DISABILITY & SOCIAL RESPONSES
IN SOME SOUTHERN AFRICAN NATIONS:
Angola, Botswana, Burundi, D.R. Congo (ex Zaire), Malawi,
Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
A bibliography, with introduction and some historical items.

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* HISTORICAL MATERIAL ACROSS SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
(mostly pre-1966, with some annotation).

The geographical range is broadened here to include references to historical developments in
the Republic of South Africa, which provide a background to much of the historical
development elsewhere in Southern Africa. Some material from West Africa has also been
listed, and rather more medical material, e.g. in connection with disabling diseases such as
leprosy.

The light annotations are acknowledged to be far from complete or uniform, having been
made irregularly over about seven years, with varied disability interests in mind. A few are
abstracts of the items' contents; some exhaust the relevant single paragraph in a book, e.g.
that fixes a date or name concerned with service development; some provide or supplement
an index, so that the busy reader can go straight to 'disability material' without combing
through a book; some quote a few lines that contradict well-established myths. The pursuit of
African disability histories has fascinated the compiler, and has often shed light on the
present disability situation in southern Africa. To make progress towards a better
understanding of disability histories and futures, there is a need for far more people to take up
this fascinating pursuit.

(References preceded by '*' appear also in the lists above)

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All materials may be reproduced for non-commercial purposes to advance educational or
scientific research.
ABADIE, Charles (1963) Artificial limb supply groups in the French-speaking African states. In: Disability Prevention - Rehabilitation (q.v.) pp. 401-403. New York. Describes a scheme begun in Morocco in 1950 and Algeria in 1952, for a mobile workshop supplying prosthetic and orthopaedic appliances, which eventually gave coverage as far as "Senegal, Guinea, Upper Volta, Niger, Dahomey, and the region south of Mauretania" (p. 401), at a time when much of this land mass was accessible only with difficulty.

ADAMS PCG (1949) Disease concepts among Africans in the protectorate of Northern Rhodesia. RLJ 10: 14-50.


* ANDERSON EM [1967] The Education of Physically Handicapped, Blind and Deaf Children in East Africa. London: Natl Fund for Res. into Crippling Diseases. 150 pp. Very detailed, factual survey and analysis on the situation of both government and NGO work in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania in the mid-1960s. Discussion of polio back to 1912 (pp. 28-30); opening of centres for blind people in 1940s and 1950s (89-99), and for deaf people from 1959 onwards (108).

ANON (1965) Dr Ella Botes: the eyes and tongue of many. Horizon vol.7 (no.10, Oct.) 26-29. Published at Salisbury. Biographical notes and description of work with blind children at Magwero, Zambia, with photographs. [Attrib. by C. Landman to G. Verstraelen-Gilhuis]


Describes the start and development of formal special education in Ghana since the 1950s with emphasis on children with learning difficulties. Policy and practice remains a mixture of earlier institutional practices with some rhetoric of inclusion.

Extensive classified description of gestural communication in West African countries from documentation of the previous two centuries; does not, however, describe formal sign language used by deaf people.

BAIN, Adrian M (1966) Historical note on poliomyelitis in Uganda. EAMJ 43 (2) 62-64.
Cases of polio in Uganda from 1912 and the 1920s.


Two of the many legendary versions recounted by West African griots about the ancient Malian kingdom, celebrating the 13th century warrior king Sunjata, who had a severe childhood impairment, and his hunchback mother (see e.g. pp. ix, 4, 5, 13, 42, 57, 59, 62, 63, 74-75, 80, 81-84, 97, 99, 110, 112, 113, 115, 116).

Historical study from 1940s to 1990s.

Includes account of Barnes's visit in 1928 to schools for the deaf (pp. 6-11) and adult deaf clubs (18-19), in South Africa, with analytical comments. (Barnes recognises that his report omits most of the native deaf in countries he visited). Arthur Blaxall makes some further comments on S.Africa (pp. 33-34).


BLACKSTOCK ZP (1958) History of our Institutions (3). The Hope Convalescent Home. Cripple Care 2: 16-19. (Johannesburg)


BLAXALL, Florence M (1948) Mapupula, the one who touches. London: Society for Propagation of the Gospel. viii + 52 pp. Story of the deaf-blind Zulu, Radcliffe Bhekinkosi Dhladhla, to the age of 21. He lost his hearing and sight through a high fever in infancy, which also left him unable to walk. His mother Rhoda took him to Durban from their native village. At the hospital he received treatment which restored his mobility. He was returned to his mother with the advice that his mind was unimpaired, and he should be encouraged to do and to learn everything possible. His mother kept him until he was 11, then tried to get him into a deaf school or a blind school, but no special school was willing to take in the deaf-blind boy. Eventually the Rev and Mrs Blaxall took charge of Radcliffe, around 1937. Florence Blaxall worked on his education, and here tells the story in detail, without sentimentality, and with many lively drawings by Monica Hope. They learnt the Tadoma method of teaching, when its originators, Miss Hall, Tad Chapman and Mrs Chapman, visited South Africa. After this, Radcliffe made more progress, and revealed more of his character and individuality. In 1938 the Blaxall with Radcliffe moved to Ezenzeleni, a new work for adult blind people near Johannesburg. Later two other deaf-blind young men, Franz and Johannes, joined him for their education.

Well referenced, revised doctoral thesis. In particular, chapter 4, "La lèpre, une endémie présente mais négligé" (pp. 131-150), and leprosy management (pp. 251-257).

BOSHOFF PH (1945) Blindness and diseases of the eye in South Africa. SAMJ 19: 148-149.
Details the haphazard nature of data and of blindness pension awards among the non-European population. Based partly on his own survey of eye disease in Western Transvaal and Mafeking districts, where almost 95% among 1,874 eye disease cases were of a preventable or treatable nature, the author advocates much more attention to prevention measures.

