a School of Nursing, which is training scores of young women each year. It is also housed in a building of modern tropical design, with bright, warm yellows and greens and a mulberry-colored roof. The equipment is as modern as the architecture, and its staff is extremely well qualified.

All over Nigeria smaller hospitals and clinics are being built and medical field teams being trained. The battle against disease and ill-health has only begun, but the enemy is being battered and beaten.



THEIR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

All over Nigeria today there are hundreds of new school buildings.

Some of these new schools are very simple. They are made with mud walls and thatch roofs. Others are of concrete. A few in the towns and cities are very modern in design. These buildings have no glass in them so as to let in all the cool air that it is possible to get. But they do have special cantilevers on the windows which look like venetian blinds. These are opened or closed to let in the sun or keep it out when it is too strong.

These new buildings are proof of the Nigerian hunger for education.

Until recently only about one person in every ten could read and write. There were very few schools, and a formal education was not too important. Most people lived on the land, and their lives were fairly simple. As children they were assigned chores according to their age and sex. In this way they obtained training while contributing to the welfare of the group.

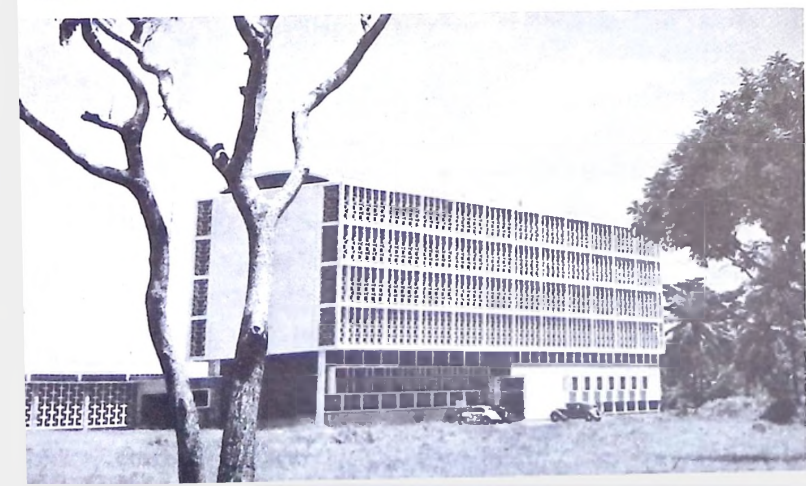
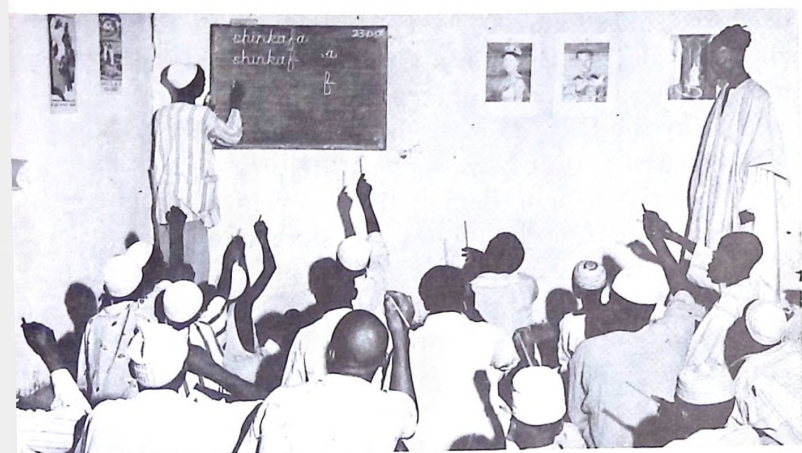
The children learned their history through folk tales and stories told them by adults. Art education began when they learned to carve, weave, or sew. Music and dance were an important part of their informal schooling, learned by watching their elders and imitating them.

The few schools which existed were run by missionaries from abroad. They taught a limited number of boys to read and write so that they could become



A school run by missionaries.
Mothers enroll their children for school.





clerks in the government offices, ministers, or teachers.

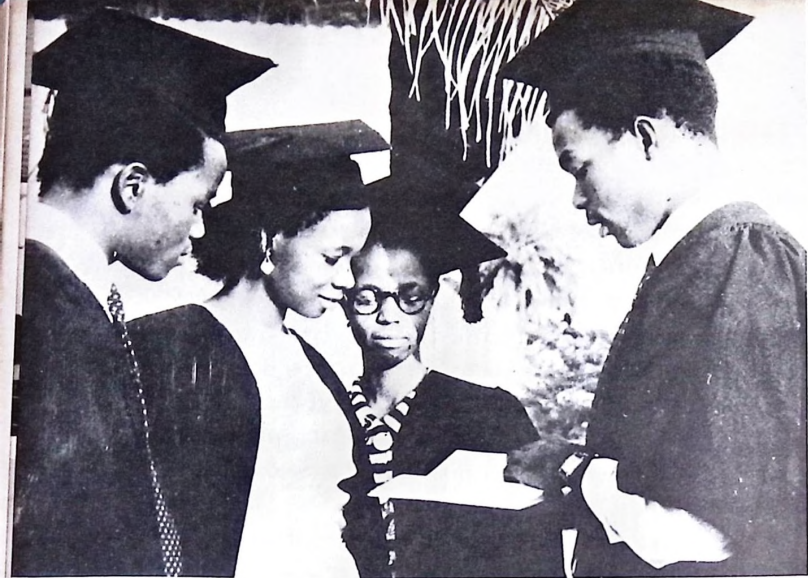
Today life is different. It is much more complicated, and almost everyone needs some formal schooling. Thousands of people are needed in government offices, as trained technicians, as teachers, as doctors and nurses, and in scores of other occupations. Most people realize this, and they are demanding schools faster than the government can build them or find teachers to staff them.

