

## CHAPTER I

### SOUTHERN BACKGROUND

FUNDAMENTAL to an evaluation of any social experiment, such as the stimulation of library service to the public, is an understanding of the geographic, economic, educational, social, and cultural background of the area in which the experiment is undertaken. This is particularly necessary in the case of the region commonly designated "the South," because of its many differences from other regions of the United States and because of the dual institutions which it maintains for two different races. The situation is further complicated by the fact that, although historically there was the South of the Civil War, with its definite boundary lines and political ideas, there are today a Southeast and a Southwest, which are significantly different in many ways while strikingly similar in others. They include and exclude much of the South of that period, and conform to newer patterns of regionalism as it is now generally conceived in the nation at large.<sup>1</sup>

Although the historic South is divided, in the newer regionalism, into a Southeast and a Southwest, for the purposes of this study the term "South" will be applied to a group of eleven states—Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Arkansas—which, with the exception of Arkansas and a part of Louisiana, lie east of the Mississippi River. These states, although they differ in many essentials, possess sufficient elements of homogeneity in geography, climate, rainfall, population, agricultural and industrial interests, educational development, and economic resources to warrant their inclusion in a single area. Texas, in which one of the demonstration counties is located, while a part of the South of the Civil War, is excluded from this discussion of the southern background and placed

<sup>1</sup> H. W. Odum, "Southern Regions," manuscript to be published in 1935-36 by the University of North Carolina Press.

in the Southwest because in a number of important respects<sup>2</sup> it is typical of that region rather than the Southeast.

#### GEOGRAPHIC ASPECTS

Certain conditions and situations which are essential to the evaluation of this experiment in library service characterize the South and differentiate it from other major regions. At the head of a list of such conditions may be placed those embraced under the concept of geography. It has long been held by certain students of society that the activities of people are definitely related to the area in which they live, and that the work of a people profoundly shapes their culture or civilization. The peculiar culture of the South, according to this theory, is largely conditioned by a long, hot growing season, an abundant rainfall, and rich soil—conditions which, in combination with other considerations, make possible the growing of cotton. The Cotton Belt, extending from eastern North Carolina to western Texas, constituting less than 3 per cent of the total land area of the world, is the one place in which these characteristics are so united that, in the past, it has grown about 55 per cent of the cotton of the world.<sup>3</sup> And the growing of cotton involves, as the record in the South only too tragically reveals, a vast amount of cheap hand labor which is supplied largely by white and colored tenant farmers under systems of high credit and absentee landlordship.<sup>4</sup>

While the student of geography will rightly insist that from Virginia through Alabama there are several distinct geographical areas, ranging from the tidewater regions, through the coastal plains, the piedmont regions, and the mountain plateaus to the mountain highlands, each with its variant environment, work, and culture, still the one preponderant pattern of the agricultural and economic life of most of the southern states has been largely shaped by the fact that a combination of conditions makes the South a region which is

<sup>2</sup> R. B. Vance, *Human Geography of the South* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1932), chap. xiii, "The South Meets the West."

<sup>3</sup> O. E. Baker, "The Agricultural Regions of North America," *Economic Geography*, III (January, 1927), 50-86.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Vance, *op. cit.*, p. 192 ff., for a discussion of the "cotton system."