Ref. from C. Landman, q.v., who translates the title "Being blind in pagan countries". Landman states that it was commissioned by the Oranje Vroue Sending Bond as "a book on being blind, black and pagan", and it gives an "overview of the work amongst the blind in the eastern part of Northern Rhodesia".

Botes's life told through the stories of many Christians with whom she worked.


Letters written to the Volta Bureau, 1931-32, by Mrs Boyd. Her daughter aged 9, deaf since birth, had been taught at home by Mrs Boyd along with her two younger children.

BRÁSIO, António (1959) As Misericórdias de Angola. Studia (Lisbon) 4: 106-149.

BRELSFORD W (1950) Insanity among the Bemba of Northern Rhodesia. Africa 20 (1) 46-54.

Outbreak of polio at Bloemfontein in Dec. 1933 and Jan. 1934, with data and discussion.

Detailed description of work with Rev. C.C. Hoffman (see Fox GT, 1868) in the 1850s at Cape Palmas, Liberia, including references to children with disabilities (see pp. 45, 56, 119-120, 136, 139, 141-142, 194-195, etc).

Published with Dunston (q.v.) and Editorial (q.v.), Brown argues that sterilization would hardly alter the prevalence of 'mental defect'; whereas "the establishment of special classes both for feeble-minded and retarded children will go much further towards solving the problem of the expense to the State of the feeble-minded than any amount of sterilization."

Part of a series of papers on Europeans only. Includes data on deformities, and defects of vision, hearing and speech, among 80,736 Cape Province European children (1930-1935). Similar results are shown for children in England (1932). Nutrition in the Province was "fairly satisfactory", except in some 'poor-white' settlements. (Compare data from Kark & Le Riche, below).


Browne recalled that in the Congo around 1940, "I learned my clinical leprosy sitting between a cannibal chief and a cannibal witchdoctor - and good teachers they were, pointing out scarcely visible differences of skin surface that I should not have noticed unaided." (p.76).

pp. 39-46 describes in some detail the historical development of medical and legal rehabilitation resources in Zimbabwe.

BURRELL, Rex (1943) Preventable deafness. SAMJ 17: 40-42.
Notes the indefensible social attitudes towards deaf people. The man in the street "will tolerate the 'poor old blind man', but seeks to avoid the 'stupid old deaf So-and-so'." Comments on "the dreadful plight of the unfortunate deaf person, his pathetic isolation, his loneliness in company, his apprehension in traffic, his negative social value." Much preventable deafness failed to be cleared up as a result of poor medical and surgical practice. Over 40 cases of severe hearing impairment were found among nearly 200 indigent school children examined over several years.


CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (1855) Report from the Select Committee ... on the arrangements for providing for lunatics, lepers, and chronic sick throughout the Colony. Cape Town. Cape Archives No 9/1855.
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (1892) *Results of a Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, as on the night of Sunday, the 5th April, 1891.* Cape Town.
Data for "Sickness and Infirmities" tabulated pp. 385-415, including age data. Discussion of infirmities pp. xci - cvii, i.e. "blind", "deaf and dumb", "idiotic", "lunatic", "epileptic", "paralytic", "leprous", "maimed, lamed and deformed", differentiated by racial group.


CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (1905) *Results of a Census of the Colony ... 17th April, 1904.* Cape Town.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (1932, and following years) *Report of the Superintendent-General of Education for the Year ended 31st December, 1931.* Pretoria: Dept of Public Educ. pp. 68-70: medical inspectors of schools note an unpub. Report of Inter-Departmental Commission on Mentally Defective Children, with some discussion. In the Report of the Superintendent-General on 1936, (pp. 19-20), 38 schools are listed where classes for mentally retarded children have begun. Teachers were specially trained at Stellenbosch Univ. Provision had begun for children with hearing and speech impairments (p. 20). There is discussion of outcomes, in the Reports on 1937 (pp. 22-8) and 1938 (pp. 52-56).

CENTNER T (1962) *L'enfant africain et ses jeux.* Elizabethville: CEPSI.


Very brief digest of definitions, survey procedure, data and discussion by a member of the Inter-Departmental Comm. on Mental Deficiency, the report of which was given to the Minister of Education but not published. Well-standardized intelligence tests were given to 28,000 European children aged 10, 11 and 12, in Union schools.

Clapperton saw the 'village of the blind' at Kano city, and was also told that a sector of the city was allocated to lame people (pp. 655, 661, 671).


The Rand Epileptic Employment Association began a small horticultural therapy scheme, providing paid work and a hostel for seven men suffering from epilepsy, near Johannesburg. The men were happier to be usefully occupied, and their physical health also improved noticeably.


COX, Alice (1934) The South African Official Mental Hygiene Scale of intelligence tests, and its clinical application. *SAMJ* 8: 373-375. Discusses the preparation and purpose of this scale, derived from Binet-Simon methods. Notes its usefulness in detecting "alexia and other reading and writing disabilities", as well as unnoticed visual or auditory defects, so that remediation can begin earlier.

COXON A (1962) The Kisii art of trephining, *Guy's Hospital Gazette*, 76, pp. 263-273. Coxon noted that "The West Kenya Medical Department have cautiously recognised this specialty", traditionally practised among the Kisii.


CUSSON, Sr. Cecile (1977) A rehabilitation experience with Cameroon Animists. In: *The Disabled in Developing Countries. Proceedings of a Symposium on Appropriate Technology and Delivery of Health and Welfare Services for the Disabled in Developing Countries held at Oriel College, Oxford, September 26-30, 1976*, 29-35. London: Cwlth Fndn. Sr Cecile learnt the importance of listening to the thoughts and expressions of families bringing a disabled member from the interior, where deeply traditional ways of life prevailed,
before offering a basic level of orthopaedic rehabilitation.

DAVEY, T Frank (1939) Uzuakoli Leper Colony. LR 10: 171-85.
Work in Southern Nigeria.