In 1955 the government of the Western Region started free education for all boys and girls in the elementary grades. In 1957 the Eastern Region and the Federal District of Lagos started a similar program. That is why there are so many new school buildings in the southern part of Nigeria.

In the Northern Region the problem of providing education is more complicated. Here many people are nomads or farmers who see little need for education. Furthermore, many northerners are Moslems who by tradition have been opposed to secular education, especially for girls. As a result, there have been fewer schools and fewer people who could read and write. But strenuous efforts are now being made to educate adults as well as boys and girls in the north.

All this education costs a lot of money. At the time of independence the Eastern and Western regions were spending about 33% of their budgets for schools. That is very high compared to other parts of the world which seldom spend more than 10 to 15% on education.

Before the British withdrew from Nigeria they started a national university in Ibadan with a large campus, beautiful buildings, and modern equipment.



A College of Arts, Science, and Technology was also begun in Zaria, with branches in other parts of the country. A University College Teaching Hospital and Nursing School was built in Ibadan, and several Technical Institutes were opened in other parts of Nigeria.

There are many problems involved in starting a school system. Teachers are difficult to find and to educate. Many children drop out after two or three years of school. There are now far too few secondary schools for those who want to continue their education beyond the elementary school.

But Nigeria has made a good beginning in its educational program and nearly 25% of the people can now read and write. In the years ahead Nigeria will undoubtedly improve its school system tremendously, continuing the progress already made.

THEIR RELIGIONS

Among the characteristic sounds of Nigeria are the call to worship of the Moslem "muezzin," the peal of mission bells, and the beat of the tom-toms for worship by Nigerian animists.

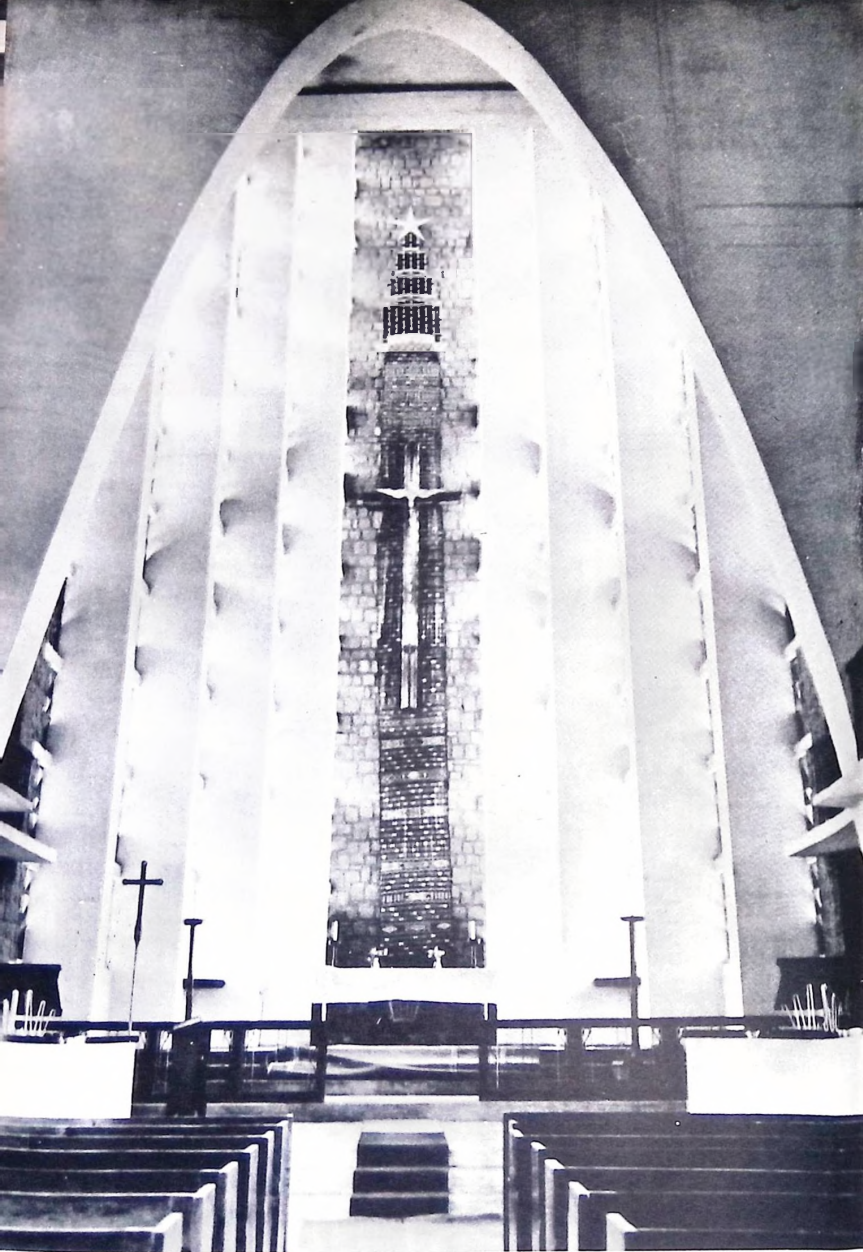
These sounds represent the major religions of Nigeria—Islam, Christianity, and animism. No one knows the exact figures, but there are probably 16 million Moslems, 8 million Christians, and 11 million followers of various African religions.