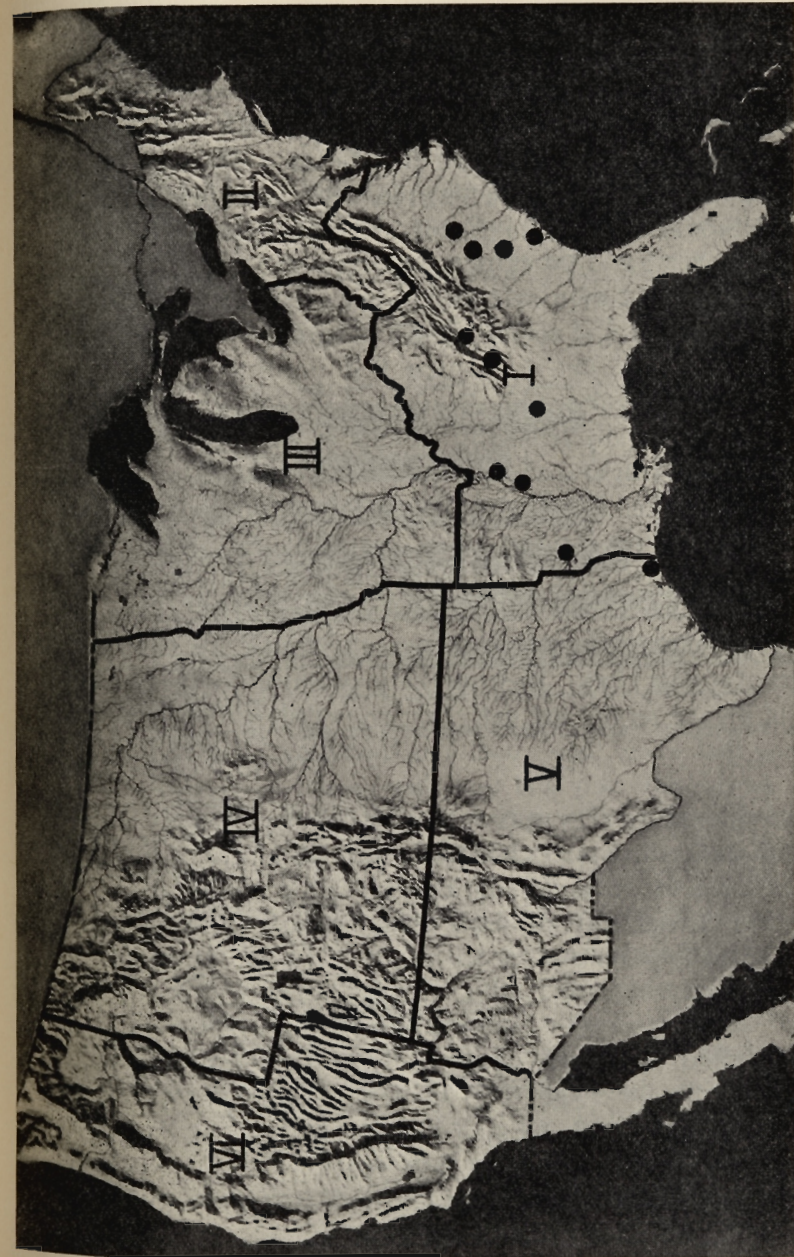


FIG. 1.—Map showing regional divisions of the United States: I, Southeast; II, Northeast; III, Middle States; IV, Northwest; V, Southwest; and VI, Far West. (Based on H. W. Odum, "Southern Regions," manuscript to be published by the University of North Carolina Press in 1935-36.) The circles show the location of the eleven Rosenwald demonstration counties. (Map used through the courtesy of the University of North Carolina Press.)

supremely favorable to cotton cultivation and in which, for a significantly large part of the population, cotton is the arbiter of work, play, and most that enters into the making of the society which it largely supports. This does not mean that the South is homogeneous, that it is not diversified, that it is "solid."<sup>5</sup> The vast region stretching from Cape Charles, Virginia, to Brownsville, Texas, is heterogeneous as well as homogeneous, and contains large subregions in which timber, naval stores, rice, tobacco, sugar, fruits, and other products displace cotton as a major, immediate interest. Manufacturing, shipping, and mining, as well as agriculture, are also carried on extensively. But the Cotton Belt constitutes by far the greatest single subregion in the South; and the culture which characterizes it profoundly influences, though in varying degrees, the culture of the South as a whole.

The economic and social development of the region is also affected by two other factors incident to its geography—submarginal land and soil erosion. Both are fairly characteristic of parts of the South, and give rise to serious problems concerning the ability of the sections affected to support satisfactory standards of living and public services of various kinds. Their specific implications for the development of library service are not clear; nevertheless, the conviction is strong that where these conditions exist they affect all forms of public service adversely and that they cannot be overlooked in a study of this nature. The state of New York is buying up such lands for reforestation and recreational uses in order to develop its program of conservation of natural resources and to avoid the support of services through state subsidies which the taxes of the areas are not sufficient to provide.