Personal recollections of ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) work since 1954, the arrival of the deaf missionary Andrew Foster in 1956, the deaf survey by General Drummond in 1961, the start of several deaf schools, and the "Deaf Village" of Adamarobe.

DAVIDSON S (1949) Psychiatric work among the Bemba. RLJ 7: 75-86.


DENIS F (1951) L'enseignement traditionnel au Congo avant l'arrivé des Blancs. La Revue Nouvelle 1 (4) 346-55.


Discusses the life context and possible meanings of some 55 proverbs involving disability, from languages of Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, Zaire, Zimbabwe, with some local informant information.


DIXEY MBD (1931-32) Some observations on leprosy in the Gold Coast and British Togoland. WAMJ 5: 3.

DOBNEY, Tom (1964) The valley of the blind children. Horizon 6 (1) 4-11, 13.


Summary of a Report by the Dominican Schools for the Deaf, Cape Town, covering the period since establishment of their first school in 1863.

DOMMISSE, George F (1982) To Benefit the Maimed: the story of orthopaedics and the care of the crippled child in South Africa. Johannesburg: South African Orthopaedic Assoc. and the National Ccl for the Care of Cripples in South Africa. xviii + 239 pp. The story is told largely from short biographies of orthopaedic surgeons (many with photos) who developed their speciality in South Africa, starting with Dr Ernst Simon who began work in 1899. Numerous lists of committees, extracts from charitable organisation reports and documents also appear, giving details of local developments. This would be a useful source-book if an organised history were to be written. [See also Le Vay, pp. 361-365, which derives very largely from Dommisse's work]

DORNAN, Samuel S (1919) The killing of the divine king in South Africa. Report of the Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, Johannesburg, 1918, July 8-13, 394-399. Cape Town. Comments on some observations by Dos Santos (see below) in the late 16th century, and others, on the tribal tradition that the ruler's body must be maintained in perfect condition, and he was killed when his powers began to fail, his hair became grey and he began to lose his teeth.


Dos Santos's account was first published in 1609 in Portuguese. His 'Eastern Ethiopia' was a huge area of Eastern and Southern Africa in the 1590s. In Vol.VII, p.320 of Theal's edition, Dos Santos describes night blindness in Mozambique; on p.251, a one-armed man, who used his foot very ably as a second hand. Rulers had sometimes killed themselves if they acquired any physical deformity, but one ruler defied this custom, pp.193-95. See also albino children, pp.214-15.


Describes and discusses the disabled British officer's farming cooperative begun in 1919 in the Kericho district of Kenya. About 50 disabled people were involved, many of whom had no previous experience in Africa. The planning and management failed disastrously, with the collapse of the flax market on which cooperative was meant to be based, and various other miscalculations. The 'disability' is hardly discussed.


Dr Dunston was Commissioner in Mental Disorders for the Union of South Africa, and the present paper was read at a meeting in London, so he went into considerable detail, and historical background of services and legal enactments in South Africa, both for feeblemindedness and other mental disorders, as his audience could not be expected to be familiar with the background. (A digest of responses to the paper appears on pp. 548-551).


Also appears in Vol. XX of the *S. Afr. J. Sci.*.


Eugenic Movement views from several countries, and some cases of South African families with feeble-minded parents and children. Quotes Inter-Departmental Comm. (q.v.) data estimating at least "between 14,000 and 15,000 mental defectives in the Union", and ten times that number being 'mentally subnormal', while "There are only two institutions for mental defectives in South Africa, and in them are resident 1,661 patients", plus a further "1,395 untrainable defectives in mental hospitals". Suggests that "before the white man interfered", eugenic practices had been indigenous to South Africa especially among the
Zulus, so that "feeble-mindedness, epilepsy and mental disorders were practically unknown amongst them." (See Editorial, and H. Egerton Brown, for contrary arguments published with Dunston's paper).

Editorial quoting extensively from the annual report by Dr H Dyke, on various aspects of the poor health of natives, and the difficulties of making services available. Dyke visited a tribal school, where some 80 children aged 10-14 were seen as "listless and apathetic". He discovered that 60 of them had eaten nothing since the previous afternoon, as they received only one meal per day, on their return home from school.


Preceding articles by Dunston (q.v.) advocating sterilisation of 'mentally defective' people, and by Egerton Brown (q.v.) casting doubt on the proposal, the Editor shared Brown's doubts, on both scientific and humanitarian grounds.

EEDLE JH (1972) *Special Education in the Developing Countries of the Commonwealth.* London: Cwlth Secretariat. v + 201 pp.
Based on thesis. Informative and well-referenced report, with some historical data, dividing the material by disability category, i.e. Visual Handicap, Hearing Impairment, Other Physical Handicaps, Epilepsy, Mental Retardation, followed by buildings and equipment; public attitudes; UN agencies and NGOs; and the future. Material on sub-Saharan Africa is scattered through the book. There was already a growing trend of recommendation that children with special needs be educated in some form of 'open' or 'integrated' education, whether in ordinary classrooms or in units attached to ordinary schools, joining the many who were already 'casually integrated' without any attention to special needs.

This and subsequent work by Erny reflect traditional child-rearing practices drawing on literature across much of sub-Saharan Africa, with a research base in the Congo.


Introduction and 3634 numbered entries with brief annotation, arranged by years starting with 1925. Indexes of authors and subjects. (See also further entry under Favazza, above).


[Tanzania. Referred to in the Introduction, 1.4(d), to this bibliography]


Over 30 years Feierman made efforts, by various means, to enter the thoughts of people in Ghaambo, a village in North-East Tanzania, about health, illness and healing, to compare them with what earlier anthropologists and colonial physicians reported, and to perceive the strengths and weaknesses of the villagers thinking, in the evolving situation of their life.