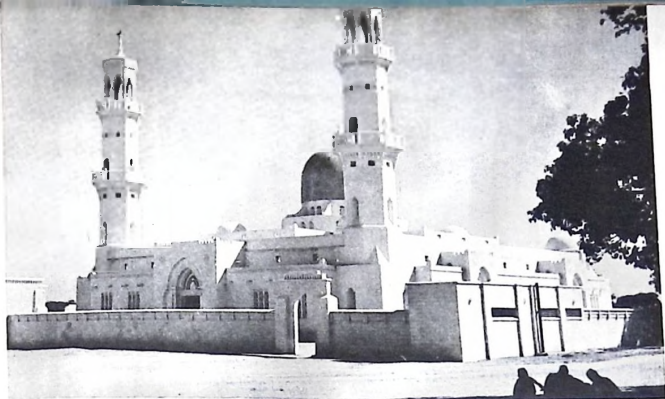
Most of the people in the Northern Region are Moslems. There are also many Moslems in the Western Region and some in the Eastern Region. In these parts of Nigeria the mosque is a familiar sight. It is almost always white, with a flat roof and at least one minaret from which the "muezzin" make the call to prayer five times each day.

In a city like Kano, however, the mosque is a very large and beautiful building. The famous Kano mosque has an enormous green central dome and several minarets with beautiful, delicate carvings.

The religion of Islam (whose members we call Moslems) is making great gains in Nigeria today, as in other parts of Africa. It appeals to many people because it has no record of race prejudice, still permits men to have more than one wife, and is easy to join.

There are also many Christians in Nigeria. The largest number is in the Eastern Region. In that section most Christians are Catholics. But there are also many Methodists and Presbyterians. In the West there





The famous mosque in Kano.

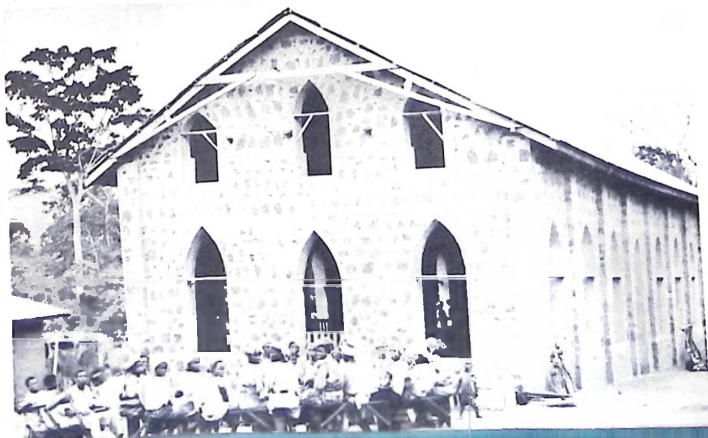
are Baptists and members of the Church of England, as well as Methodists and other Protestants.

Until recently most of the schools and hospitals of Nigeria were run by the Christian missionaries.

A great many Nigerians are non-Christians believing in a Supreme Being. But because he is so far away and out of reach, they feel that they can communicate with him through idols, images, and spirits, which are closer.

At best this type of religion is a simple form of worship of beauty in different forms. At its worst it involves superstitions and evil practices.

A typical rural church with no glass in the windows in order to improve ventilation.



HOW THEY HAVE FUN

Like everyone else, Nigerians like to relax and have fun. And like people in other parts of the world, they have fun in different ways.

In some respects they have more time to enjoy life than we have. Life is more leisurely and they are not always catching trains or buses or keeping appointments. On the other hand, people have to work hard. This is especially true of the women.

Nigerian children make mud pies, play with balls, run and jump, and play hide and seek (which they call "Boju-Boju").

Little girls also play with dolls, although their dolls are likely to be flat pieces of wood with some string attached for hair. They tie their dolls to their backs with sashes or odd pieces of cloth, imitating the way their mothers carry their babies.

Where there is water, the boys learn to swim very early and are experts in that and in paddling canoes. They also learn to fish as small boys and enjoy it in their spare time. In the north they learn to ride at an early age and often have young donkeys, ponies, or camels as pets.

A popular game in Nigeria as in other parts of West Africa is Adi. Two rows of holes are dug in the ground or in a board, and seeds are dropped into these holes and transferred from one hole to another in a very complicated game which is a little like some of our games with marbles.



Checkers is also a popular game in Nigeria. Boxing and wrestling are common—in fact, one holder of the world's featherweight championship was a Nigerian, Hogan Bassey.

