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David G. Scanlon (editor), **Traditions of African Education** Classics in Education, No. 16; Lawrence A. Cremin, General Editor. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964. 184 pages; $1.95; Paperback.

Reviewed by

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A preliminary thought may be appropriate about the Classics in Education series. Lawrence A. Cremin, as General Editor of the series, and the Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, as publisher, have presented a valuable collection of selected original documents in the history of education edited by competent scholars. The series, numbering 22 volumes at this writing, marks a kind of watershed in the history of education. Too many textbooks of a synthetic nature have dominated this field, many of them cumulatively borrowed from a few pioneer works. One may hope that the series will have the effect of overcoming the misinterpretations sometimes served up as the history of education, and that the original sources made inexpensively available may invite thoughtful discussion about the interrelation of school and society.

In line with the pattern of previous volumes of the series, editor David G. Scanlon has selected original sources to illustrate the range of African education. A brief sketch on indigenous education illustrates the rites which have traditionally taken place during critical transformation from youth to adulthood. Another source provides an analysis of pre-World War I German colonial educational policy. Part of the 1922 Phelps-Stokes Report follows, and there are selections from British, French, and Belgian colonial educational policy statements. Graduate students and others might like to know of a recent useful bibliography by Barbara A. Yates, "Educational Policy and Practice in Tropical Africa: A General Bibliography", *Comparative Education Review*, VIII, No. 2 (October, 1964), pages 215–228.

Editor Scanlon's historical introduction provides a connecting background for the documentary selections and brings the whole up to date. He rightly emphasizes the call of the Addis Ababa Conference for a massive breakthrough in secondary education, not only as a university feeder but, just as important, to provide technical skills needed for modern states. How this is to be brought about remains a serious challenge. Scanlon also concludes by saying that a distinctively *African* educational system is emerging in the independent African nations. Besides the obvious meaning of African control, the implication of a curriculum geared to the various African cultures and written by African intellectuals is another matter. So far the African prospect has been explosively political with remarkably little evidence of a cultural movement away from that of the West. However the future of African education may be (I see it as building upon colonial patterns for some time), the past is prologue and a comprehensive history of Tropical African education awaits completion.

Meanwhile, this volume, which will aid that history, also provides good reading for courses dealing in any way with African education. David G. Scanlon is Professor of Education and coordinator of African education studies at Teachers College, Columbia University. His recent experience, together with his previous work as advisor to UNESCO on Liberian education, makes him uniquely qualified to edit this volume. His colleagues eagerly await his forthcoming study of church, state, and education in Africa.

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