Field found that "the idiot" was reverenced, among the Ga in West Africa, "particularly if he is so feeble-minded as to be incapable of speech, or if he is of grotesque appearance." Such people were believed to be incarnations of divine beings: "They are always treated with the greatest kindness, gentleness and patience, are kept very clean and well-dressed, and are given daily good food at a low table with a white calico cloth while the rest of the family squat on the ground round a common dish. ... Not only do his family care for him but all the neighbours help to keep an eye on him. If he shambles into any compound he will probably be given food, and if he eats it messily his face will be cleaned for him before he is sent home" (p.183).


Nigeria. Includes some details of the start of education for four girls with severe visual disabilities, using Brailled materials, and one physically disabled girl. A photograph is shown of "Blind Beggars in Nigeria", five of whom appear, walking with the aid of long sticks. (See also items by Forbes and others in 'Lightbearer' vols 12, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 25, 29, 31-33, 35, 36, 37, cited by K.E. Hill, 1993, q.v.)

Stories of women with physical disabilities in Zimbabwe.

Leper colony in Southern Nigeria.

Hoffman's aims and work with blind and deaf people are described on pp. 274, 331-34, 348, 361.

Study of chronic goitre and iodine treatment among families in the Lower Kosterfontein valley. Some evidence of mild mental disability was observed in some of the goitre sufferers.


FRESHWATER W (1915) A leper camp at Mbereshi, Rhodesia. *WTC* No.78 (Oct.) 121.


Based on Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Historical survey.

Discusses some traditional religious views held by disabled people in West Africa.


GOLBERRY S.M.X. (1802) *Travels in Africa, performed during the years 1785, 1786, and 1787, in the western countries of that continent, etc*. Transl. from French by F. Blagdon.
London.
Description (II: 353-354) of blind men on the West African coast, begging in groups, chanting Islamic scriptures.

GOLD COAST. *Report on the Enquiry into Begging and Destitution in the Gold Coast,*

Many West African legends tell of strange children with extraordinary behaviour.


Lists 281 items in 12 categories, with author index. Lists 42 journals along with other sorts of materials examined in 4 libraries of Cape Town. Some articles include historical matters.


From early travellers' reports. Mentions Angola, Bechuanaland, Congo, Mozambique, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Tanganyika, Union of South Africa. Very little about cretinism.


Data from a series of 4054 consecutive live births in hospital at Ibadan during six months of 1964.


Mention is made of blind singers at Maroua in the period 1970-1976, from some of whom the author obtained Islamic songs in the Peul language (pp. 5-9, 29, 32, 42-43, 47-49). Some of the blind informants were itinerant mendicants, a long tradition in the region.


Describes in some detail three schools for the deaf at Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Worcester. Notes (p. 134) that the Cape Town deaf work was initiated in 1863 under a Mother Prioress "who at one time had been a member of the teaching staff of the St. Mary's Institution for Female Deaf at Cabra" (in Dublin, Ireland). The Worcester school had pupils from as far afield as "South West Africa, Swaziland, and Southern and Northern Rhodesia" (p. 138)


HERSKOVITS MJ (1938) Dahomey. New York: Augustin. Many children born with abnormalities were classified as belonging to river spirits, "in which case the child is taken to the river bank and after certain ceremonies is left there. Some children whom Fate orders to be returned to the river refuse to accept this verdict, and cry out, or speak their protest [such children are believed capable of speaking from birth] until they are taken home." (Vol. I: 262). One such child, described as "with a large head" (p. 262), and "This macrocephalic boy..." (caption Pl.43, between pp. 288, 289), probably had hydrocephalus.


HETHERWICK, Alexander (1902) Some animistic beliefs among the Yaos of British Central Africa. J. Anthropological Institute 32: 89-95. Tribes people to the east of Lake Nyasa gave an account of madness, idiocy, delirium and epilepsy in terms of being seized by spirits. "Such people are usually regarded with awe, as living in close contact with the unseen ... Idiots and the insane are allowed to wander at will..." (p. 90)

HILL JC (1984) Mobile eye-care teams and rural ophthalmology in Southern Africa. SAMJ 66: 531-535. Describes the work of three mobile teams, established in 1952, 1976, and 1981. "The Colin Anderson Unit was established in 1952 and since its inception more than 300,000 patients have been examined and over 12,000 eye operations performed ... This unit operates in the homelands, the independent states and SWA/Namibia. Each year 11 tours, each of 2 weeks' duration, are undertaken."


Ch. 1 (pp. 1-5) is based on the item listed above by KE Hill. Subsequent chapters describe further service development mainly for blind children and adults, mostly post-1950.


A tale of Africa's troubles and women's oppression. The action moves between an imagined life in the 1850s when Miriro was born "deaf and dumb" in an African village and had sorrowful experiences, and scenes from the 1950s to 1980s when her (silent) voice spoke to a later generation about their disregard for traditional ways.

Describes simple methods for orthopaedic rehabilitation of people lamed by polio, of whom there were thousands in Uganda at that time.


Brief account by the headmistress, daughter of the founder, of progress since 1926.


Much ref. to disab.: indexed by region under blindness, cripples, deafness, dumbness, epilepsy, insanity, et al, from 16C. onward. Full chapter on leprosy, pp. 214-229 + notes 337-341.

By the Chief and Medical Superintendent of Robben Island Infirmary. Historical review pp. 3-8.


KARK, Sidney L & LE RICHE, H (1944) A health study of South African Bantu school-children. *SAMJ* 18: 100-103. During 1938-39, over 7,000 Bantu boys and girls were given a detailed examination in three urban and six rural areas across South Africa. Results included 'postural deformities' in 83 (1.16 %) children, apparently from injuries, TB, congenital deformity, rickets, birth trauma, infantile paralysis and syphilis. At least eight percent had noticeable eye and ear disease. Many signs of specific nutritional deficiencies were present. The "thin, round-shouldered, flat-chested, pot-bellied child with spindly legs" was so common as to suggest that "many were on the borders of starvation", so no specific food remedy seemed to be indicated, but an all-round increase in nutrition.