In the schools and in larger towns cricket, basketball, and tennis are played. Soccer is very popular and is sometimes played by boys and men in their bare feet since soccer shoes are so expensive.



Drumming and dancing, however, are the most fun for the most people. There is often dancing in the evenings in the hamlets and villages after the day's work is done. There is dancing at harvest time when the cocoa, yams, cassava, and other products have been gathered. There is dancing when boys and girls are initiated into their tribes. And there is dancing for the many religious festivals. As one writer has said:

They dance for joy and they dance for grief; they dance for love and they dance for hate; they dance to bring prosperity and they dance to avert calamity; they dance for religion and they dance to pass the time away.

All Nigeria drums and dances. Women usually drum on small hand drums made of gourds or earthen vessels. Men drum on all kinds of instruments, from tiny tambours, which are hung around their necks, to the giant talking drums.

In the north the big events are the breath-taking durbars. These durbars are colorful pageants which remind one of the Middle Ages. Among the participants are hundreds of horsemen dressed in chain armor; court jesters in fantastic garb; dancers from many tribes in colorful costumes; and thousands of spectators dressed in their very best clothes. There are parades, charges of riders on horses and camels, dances, and music of all kinds.

Originally, durbars were held to celebrate the selection of new emirs or chiefs. Today they also take place to welcome distinguished foreign visitors or to celebrate events like Independence. Durbars may last for several days, and people come from hundreds of miles to take part in them.



THEIR ARTS AND CRAFTS

When the British took over the city of Benin in 1897, they came across some curious bronze statues and plaques of African rulers, warriors, animals, and flowers. They found these bronze figures in the old palace grounds, covered by centuries of sand and soil.

At first no one paid much attention to these works of art. Then experts in bronze castings saw them and were amazed at the originality of the designs and the process by which they had been made. They compared them to the bronzes made by the ancient Romans. Since they thought that no Africans could be so artistic, they decided that the Portuguese must have taught the Yorubas how to do this work.

Today art experts concede that the Yorubas were superb artists with great technical skill as far back as the thirteenth century. Originally the city of Ife was the center of their artistic life. Then the city of Benin replaced it.

The Yorubas also worked in wood, carving intricate and beautiful altarpieces and doors and



Benin bronze work
from ancient times.



Basketware in a market.

ornaments for special houses. Almost all of the wood carvings have been destroyed by insects and the ravages of time, but the bronzes have been preserved and are now in museums in England, Germany, and other parts of Europe.

Fortunately this artistic ability is not something which existed only in the past. Today many Nigerians are still producing all kinds of beauty.

The best-known artist of today is Ben Enwonwu, an internationally famous painter and sculptor who works in wood and bronze. Among his works are a full-length statue of Queen Elizabeth which has been placed in the Nigerian House of Representatives in Lagos, a bronze group in the Lagos Museum, four figures in the Onitsha Cathedral, and a graceful yet tragic figure of "The Risen Christ" at the University College in Ibadan.

Scores of less-known artists are constantly working in various media. Some are northerners who make hand-wrought trays and bowls with such simple tools as hammers and nails. Others are members of the Oyo tribe in the Western Region who carve an infinite variety of gaily decorated bowls and wall decorations from calabashes.



Ben Enwonnu creates beauty in wood.

In the Eastern Region many people work with raffia, weaving rugs and tapestries with exquisite designs. In the Northern Region there are skilled workers who produce saddlery, bags, wallets, shoes, and other articles from the fine leather in that part of Nigeria.

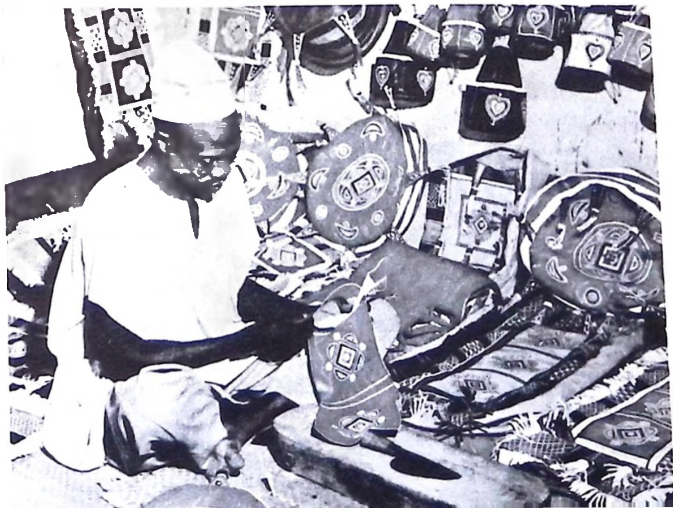


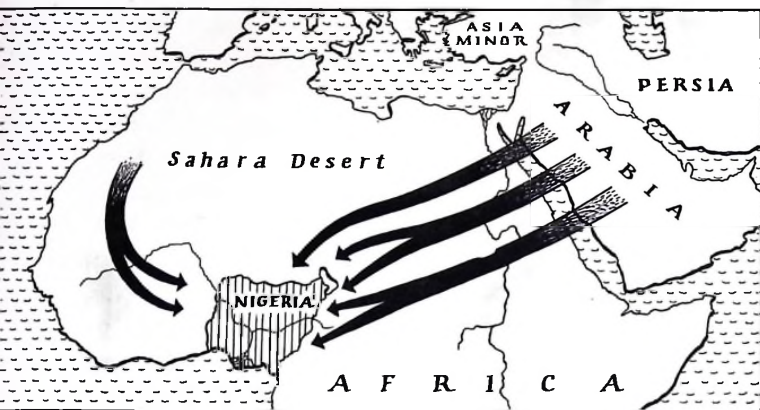
Decorating calabashes or gourds.