#### POPULATION

In any effort to *place* the library in the southern setting, population constitutes the major consideration, not only because of its significance in all social and economic phenomena, but because of the problem of two races which it presents in the South and certain characteristics of the population itself which differentiate it

<sup>5</sup> H. W. Odum, *An American Epoch* (New York: Henry Holt, 1930), chap. ii, "These Southern States."

from the population pattern of the nation as a whole. These characteristics are so important that they require special consideration.

First of all, the white South is predominantly a South of early native stock. There has been little or no infiltration of foreign elements within the past one hundred years, the percentage of foreign born ranging from a low of three-tenths of 1 per cent in North and South Carolina to a high of 4 per cent in Florida. The average for the United States is 9 per cent, and the high for the nation is 25.4 per cent in New York. Nowhere in the South has there been such an invasion of Northern European stocks, with their varying insti-

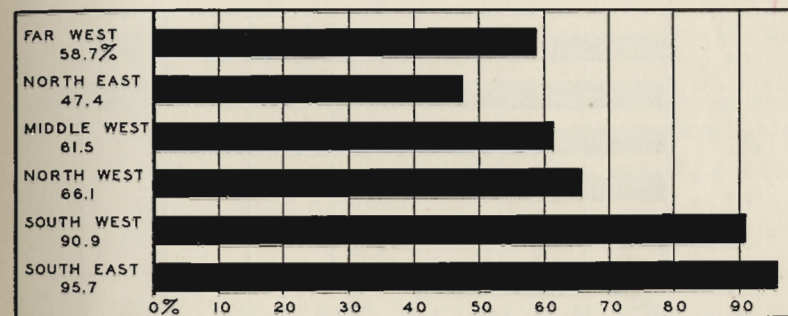


FIG. 2.—Percentage of total white population which is native born of native parents. (Data from the U.S. Census of 1930.)

tutions, ideals, and cultures, as there has been, for example, in Wisconsin or Massachusetts or the Dakotas; nor has there been the migration from New England to the South comparable to that from New England to Michigan or Kansas or the Pacific Northwest. This is even more evident in the mountain areas of the South, where survivals in speech and folk song of the Elizabethan era are still detected, and where the theological ideas of the English, the Scotch-Irish, and the Germans, who populated Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, still largely prevail.

In the second place, according to the 1930 census, of the 11,891,143 Negroes in the United States, 7,978,473, or 67 per cent, live in the South; and they constitute 31.3 per cent of the total population. The range in the percentage of Negro population in the individual

states is from 8.6 per cent in Kentucky to 50.2 per cent in Mississippi. The presence of two races in numbers so nearly equal gives rise to many situations which call for special adjustments and adds to the financial burden upon the comparatively limited financial resources of the South because of the provision of dual institutions for education and other essential services which it entails.

Again, the population of the South is predominantly rural. Of the ninety-six metropolitan areas of the country having populations ranging upward from 100,000, only sixteen are in the South. New Orleans with 458,762 inhabitants and Louisville with 307,745 are

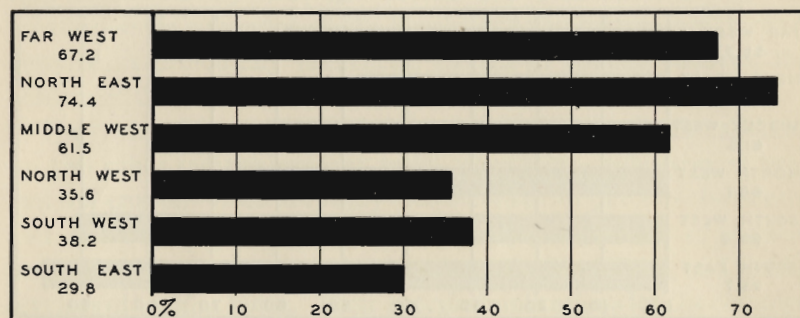


FIG. 3.—Percentage of total population which is urban. (Data from the U.S. Census of 1930.)

its two largest cities. Seventy per cent of its population lives in the open country or in towns of less than 2,500. This is far above the average of 44 per cent for the country, and of Rhode Island, where the percentage drops to 7.6. And in addition to being rural, the population is largely agricultural. The eleven states under consideration contain 38 per cent of the farms and 40 per cent of the farm population of the nation, although they constitute only 21 per cent of the total population. In these respects, the South is a region of country-dwellers whose livelihood depends principally upon the products of the farm—products in the main in the form of raw materials for which the producers receive comparatively slight net returns.