In pp. 420-422 the development of services for people with mental illness / disability is traced from the mid 19th century, as 'traditional' systems of healing slowly began to give ground to European hospital-based health care.

Gift of Braille books in 1905 enabled Universities Mission to start a blind school at Nkhotakota, p.62; see also pp.48-9; Leprosy work, pp.80-84; polio pp. 160-62. (According to Bishop St Clair Donaldson, 1926, *The Call from Africa*, London, p.93, "Work among the blind has almost entirely lapsed, owing to the lack of a trained worker for the blind school at Kota Kota." See also notes to Pauw (1980).


Plaintive letter to the Editor, outlining the difficulties of physiotherapists in maintaining professional ethics while their role with respect to physicians or to unqualified practitioners was sometimes unclear. (Poor quality photocopy has obscured the authors' names).

Includes a brief historical review of service development from 1946 to 1980.

pp. 8-25 give an annotated account of legislation and responses to mental illness, from the first provision for 'detention' in 1711 through to provisions for out-patient treatment, in an Act of 1961.


LAMONT, Alastair McEwan (1948) A study of racial and socio-economic influences on

LANDMAN, Christina (1993) The sacred story of Ella Botes - exploring religious women's history. *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 19 (2) 57-77. Short, well-referenced view of the life of Ella Botes (1885-1971), who pioneered services for blind and deaf children in Northern Rhodesia. Based on interviews with Botes's former colleagues and pupils, as well as texts, it gives a rather more critical view of the circumstances and assumptions of the missionary society in which Botes worked from 1912 to 1965.


LE VAY, David (1990) *The History of Orthopaedics. An account of the study and practice of orthopaedics from the earliest times to the modern era*. Carnforth, UK, and Park Ridge, NJ: Parthenon. pp. 361-65 provide a brief sketch of orthopaedic surgeons and their activities, from 1847 onward in South Africa. This derives very largely from the book by GF Dommisse (q.v.)


LIKNAITZKY I (1933) A case of masturbation in a child. *SAMJ* 7: 85-86.
Reports (indignantly) that a 9-year-old girl, at Johannesburg, was found masturbating in bed, by her mother, and was severely beaten. The girl had been told by a doctor that if she continued the habit she would go mad and her fingers would fall off. She was then excluded from her school and certified as feeble-minded by two doctors who also tried to have her committed to an institution, on the grounds of masturbation. The author and Dr Alice Cox examined the girl and found her of normal intelligence. Counselling was given to the girl and her mother, and the girl was admitted to another school.

When apparent dullness or minor behaviour problems are observed in school children, various possible medical causes should first be checked.

Advocates more rapid and determined efforts should be made for rehabilitation of injured workers, rather than neglecting rehabilitation by focusing on compensation for an assumed permanent disability.

LONDON SOCIETY for Teaching the Blind to Read Annual Reports.
Fourth Report, presented 15 April 1842, records that several ladies leaving London "for Greece, India, and the Cape" (p. 11) were instructed in the Society's methods of teaching blind people to read, using the Lucas embossed script. The Twentieth Report, presented 13 April 1858, notes (p. 8) that "Lucas' system of teaching the Blind to read has been extended to the Cape, to India, and to Australia, the extreme members of our Empire..."

Suggests that disability is often the cause of people turning to begging. Deterioration of health may follow, through lack of shelter or crowded and unhygienic accommodation. There are some risks to public health from beggars, e.g. with leprosy or more contagious diseases. Dr Lucas thought that much could be done to prevent disability, and to provide medical and rehabilitative care.

Five case histories of infants with Down's syndrome in the 1950s near Kampala, Uganda. See also Stannus (1914).

Outlines plan for hospital-based Rehabilitation Services mostly for physically disabled people, aiming to "make every patient fit for the open labour market", while admitting that some might be occupied in Sheltered Workshops. Suggests that vocational rehabilitation for non-Europeans will be mainly in physical labour, because of the "limited field of skilled trades open to the non-European".
MacDONALD, Andrew B (1948) Rehabilitation, the industrial and social work of a leper colony. LR 19: 45-53.

Itu leprosy settlement, inland from Calabar, Nigeria, was apparently a large, thriving community, growing its own food, constructing its own buildings, and with some degree of self-government by the leprosy patients.

McGLASHAN ND & MULENGA, James (1964) A note on traditional attitudes towards blindness in Chief Munungu's area, Kawambwa. Northern Rhodesia J. 5 (6) 583-87.

Beliefs and attitudes were collected by interview, with efforts "to obtain the views current forty of so years ago" before the impact of European notions. Notes are recorded on causation, traditional treatments, family care and the social position of the blind child or adult.


Report on mortality, morbidity, nutritional status and common local practices, among Umtata District rural children in the Transkei, where McGregor was supervising school health clinics and outreach from a base Health Unit.


Much of the illness and impairment could be prevented by basic nutritional supplement, cleanliness, rest and exercise.


With some notes on the self-organised home and work activities of blind adults in Uganda, the author described the start in 1956 of a formal centre for training rural blind men in farming activities, independence and some leisure activities.


Informative overview, including notes on child welfare council and legislation, and nurseries (pp. 43-49); Dutch Reformed Church services for aged, deaf or blind and "deviate types" (e.g. "psychopathic girls") and orphans or destitute children (57-58); "Social welfare among non-Europeans" very briefly (77-78); a paragraph on "Special Schools for blind, deaf and dumb and mentally defective children" (95) following the "Vocational Education and Special Schools Act" (No.29 of 1928).


MILNE AJ (1934) The health importance of pre-school life. SAMJ 8: 604-606. Progress in post-natal care, and in school medical services, had not been matched by development of surveillance and care in the pre-school years, thus many children were entering school with preventable impairments.