Among the artists and craftsmen of Nigeria are fine pottery workers and weavers of the “wrappers” described in the chapter on clothes.

Anyone who thinks of Africans as “primitives” will change his mind when he sees the beautiful products of Nigerians today as well as the products from her artists in the past.

Working with Nigerian leather.





Map of Africa showing probable lines of immigration.

THEIR HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

It is very difficult to discover the truth about the early history of what is now Nigeria.

Almost all records of those times have been destroyed, and it is almost impossible to separate fact from fiction and history from legend.

We do know, however, that for centuries the front door to this part of the world was the Sahara Desert. Most of the early settlers of Nigeria probably came from Arabia, wandering for many years in the direction of northern Nigeria. A smaller group probably came from what is now Morocco, moving gradually south along the Atlantic coast.

We also know that for centuries Kano was an important trading center. Camel caravans left there and eventually reached Tripoli in what is now Tunisia. Or they traveled to the northwest and finally ended their journeys in what is now Morocco. With them they took gold, hides and skins, kola nuts, and cotton. Because the Europeans bought leather goods in Morocco, they called it Moroccan leather. Actually most of it was northern Nigerian leather. Some of it was used to cover books, some to make shoes, and some to make gloves for the court ladies. Especially prized were skins from the Sokoto red goats.

It is also clear that mighty empires once existed in West Africa. They were like the Incan, Aztec, and Mayan empires in Latin America, or the Greek and Roman empires of Europe.

One of these African empires was the Ghana empire, after which the modern nation of Ghana is named. Another was Mali, from which the present-day federation of French states in West Africa is named. A third was the Songhay empire and a fourth the Kanem empire.

We do not know the details of each of these civilizations, but we do know that they followed a common pattern of rise and fall. Each empire stretched into the territory of what is now Nigeria or influenced the people of that part of the world.

Meanwhile there was rivalry and warfare among the various tribes in what is now Nigeria. For a long time the Yorubas had an empire which extended northwest into what is now Dahomey and Ghana.

Then they were defeated by the Hausas from

the north. In order to defend themselves, the Yorubas built such cities as Ibadan and Lagos and retreated into the forest and delta area.

Then the Hausas were defeated by the Fulanis, a more recent group of immigrants. The Hausas, however, remained in the north after their defeat. There they became traders and farmers and often intermarried with the newcomers.

During centuries of fighting, the only group able to maintain its independence was the Kanuris in the extreme northeastern part of Nigeria, in the neighborhood of Lake Chad.

An important event of another kind was the appearance of Islam in the thirteenth century. Traders and missionaries brought this world religion from Arabia and North Africa to northern Nigeria, and within a relatively short time almost all the northerners became Moslems.

For a very long time there was no contact between the people of this part of Africa and the people of Europe. Then, in 1472, the Portuguese came to the west coast of Africa and took back with them gold dust, ivory, and pepper.

By 1485 the British had appeared. But they did not stay either. They sailed their ships a short way up the Niger River, cast anchor for a while, and then returned to England.

By the early seventeenth century, however, the Portuguese and the British were frequent visitors to the west coast of Africa. Their interest now was in slaves which could be bought at a low price and sold in the West Indies or in the American colonies. It was



Preserving the past—in a museum.

a profitable business despite the fact that hundreds of the slaves died en route.

It is estimated that around 20,000 slaves were taken each year from West Africa over a period of 300 years. And for a time 50,000 slaves were taken each year to the West Indies.

In 1807 the British forbade the use of any of their ships for the slave trade. But there were Dutch, French, Portuguese, and Spanish ships to carry slaves, and the slave trade continued for a time. The real death knell to this trade came in 1833 when slavery was forbidden in the British Empire. As a result, the slave trade became an unprofitable business and soon stopped.

This is one of the most horrible chapters in human history. The blame for it, however, has to be shared by Africans as well as Europeans. Europeans

carried it on, but they were aided and abetted by Africans who captured members of rival tribes and sold them to make a profit.

The story of British control in Nigeria really begins with the explorations of Mungo Park in 1795 and 1805. He and most of his men died on the latter journey. But accounts of their expeditions brought more British, French, and German explorers and aroused great interest in this part of Africa. By 1861 the British gained control of Lagos and established it as a colony in the British Empire.

Gradually British traders spread out from Lagos, and in 1879 the United African Company was formed to oppose the French in this region of West Africa. By 1886 The Royal Niger Company (the United African Company under a new name) was given a charter to govern along the Niger River, and by 1893 the Niger Coast Protectorate was established.

There was strong opposition to the encroachment of the British in Nigeria and some fighting, but the local people were divided and were not strong enough to battle against the British.