Two other facts concerning population merit consideration: (1) the South has steadily lost a greater number of its inhabitants to

other regions than it has received in return; and (2) the ratio of children in its population to adults is remarkably high. Both facts profoundly affect the development of the region.

Odum,<sup>6</sup> of the University of North Carolina, places the loss of population by the South to other regions since 1900 at 2,500,000. In this respect, the South serves as a breeding and training ground for the Nation. With its inadequate economic resources, it rears and trains many of its young men and women only to lose them to other states just at the period when their productive abilities are greatest. Thus, it is impoverished to the extent that this exchange is uneven. Gee,<sup>7</sup> of the University of Virginia, in a study of the barriers to research in the South, points out another aspect of this loss. He shows the drain from it of many of its potential leaders to other states, particularly in the fields of science and scholarship—a drain which is strikingly reflected in the pages of *American Men of Science* and *Who's Who in America*, and for which other states make far from adequate compensation in return.

The significance of the fact that the percentage of persons nineteen years of age or under is greater in the South than in any other region cannot be overemphasized. In 1930 the percentage of persons in this age group in the United States was 38.8, while for the South the corresponding figure was 45.7 per cent. The percentage of persons of similar age for California was only 30.4. The situation may be stated more concretely by the use of political units. North Carolina, with a population of 3,275,000, has approximately 1,600,000 children under the age of twenty. Chicago, with a population greater by 100,000, has 1,400,000 children of like age, or 200,000 less. If a similar population group of 3,275,000 is taken from the total population of California, it would contain only approximately 975,000 children under the age of twenty, or 625,000 less.

When this condition is related to the provision of library service or educational facilities, the significance is vividly apparent. In Walker County, Alabama, one of the demonstration counties, the percentage of the total population under the age of twenty mounts

<sup>6</sup> Odum, "Southern Regions," *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> Wilson Gee, *Research Barriers in the South* (New York, London: Century Co., 1932).

to 50.5, or nearly a third above the average for the nation. In Marin County, California, whose county library system was visited for comparison, it drops to 26.2, or about one-third below the average. In the former county there is only one person twenty years of age or older to provide funds for library service and for the educational requirements of one person nineteen years of age or less. In the latter there are three adults to provide for one child. When it is kept in mind that two sets of schoolhouses, libraries, and other institutions have to be maintained in the Alabama county, the difficulties of providing such services and facilities become even more sharply emphasized.

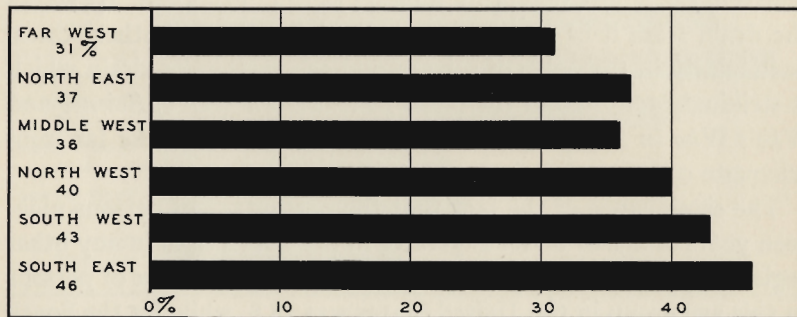


FIG. 4.—Percentage of total population which is under twenty years of age. (Data from the U.S. Census of 1930.)