MINDE M (1938) Speech training centre. SAMJ 12: 452. Brief letter pointing out that "the Cape Town University Child Guidance Clinic has for the last two years had a speech-training department with a speech expert at its head, and has successfully handled numerous cases sent to it from various Peninsula schools." This was in response to an earlier letter from Dr P. de V. Pienaar. (The Universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand both began speech clinics in 1936.)

MINDE M (1975) History of Mental Health Services in South Africa. Part IX. The protection and care of the feebleminded. SAMJ 49: 1716-1720. Dates the first mention of mental deficiency in South Africa to the period 1803-1806 when Henry Lichtenstein visited the Cape and there met the widow Liewenberg, "having three daughters, idiots." Notes the start in June 1913 of a Society at Cape Town dedicated to the care, protection and training of feebleminded persons, and the subsequent passing of Act No.38 in 1916 providing "for certification, care and supervision of mental defectives and mentally disordered", promoted by Dr J.T. Dunston. Intelligence testing was in vogue from
the 1920s, with surveys conducted by Drs M.L. Fick, C.L. Leipoldt, J.M. Moll, K. Gillis, L. van Schalkwyk, and others. The paper ends with publication in 1967 of the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Care of Mentally Deficient Persons, chaired by Dr A.J. van Wyk, with the assistance of Dr C.H. de C. Murray of the Education Department.


MSHANA, Rogate R (1992) Insisting upon People's Knowledge to Resist Developmentalism, Frankfurt: Verlag für Interkulturelle Kommunikation. pp.117-120 of this doctoral thesis describe the destruction of some abnormal neonates by the Pare in pre-colonial and colonial Tanganyika, based on interviews with older people. The author argues that this made sense in terms of community survival.


MUTWA, Vusamazulu Credo (1964, reprint 1998) Indaba My Children. African tribal history, legends, customs and religious beliefs. Originally printed in South Africa by Blue Crane Books. Reprint Edinburgh: Payback Press. xxi + 696 pp. (Many other reprints exist.) This retelling and discussion of legendary and historical material from the Bantu peoples of Southern Africa aims to educate 'the White man' about the hidden springs of African life, and to correct some misapprehensions. Throughout the legends, some beings with deformities and peculiarities appear. The opening "Sacred Story of the Tree of Life" (pp. 5-41) shows the
Great Mother, Goddess of Creation, as both immortal and imperfect, passing on physical imperfections to her creation (p. 8). There follows the birth of the first deformed child, the call to destroy this child, and its mother's flight (23-40). Saved from death, the baby grows up to be a monstrous and destructive tyrant. The concluding postscript is that "The main reason why the Africans used to destroy crippled and otherwise deformed children was to prevent this fabled tyrant from ever being reborn..." (p. 41)

Among the subsequent characters is Nonikwe, a blind hunchback child whose gift of clairvoyance saved her from the usual fate of being destroyed (pp. 113-117); the ugly hunchback idiot Zozo, who one day paid some people back for their ill treatment (153-154); the impotent and cruel Vamba, and his one-handed, mute mother Luojoyo, who communicated by signs with her one hand (232-239, 261, 313); the deaf-mute Muwende-Lutanana (414-415, 422) and other people who also used sign language (358-359, 574-576); the beautiful albino queen Muxakaza (262-263, 267, 309-313); the blind 'Lost Immortal' Lumukanda (159, 192, 203, 257-258, 342); the idiot tokoloshes, and their origins (308, 606-607); and many more, e.g. pp. 269, 272, 315, 339.

NOTE: The author Credo Mutwa has been associated in recent years with beliefs about extra-terrestrial 'aliens' and their supposed effects on the world. His views and political position have attracted strong criticisms. However, the retelling of Bantu legends, with some disabled characters, as annotated above, belongs to at an earlier phase in Mr Mutwa's career.


Reports the formation of the Kenya Society for Deaf Children in 1959, the commencement of training for teachers of the deaf in 1964, and subsequent opening of schools.

NESBITT, Murrogh de Burgh (1956) *The Road to Avalon*. Johannesburg: Central News Agency. x + 166 pp. This and the next entry concern the struggle for independent living by Nesbitt (1898-1959), a South African who lost his legs in an accident at age 13. He later taught other physically disabled people to achieve a normal and successful life.


Study of 98 randomly selected healers disclosed a range of beliefs about the causes of deafness, including attribution to malevolent supernatural forces.


Notes that in a recent survey of 4,000 beggars in Lagos and Western State, over 70% were blind.


The harsh life of a Nigerian shanty town somewhere between city and forest, at the close of the colonial period, is described through the eyes of the 'spirit child' Azaro who has returned for another rebirth amidst human beings "all of whom are born blind, few of whom ever learn to see." (p. 1) Mundanely, the narrator Azaro is a sharp-eyed, stubborn little boy whose father earns a pittance as a casual labourer while his mother hawks small items at market or on the roadside. Survival amongst the wretched of the earth, with thrashings at home and school and aimless adult brutality, is interspersed with dream sequences in a spirit world heavily populated by freakish entities. These are often depicted with gross abnormalities, having multiple heads or as midgets or with smashed features (e.g. pp. 15, 25, 134, 136, 274, 305, 326, 455, 459-460, 473), who are eventually understood by Azaro as not being humans (p. 136). Some characters in the 'ordinary' world are more normally disabled. One is an old blind man of the neighbourhood, who perceives that Azaro is a spirit child and who engages in various mischief and magic (pp. 313-314, 318-322, 349, 361-362, 393-400, 415, 420, 428, 454, 456, 464-465, 470, 472, 474-475). Other disabled characters vividly described through the boy's eyes are incidental to the narration, such as the market lunatic (p. 17), the lame woman "deformed in a way I couldn't define" (p. 38), the blind head-priest who is Azaro's grandfather (p. 70), some six-fingered strangers (p. 77), the madman who smashes up Madame Koto's bar (pp. 83-85), the cross-eyed man and "the weird, the drunk, the mad, the wounded, and the wonderful", not to mention the albinos, in the same bar where Azaro hangs out (pp. 87, 89, 102, 106-108, 133). Somewhere between the mystical and the real are various deformed tramps and beggars (pp. 415-416, 422, 429-430, 442-444, 447, 466). Deformity and freakishness are mostly signals warning of mischief and violence in both the slum and the spirit world as perceived by Azaro; yet most of the 'normal' humans also appear more or less grotesque to his eyes. (The entire novel may also be interpreted in political terms).