In 1900 the Charter of the Royal Niger Company was withdrawn and the British government itself took over the administration of Nigeria, forming the Protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria.

In 1914 these two protectorates and the colony of Lagos were finally united into one government, known as the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria.

During both World War I and World War II there were many Nigerians who fought with the British on the side of the Allies. In World War II Nigerian tin

took the place of Malayan tin for the United States and England, since Malaya had been occupied by the Japanese. The palm oil and palm kernels of Nigeria also played an important part in furnishing fats to the British and giving them a source of glycerine for explosives.

The desire for independence really came alive at the end of World War II when India, Ceylon, Pakistan, Burma, and other parts of the world gained their freedom. A few people in Nigeria began to dream about independence, too, although most of them felt that it was a long way off.

Outstanding among these dreamers was a man named Azikiwe (or "Zik" for short). He had studied in the United States and had spent three years in Ghana helping the people there in their fight for independence. In 1937 he returned to Nigeria and set up a small chain of newspapers in which he championed the cause of freedom for the Nigerians. He also began to organize a political party known as the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons.

Meanwhile Ghana's fight for freedom, which resulted in independence on March 6, 1957, gave the Nigerians new hope that they could also obtain self-rule and independence.

Actually Nigeria never had to fight for its freedom. If opposition to independence had been greater, perhaps some of Nigeria's tribal and regional loyalties would have been forgotten as people united against a common enemy.

But the British forestalled such a fight by granting independence gradually. In 1946 they drafted a

constitution which established a central legislature for all of Nigeria. Then, in 1951, most of the members in this legislature were elected by the Nigerians for the first time.

In 1953 another constitution was written which established the Federation of Nigeria in 1954. Regional governments were set up in the Eastern Region, the Western Region, and the Northern Region. Enugu, Ibadan, and Kaduna became the regional capitals.

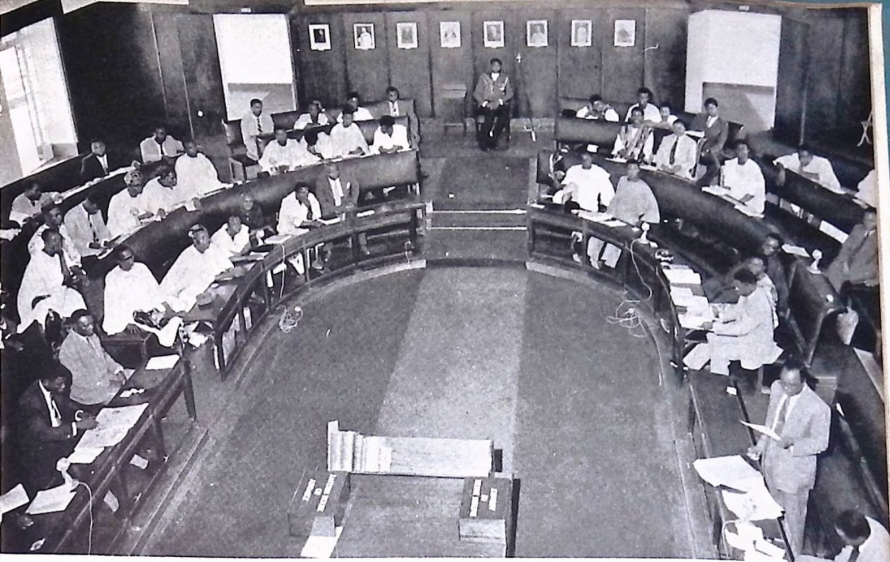
Each region was given its own House of Assembly, its Executive Council, and its Premier. The Northern and Western regions also had a House of Chiefs, and the Eastern Region soon added a similar body.

In 1954 Lagos was made a separate Federal District, like the District of Columbia in the United States. And the Southern Cameroons became a quasi-federal territory.

The next step came in 1957 when the Eastern and Western regions were granted self-government. At that time Tafawa Balewa, the leader of the majority party in the national legislature, was selected as Prime Minister for the whole of Nigeria. The Northern Region could have had self-government, too, but it asked that it be postponed until 1959.

In 1958 a conference was held in London to discuss the future of Nigeria. This was the most important of all such meetings. At that conference it was decided to grant independence to Nigeria on October 1, 1960.

On that date Nigeria became the twenty-fifth new nation to be established since World War II. It



Making laws for the new Nigeria.

The Federal House of Representatives in Lagos.



was a great day for 35 million people, for they were really free for the first time in centuries. They might well have become free as soon as Ghana had it not been for the size of Nigeria, the intense tribal and regional rivalries, and the opposition of the Northern Region to such quick action.

Many Nigerians are aware that October 1, 1960, was only the beginning rather than the end. Now a new nation has to be *created*. Tribal and regional loyalties must now be supplemented by a larger loyalty—to the new nation of Nigeria. But leaders feel that Nigerians can do at least as well as the people of the other countries which have been formed since World War II. To that ideal they are now dedicated.

THEIR POLITICAL LEADERS

Many people help to run the various governments of Nigeria, but four men are particularly important.

One of these is Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. A second is Chief Obafemi Awolowo. A third is the Sardauna of Sokoto. And the fourth is Tafawa Balewa.