#### WEALTH AND INCOME

The support of libraries in a given state or section bears a very definite relation to its accumulated wealth or current income with which such service may be provided. Although the South possesses a superabundance of natural resources, nevertheless its true wealth, measured by any of the ordinary standards by which actual wealth or ability to support institutions is determined, falls far below the average for the nation.

The character of the South's natural resources, and the part which agriculture and industry play in relation to the production and accumulation of wealth, are matters which have a direct relationship to the region's social and cultural well-being. The latter cannot be considered apart from the former.

Industrially, the advance made in the South during the past three decades, especially in the manufacture of textiles and tobacco, and in the development of water power, has been phenomenal. These industries, however, have grown in what otherwise is an agrarian setting. In North Carolina there is one county, largely rural, which contains one hundred cotton mills having the third largest number of spindles of any county in the nation, and 58 per cent of the producing spindles in cotton manufacture were to be found in the southeastern area in 1929. The area also produced in that year 90 per cent of the tobacco utilized in the manufacture of cigarettes. In the manufacture of furniture, it has developed highly concentrated cen-

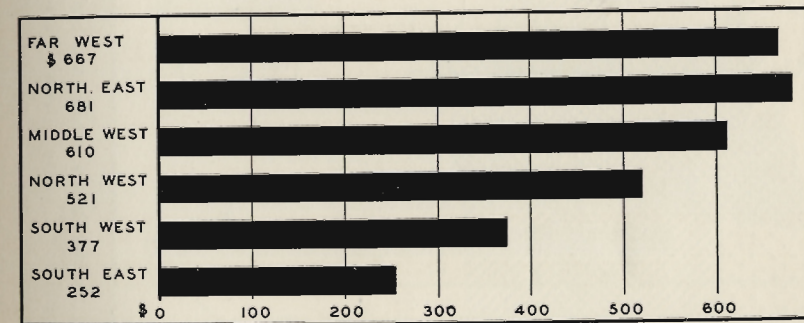


FIG. 5.—Average annual per capita income, 1929-33. (Based on data from Brookmire Economic Service and U.S. Census of 1930.)

ters which may be compared favorably with the best in other areas. Nevertheless, in 1929 the region received less than one-fourth of its income from manufacturing; and the annual income of its industrial wage-earners ranged from \$627 in Georgia to \$968 in Kentucky, the average for the country at large being \$1,139.<sup>8</sup> Industry in the South is concerned in the large with the turning-out of crude products, on which the money return is comparatively lower than that from highly finished products; and in many instances the income on capital invested goes to outside investors for the enrichment of other sections.

Space is not available in a summary of this nature to present an adequate statement concerning agriculture in the South and its rela-

<sup>8</sup> Based on data from the *U.S. Census of Manufacturing, 1929*.