Reviews developments since the 1950s, with some focus on the activities of the Rev. Dr. Andrew Jackson Foster, a deaf black American who graduated from Gallaudet Univ. and founded a number of schools in West Africa.


PALLEY A & BRUWER T (1946) An analysis of the medical and social conditions of native children attending Groote Schuur Hospital Paediatric Out-Patient Department. *SAMJ* 20: 339-341

Results from interviews with mothers of 61 children (30 up to 1 year, 25 from 1 to 5 years inclusive). Housing and economic status was extremely poor, with seriously adverse consequences for children's health. There were "no facilities in Cape Town for native children, e.g. nursery schools, crèches, etc." Parental control and interest in the children's health was rated "very good". Fathers' interest was "often seen by the fact that he accompanied the mother and child to hospital, often at the loss of a day's pay."


In pp. 82-88 the action of this famous South African novel takes place at Ezenzeleni, the centre founded by Arthur and Florence Blaxall, where blind Africans learn vocational skills, described here as "a wonderful place" (p. 85). The rest of the novel, as is well known, has a background of various political forms of blindness, and some different sorts of rehabilitation.


p. 177, based on Minutes of the Nyasaland Christian Council, sketches the plan from as early as 1922 to open a school for blind students. Eventually a school was opened in 1952, which became known as the Keppel-Compton School for the Blind. By 1958 there were 24 pupils being taught by four Malawian staff, two of whom were blind. (See King & King, above).


Records briefly some concepts of mental handicap and developmental disabilities, with possible causation and examples of treatments, mainly herbal, described by 25 traditional healers at Lusaka, in semi-structured interviews.
Reviews developments since the first speech clinic was opened in 1936 at the Univ. Witwatersrand. See ARON+, MARAIS, and PIENAAR.


PIENAAR P de v (1951) Speech disorganisation. In: EH Cluver (ed) Social Medicine, 563-608, CNA.

Study of traditional beliefs and therapies.

Bulozi, Zambia.

pp. 3-4, para. by WH Nicholas on two institutions for "the deaf and dumb" in Natal.

Includes some consideration of disability in Ben Okri's 'The Famished Road' (q.v.)

"We good-intentioned folk would be well advised to find out something more about the system and ideas which African parents themselves practise or hold regarding this subject" [i.e. the African child] "before we rush in to criticize, interfere with, or offer advice to those who in the long run are mainly responsible - namely, the childrens' own parents." (p.456)

Boston: GK Hall.

pp. 88-96, adverse responses to children perceived as having deformities.


RENNER-LISK, Eleanor (1972) National School for the Deaf (Sierra Leone). In: Seminar on

Report on the Work of the Child Guidance Clinic (University of Cape Town), Rhodes Avenue, Mowbray, Cape Town, for the period 1st February, 1944 to 31st March, 1946. SAMJ 20: 419-421.

Staff, activities and case data are given. During two years, 350 new cases were seen, with an average of 11 attendances per person.


Mental testing conducted on school attenders, in 1916, together with H.R. Loades, in Natal. Adaptations of Binet tests.


Dr Robertson, a missionary in Nigeria, founded this leprosy colony in 1929 and saw its early days. (He died in 1931).


Epidemic of 1919-20 from Leopoldville to Stanleyville.


Relevant to disability are the treatments for fractures and dislocations, trephining, amputations (including superfluous digits in neonates), cauterisation for epilepsy, ophthalmological procedures, and vigorous therapeutic massage.

See e.g. entries for Robert Bowen, Gabriel De la Bat, Frida Hartley, Murrogh Nesbitt, and others, who contributed to special education and rehabilitation services, some themselves having a disability.


Account of activities in Zambia and other countries by a pioneer of open (integrated) education and resource development for blind people.

Mostly on standard treatment methods of the time; some case histories are given from 1927 onwards, treated at Johannesburg.

SAUNDERS GFT (1933) A report on blindness in the Wa and Tumu Districts, Gold Coast, West Africa. *J. Tropical Medicine & Hygiene* 36: 5-6.

Compiled from official records. Ch. 11, pp. 361-87, reviews Social Services, i.e. Health and Sanitation, Education, and Missions.


Papers in French and English. (English version listed above under "Mental Disorders").

Brief review, with photographs, of a printed report (1863-1943) of the Dominican Schools for the Deaf, Cape Town.

SCHRAM, Ralph (1971) *A History of the Nigerian Health Services*. Ibadan UP.  
See chapter 23 "The care of the handicapped", pp. 378-89. Some details are also given of early institutional care for leprosy patients, pp. 230-36.

SCHWEINFURTH G (1873) *The Heart of Africa*. Transl. EE FREWER. London: Sampson Low, Marston et al.  


Well referenced study based on res. of historical texts and interviews during 1992-93 with nearly 200 former leprosy patients and health workers in Mali. Arabic materials by Ahmad Baba, a 16th century W.African scholar, discuss leprosy in some detail (pp. 46-49).

Sets the development of sign language(s) in an historical background of the development of educational services (pp. 80-82).

Data on 112 malformations among 2068 consecutive hospital births in 1956-57.


p. 189, half page on the school for the blind at Akropong, arising from the "the interest taken in a few neglected blind children by the Scottish missionaries Mr F.D. Harker and Mrs Margaret Benzies in 1943", who obtained Braille primers and had several children under instruction. Footnote: "Since 1948 the school has been ably conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Sakyiam Amoako who were trained in Edinburgh as teachers of the blind..."

p. 72, 79-80: work with blind people begun in 1905, first formal blind school opened at Magwero, 1923, by Ella Botes; second at Lwela in 1930s, third at Johnston Falls, 1940. School for 'deaf and dumb' opened at Magwero, 1955, by Ella Botes, assisted by Shenard Chitsala.