Azikiwe is the best known of these four. He is a very popular person and is almost always called "Zik" for short.

He was born in the Northern Region in 1904, attended school in Onitsha, in Calabar, and then went to the Methodist Boys High School in Lagos. He was a bright student and almost always at the top of his class.

When his father retired as an officer in the government, he received \$500 as a gift. He gave this to "Zik" and told him, "That is all I can give you. The rest you must manage for yourself."

"Zik" decided he would spend this money for more education and that the United States would be the best place to get it. So he set off for Lincoln University, where he stayed until he completed his B.A. degree. Still not satisfied, he stayed on until he had won two more degrees from the University of Pennsylvania. One was in philosophy and the other in anthropology. In order to earn his way he worked during vacations and weekends as a janitor, a dishwasher, a coal miner, and as a professional boxer.

When he left the United States, "Zik" went to the Gold Coast (now Ghana). There he worked three



Azikiwe.

years as a journalist and organizer for their independence movement.

When he finally returned to Nigeria, he started a small chain of newspapers. But his first love was the idea of freedom and independence. With that in mind he organized the National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroons (known as the N.C.N.C.). Today it is the leading party in the Eastern Region and one of the main national parties. "Zik" is still its leader as well as the Premier of the Eastern Region.

"Zik" is a peppery, popular leader who loves parades and crowds and is a spell-binding speaker. He has championed the rights of women in politics, and the Eastern Region was the first section of Nigeria to give them the vote. He is very much interested in a university in the Eastern Region and thinks it should

be run like a state university in the United States. He is also the author of several books.

His main support comes from the Ibos, but he has many enthusiastic supporters in other parts of the country. The fact that he speaks Hausa and Yoruba as well as Ibo and English is a great help to him.

Awolowo is quite a different type of person. He is a short, solidly built man who is not so good as a speaker. But he is a better organizer than "Zik." He is the leader of the Action Group and Premier of the Western Region.

Awolowo was born in 1909 in Ikenne in the Western Region. His father was a farmer. He started to school but was unable to finish because of the death of his father. Withdrawing from school, he worked at whatever he could find in order to support his family, but he never forgot his desire to become an educated person. He taught himself shorthand and typing and worked for various commercial firms. Then, at night, he studied. Finally he was able to return to school and to earn his Bachelor of Commerce degree.

Eventually he went to London, where he studied law and passed the examinations as a lawyer.

People really began to notice him, however, after the publication of a small book entitled *Path to Nigerian Freedom*. That volume appeared in 1947.

In the 1940's and 1950's he was busy running a newspaper called *The Sentinel* and organizing political groups in Western Nigeria.

His ability as an organizer and administrator paid off in the election of 1951 when his Action Group came into power in the Western Region. In 1957 that



Awolowo.

party did well in the Eastern Region and became the Opposition Party there.

Awolowo is a Yoruba and his chief support comes from that important tribe. But the Action Group is now a national party with its primary interest in the new nation of Nigeria rather than in the welfare of the Yorubas.

The third major political leader of Nigeria is Alhaji Ahmadu. He holds the title of Sardauna of Sokoto and is the leader of the Northern People's Congress (the N.P.C.).

The Sardauna differs radically from Azikiwe and Awolowo. He is not a spell-binder like Azikiwe or an organizer like Awolowo. Nor is he as ardent a nationalist as either of them.

But he is an experienced administrator, and he has been a schoolteacher, a District Head Commis-



The Sardana
of Sokoto.

sioner, and head of the local government in Sokoto for many years.

His power lies in the fact that he is a northerner, a Moslem, and a member of the royal family. In fact, he is a direct descendant of Othman Dan Fodio, the founder of the Fulani Empire.

Basically he is a conservative, and his caution has probably been good for the north on many occasions. For example, it was the Sardana who decided that his people were not ready for self-government in 1957 and who postponed their self-rule until 1959.

He has been the Premier of the Northern Region since 1954. Even though he was not a leader in the early independence movement, he supported it fully in the months just before independence.

A fourth outstanding leader of Nigeria today is Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. He is a tall, gaunt,

very dark-skinned Nigerian who was Prime Minister of Nigeria in the short period of its partial independence prior to October 1, 1960, and thus led Nigeria at the time of its gaining its freedom.

He was born in 1912 in a small town in the north. At the age of four he was taken by his family to the town of Tafawa Balewa, from which part of his long name comes.

His father was a local government official and a forward-looking person. He insisted that his son go to a western-type school in the days when few boys in the north did that. Balewa completed his work in that public school and went on to the Bauchi Provincial School. From there he went to the Katsina Training College, graduating in 1928.

For several years he taught geography and history and specialized in English. For a short time he was head of the Bauchi Middle School. Then he went to London, where he studied at the Institute of Education in the University of London.

When he returned to Nigeria, he held several jobs as a teacher and as a supervisor in the schools in his province.

In 1946 he entered the Northern House of Assembly and in 1947 the Federal Legislative Council. In 1952 he became a member of the Federal Cabinet and attended several important international conferences. When Nigeria was granted the right to select her own Prime Minister in 1957, Balewa was chosen for that post.

