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# [Joint review of two simplified French readers: Quatre contes, and Contes divers, both by Herbert Samuel Evason (London: Methuen, 1965)]

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**African Education** *by D. G. Burns* (O.U.P.).

This book is intended for "the very large number of young Africans now training to become teachers, who wish to find out about the development of education in other African countries as well as their own". It should also be compulsory reading for all those armchair critics of politics or African education (or both). Mr. Burns has been tireless in marshalling facts upon facts (some of them he admits are out of date) from "Recurrent Expenditure of Nigeria, 1958–9" to "The Administration of Education (Kenya) 1960–1," from a list of new universities (16) to "Distribution of Periods in Lower Primary Schools".

The target population of this book could not fail to become, every man Josiah of them, competent comparative educationists.

The purely pedagogic aspects of education are not neglected either — aims, curricula and methods. The author has maintained his objectivity very nicely in the chapter on "Education in the University" where he discusses academic freedom and autonomy in the university. Altogether an impressive document amply supported by facts and references.

**Quatre Contes and Contes Divers** *by H. S. Evason* (Methuen)

Modern language readers, of all shapes and sizes and of all degrees of difficulty, continue to pour from the publishers. Of the making of graded readers there seems to be no end. Some compilers have the laudable aim of introducing the third or fourth former easily and gradually to the meatier works of recognised authors by means of simplified adaptations of their works. *Contes Divers* and *Quatre Contes* are two examples of happier choices of subject matter and successful presentation. Each book, very modestly priced, is a "simplified reader edited with notes and autobiographical introduction". The notes at the end of each extract are adequate, as is the vocabulary at the end of the book. The authors represented in both volumes are the usual ones — Maupassant, Mérimée, Daudet, Dumas, Balzac, de Vigny and Flaubert. *Contes Divers* contains the more amusing and more palatable kinds of "conte" than does *Quatre Contes* — "La Mule du Pape" and "L'Elixir du Révérend Pére Gaucher" being sure winners with matriculation candidates. It is an interesting exercise for the teacher to take a copy of the original and try to ascertain why certain passages were omitted or emasculated.

**Guide to Modern Language Teaching Methods** (*A.V.L.A. Publication No.* 1) *Edited by Brian Dutton* (Cassell)

Most reports and discussions of new developments in pedagogic technique and methodology appear in specialised journals and often in abbreviated or attenuated form. Most of the entries in a bibliography on, say, language laboratories would indicate articles that are hard to come by because the particular issue is out of print or otherwise unobtainable. A full length book such as this is therefore welcome, as it contains between its covers extensive material covering most aspects of the topic. When the book is the work of three authors, each with their individual or individualistic viewpoints and experiences, the work is doubly welcome. This volume is the work of three writers, all pioneers in language teaching methodology. The names of two of them — Dr. Brian Dutton and Dr. Derek van Abbé are well-known for their work in the Audio-Visual Language Association, under whose aegis this book was published. Each of the three contributors has written from the point of view of his own specialist study — Mr. Jerman discusses audio-visual methods in language teaching, Dr. van Abbé deals with audio-lingual methods and Dr. Dutton handles linguistics and programmed instruction in language teaching.

One of the most striking features of the book is the number of examples and illustrations of techniques and methods under discussion. Many teachers in South Africa, in introducing audio-lingual or language laboratory material, will, for various reasons (cost, non-availability of material suitable for South African conditions, amongst others) have to produce their own drills and material. All teachers who are anxious to acquaint themselves with new developments in language teaching, or are about to apply the "new key", should consult this work and take note of the varied and successful experience of these writers in the new field.

There are chapters on the historical background of audio-visual and audio-lingual methods that would form a useful basis for lectures in methods of language teaching.

The chapter on programmed instruction is rather brief. It is a pity that Dr. Dutton did not treat of the topic more extensively, either theoretically or from his own experience. He contents himself with an account of the work of Rand Morton and the redundancy programme of Schaefer.

Several books have been published in England in the last two years on language laboratories, none of which have really got down to the question of preparing materials (with the possible exception of Adams' book on French pattern sentences). This volume does overcome these objections: there