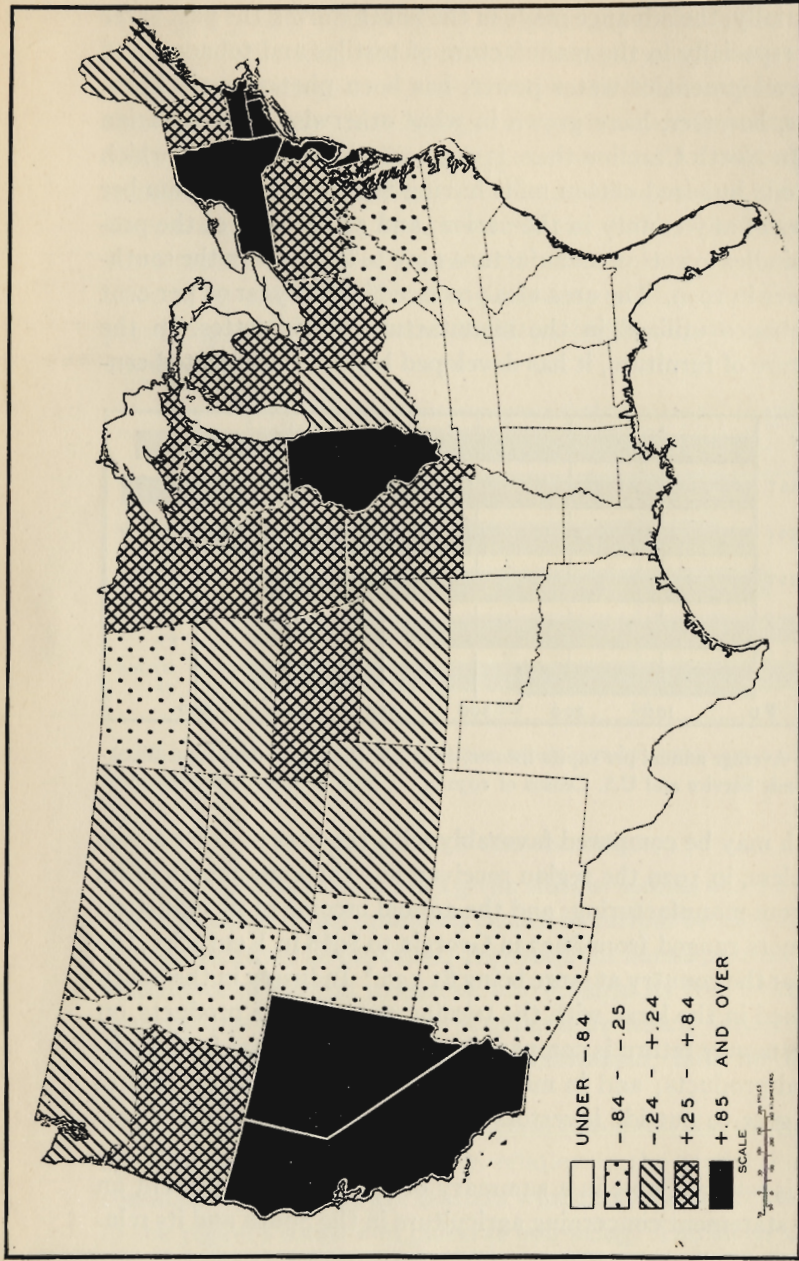


FIG. 6.—Index of relative wealth. (Based on per capita annual income, median value of owned homes, per capita true wealth, per capita savings deposits, life insurance per capita, postal receipts per capita.) (Goode Base Map No. 110, published by the University of Chicago Press, used by permission.) The index is computed in standard score units. Scores above the average of the group are positive (+), and those below the average are negative (-). States scoring under  $-.84$  (white on the map) rank lowest in wealth; those scoring from  $-.24$  to  $+.24$  are near the average; and those scoring  $+.85$  and over rank highest. For a discussion of the derivation and use of the standard score, see Karl Holzinger, *Statistical Methods for Students in Education* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1928).

tion to wealth. A few major considerations must be mentioned, however. First of all, it must be remembered that soil, climate, and rainfall are conditioning factors in the southern agricultural economy. The Southeast and Southwest constitute the greatest cotton-growing section in the world, and the Southeast produces more than a fourth (28.3 per cent in 1933) of the tobacco grown in the United States. Both are cash crops which require a great deal of hand labor, their cultivation lending itself to a tenancy régime which tends to the impoverishment of tenant and land alike. In 1933, 27 per cent of all the crop land in the South was devoted to the cultivation of

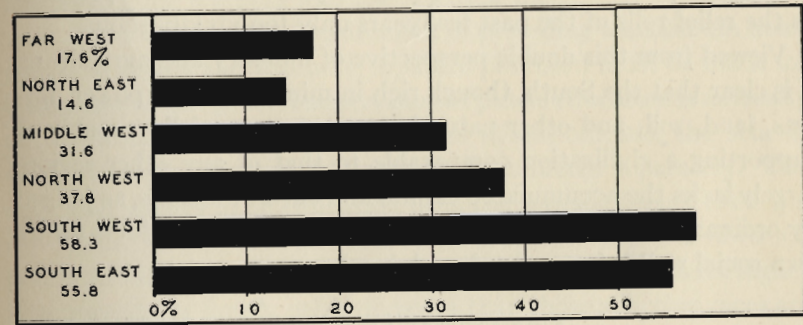


FIG. 7.—Percentage of farms which are operated by tenants and croppers. (Data from the U.S. Census of 1930.)

cotton and tobacco, and over half of its cultivators were tenants rather than owners. The number of tenants in the South, already alarmingly high, is steadily increasing, with the ratio of white tenants gaining on that of Negroes.