The Prime Minister was automatically selected from the majority party in the Federal House. Since



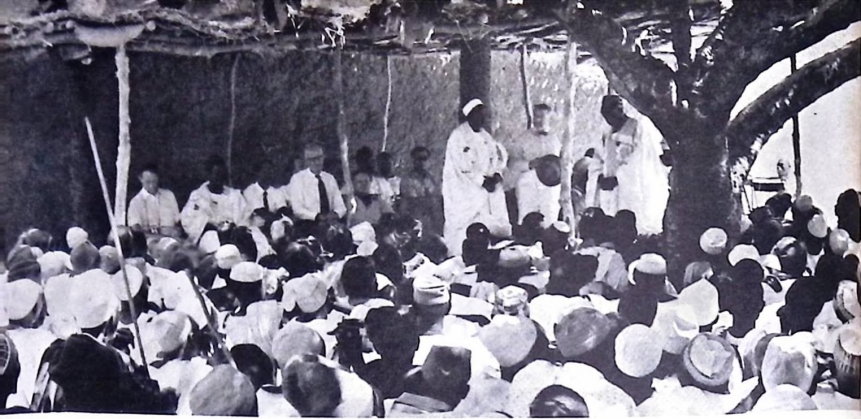
Balewa.

its leader, the Sardauna, did not want the position, Balewa was picked as Prime Minister since he was then deputy leader of the majority party.

He also had other qualifications. He was from the north, where a majority of the people live, but he was well known in the south. He was a brilliant speaker, a good organizer, and an honest and able administrator.

As Nigeria develops as a nation, new leaders will appear. Some of those men and women are now studying in the United States and in England. Some are still in school in Nigeria or working in government jobs there.

But in the history of Nigeria the names of Azikiwe, Awolowo, the Sardauna of Sokoto, and Balewa will always rank high as the outstanding political leaders of its early days as a nation.



THEIR FUTURE

Nigeria is well worth watching.

Someday soon she may be the most important country in all of Africa.

She has plenty of man-power—35 million persons at the time of independence.

She has important farm and forest products, such as peanuts, cocoa, palm oil and palm kernels, cotton, rubber, timber, and hides and skins.

She has important mineral resources, including tin and columbite, lead and zinc, coal and oil.

She has been spared interracial fighting.

If she can forget her tribal and regional differences, develop a common language, improve her agriculture, and get on with her industrialization, she should go far.

Yes, Nigeria has a bright future. Those of us outside her borders are watching her with interest. We wish her well as a new member of the international community of our day.

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Scores of persons share in the production of any book and it is impossible to mention them all. This has certainly been true in the preparation of this volume.

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To these and to others who encouraged me in preparing this book, I am extremely grateful. For the final presentation, however, I take the full responsibility. I only trust that I have presented the new nation of Nigeria as clearly and fairly as a foreigner can.

LEONARD S. KENWORTHY

INDEX

- Ahmadu. *See* Sardauna
Animism, 67
Awolowo, 87, 89-90, 93
Azikiwe, 83, 87-89, 93
- Balewa, 84, 87, 91-93
Benin, 74
Benue River, 17
- Cacao, 37
Calabashes, 29, 46, 77
Cameroons, 8, 17
Cameroon Highlands, 12, 13, 16
Cameroon Mountain, 12, 13, 16
Christians, 67-68
Columbite, 41
Compound, 25
Co-operatives, 39
Cotton, 38, 41
- Dance, 72-73
Durbars, 72-73
- Enwonwu, Ben, 76
Europeans, 22
- Factories, 42
French Equatorial Africa, 9
French West Africa, 9
Fulani, 18, 20, 22, 52, 91
- Games, 70-73
Government, 78-86
- Hausa, 18, 20, 52, 79-80
- Ibadan, 53-54, 65, 75
Ibibios, 18, 52
Ibos, 18, 20, 22, 52
Ifè, 74
Indigo pits, 57
Islam, 67, 69
- Jos Plateau, 16
- Kaduna, 50
Kano, 18, 43, 45, 55, 57, 67, 69, 79
Kanuris, 18, 22, 32, 52, 80
- Lagos, 18, 47, 49, 50, 54-55, 75, 84
Lake Chad, 16, 80
Languages, 52
Leprosy, 58-60
- "Mammy trucks," 48
Markets, 43-45, 75
Mining, 16, 41
Moslems, 67, 69
- Newspapers, 51
Niger Delta, 12, 13
Niger River, 9, 17
Nuru, 50
- Oil, 41
Onitsha, 43, 68, 75
- Park, Mungo, 82
Peanuts, 36-37
Port Harcourt, 41, 47, 50
Portuguese, 54
- Radio, 51-52
Railroads, 50, 54
- Sardauna of Sokoto, 87, 90-91, 93
Slavery, 80-82
Sokoto, 40
- Tin, 16, 41
Trade, 36, 42
Transportation, 46-52, 57
Tribes, 18
Tsetse fly, 15, 40, 48
- U.N. Children's Fund, 60
University College, 54
 Hospital, 60-61
 School of Nursing, 61
- Uranium, 41
- Volcanoes, 16
- World Health Organization, 60
- Yorubas, 18, 22, 32, 52, 53, 54, 74,
 79-80
- Zaria, 50, 66