SOUTH AFRICAN National Council for the Blind (1930) First Biennial Report and
Established in March 1929, the National Council reports continue to the present (published from Pretoria since 1941), constituting a substantial formal record of work for, with and by blind people in South Africa.


STANNUS, H.S. (1914) Congenital anomalies in a native African race. Biometrika 10: 1-24 + plates. Medical Officer, Nyasaland, discussing the types of congenital anomalies he met during 7 years, with some case details, drawings and photographs. Mentions (p.5) "a Mongol Idiot aged 4 years in W. Nyasa district" (one of the earliest identifications of Down's syndrome in Africans).


THOMAS, Patricia W (1956) Impressions of the mission field. Physiotherapy 42: 180-182. Short account by physiotherapist, working at Kampala with some children having polio paralysis. "For my first few months in the country I was trying hard to dispel the superstition that poliomyelitis was 'caused by an injection'. African, Indian and English parents would patiently relate their children's histories and I in my ignorance would say, with no little arrogance, that the injection [usually quinine into the buttocks, against malaria] had nothing to do with it. I would be wiser now. For it is acknowledged that once the virus has gained entrance to the body there is a relation between inflamed muscle tissue and subsequent residual paralysis."

Numerous folktales and direct or indirect comments about disability and disabled people, e.g. pp. 46-49 (blind or deaf), 54-57 (sign language), 60 (blind man), 93-94 (abnormal infants), 98, 122-124 (half creatures), 178, 196-198 (blind man, woman with leprosy), 216-218 (fool), 235-238, 351-354 (refusal to walk), 512-513, 530-540 [145-152].


Turnbull lived with and studied the Mbuti people in the Ituri forest of the eastern Congo. They had excellent craft skills in their environment, but were not used to making crutches for lame people. Turnbull made crutches and demonstrated them with an African colleague and with some able-bodied children. After some doubts and fears, a congenitally disabled 10-year-old girl, Lizabeti, was persuaded to try the crutches. She managed to get upright and walk with them, to the interest and delight of the village (pp. 238, 241-243).


Between 1964 and 1967, Turnbull studied the Ik people in the mountains of northern Uganda. Through socio-economic changes, the Ik were reduced practically to starvation, and Turnbull saw the disappearance of what he had believed to be 'normal' human care for weak, disabled or elderly people, and its replacement by cruel teasing and abandonment to starvation (pp. 112-14, 131-37, 225-29, 267). Turnbull was well known for unconventional approaches and interpretations, but there is no reason to think that he fabricated his reports of Ik behaviour, which he found deeply disturbing.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA. Report of the Commissioner of Mentally Disordered and Defective Persons for the Union of South Africa (Report of the Commissioner for Mental Hygiene) for 1919 [-1939]. Cape Town, Pretoria, 1921 [-1940]

UNION OF S. AFRICA (1929) Report of Interdepartmental Committee on Mental Deficiency.


WAREHAM, Mrs (1908) "Mukondo". The Messenger (Belfast) No. 1 - Vol. IX (new series), April-May. One page account, with photo, of a young deaf African girl found at the Garanganze Mission Station, Mambadina (Northern Rhodesia) through which Mrs Wareham passed on a journey. "Having been associated with children similarly afflicted", Mrs Wareham persuaded the girl's parents to part with her, which they did apparently without any interest, as little Mukondo had been cared for by her grandmother. Mukondo was reported to be now much happier, and Mrs Wareham hoped that "in time she will learn to express herself in writing, and perhaps even in speech."

WAREHAM HE (1918) Pioneer problems at Mbereshi. WTC No.85 (Jan.) 3-4. Leprosy. See also WTC No.87 (Jly 1918) 56.

WATSON, Marjorie Tennant (1957) Kindly Light: memories of a blind worker for the blind. Fish Hoek: privately printed. [60 pp]

WERNER, Alice (1933) Myths & Legends of the Bantu. London: Harrap. Careful account with explanatory material and comparison of different versions, having some 'folkloric disablement' items. Noting the risk of possession by an avenging spirit if the corpse of a man killed in battle was not cut open before it began to swell, Werner points out (p.100) that this had been misreported by colonial writers as 'atrocities' and 'mutilation'. Stories of 'pretended stupidity' by Huveane are given (p.158f.), a note on albinos (p.174) and material on "were-wolves, half-men, gnomes, goblins and other monsters" (pp. 195-205, also 175-178). The Tokolotshe is mentioned on p.289.
See ARON+


After some broader remarks, and discussion of the issue of separate or integrated education, Wilson described a village school that he visited in a remote part of Northern Rhodesia [Zambia]. "The blind school, made of sun-dried bricks under the thatch, was built by the village people for less than 650 pounds. Thirty-two blind children attend, some coming daily from neighbouring huts, and others from more remote villages, living in 'round houses', each under a 'hut chief'. There are two teachers, both village men, who had a year's special training at the central school for the blind. One teaches full time at the school while the other spends part of his time on a bicycle visiting villages within a radius of fifty miles, getting to know all the blind, and laying the foundations of a simple after-care system ... There are formal lessons, but the classroom is part of the village and open to its sounds and life ... When they have finished this schooling, they will not be scholars, though some reach standard five in the general curriculum, but they will know every inch and every activity of their village. They will be part of their community because they have never left it." (pp. 65-66)


(ZAMBIA.) *Education in Northern Rhodesia. A report an recommendations prepared by the UNESCO Planning Mission 28th September - 2nd December 1963.* Lsk. (pp. 23-24 refers to slow learners)