The whole cotton-tobacco economy places a premium upon the growing of commodities that cannot be consumed as food, that are usually thrown on the market during a brief period, and whose price is determined largely by world, rather than local, markets.<sup>9</sup> These practices have been modified by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, but it remains to be seen what the permanent effect of these modifications will be.

The tenant, by the very nature of his lease, has slight interest in

<sup>9</sup> Peter Molyneux, *What Economic Nationalism Means to the South* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1934).

the improvement of the land he cultivates. He usually secures his food and supplies on credit from his landlord or "time" stores at prices that frequently run as high as 25 or 30 per cent above the cash price; and at the end of the year, when his cotton or tobacco has been placed on the market, he often finds himself still indebted to his landlord or to the "time" store. The share cropper, constantly on the move from farm to farm, rarely builds up the land he rents or becomes a home-owning citizen through whose interest and support a sound social structure with essential institutions, such as substantial homes, schools, libraries, and churches, can be built. His status, always unstable, becomes tragically so in times of depression, as the relief rolls of the past few years only too vividly show.

Viewed from this double perspective of industry and agriculture, it is clear that the South, though rich in minerals, water power, forests, land, soil, and other natural resources potentially capable of supporting a civilization comparable to that of any other region, largely lacks the accumulated capital and current income, as judged by ordinary indexes, to convert these resources into products for its own social well-being and cultural development.

#### EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The significance of what has been said concerning population and wealth is strikingly revealed when the total educational attainment of the South is contrasted with that of other regions. Four aspects of the educational status of the South are so notable that they demand special consideration.

1. It was pointed out earlier that in certain respects the culture of the South, particularly of the mountain highlands, still bears many traces of colonial or frontier days. It has also been indicated that the cotton economy has perpetuated certain elements characteristic of a colonial policy in which raw materials are produced and exchanged for supplies, finished products, and invested capital. In these respects, there has been what, for lack of a better term, may be called "historical lag" in the educational development of the South. This is true in spite of the tremendous educational gains which have been recorded since the turn of the century, and even though the educational facilities of certain urban centers in the South present no very great differences from those in other regions.

2. The second major consideration may be stated very simply. There are more children per 100,000 population in the South to be educated than there are anywhere else in America. The birth-rate of the nation, both of whites and Negroes, reaches its maximum in the area. This makes it necessary to build, equip, and maintain a maximum number of schoolhouses and to employ a maximum number of school teachers per 100,000 population, which no other region has to equal. Obviously, the converse of this condition is true, namely, there are fewer adults per 100,000 population to provide for building, equipping, and maintaining these schoolhouses and for supporting the teachers who teach within them.

3. In addition to this requirement of providing a maximum number of buildings and teachers, separate provision must be made for two races. While general supervision of public education is normally provided in the South through white school officials, the schools themselves for whites and Negroes are conducted separately. This dual load applies to all education from the lowest through the highest schools, as well as to all other cultural agencies, such as libraries, playgrounds, and recreational centers. In the institutions for higher education in the South, other divisions than those affecting races are to be noted. First of all, there are state-supported colleges and universities, and church or private colleges and universities. Next, in the state-supported systems of higher education, there are separate colleges for men, for women, for technical training, and for liberal training. The same principle largely carries over into private institutions as well, leading altogether to a multiplicity of comparatively weak institutions that makes extremely difficult the building-up of scholarly faculties and the provision of technical, scientific, and research equipment essential to the adequate training of students.

4. Obviously, lack of accumulated wealth and current income accentuates the situation. The results of this lack are evidenced in small per capita investment in school buildings, in inadequate equipment and libraries, in short school terms, in low salaries for teachers in the public schools, and in the small number of institutions of higher education which are able to provide a technical and scientific training sufficiently extended to enable their students to convert the rich agricultural and natural resources of the region into means for meeting its social and cultural needs. In subjects such as animal

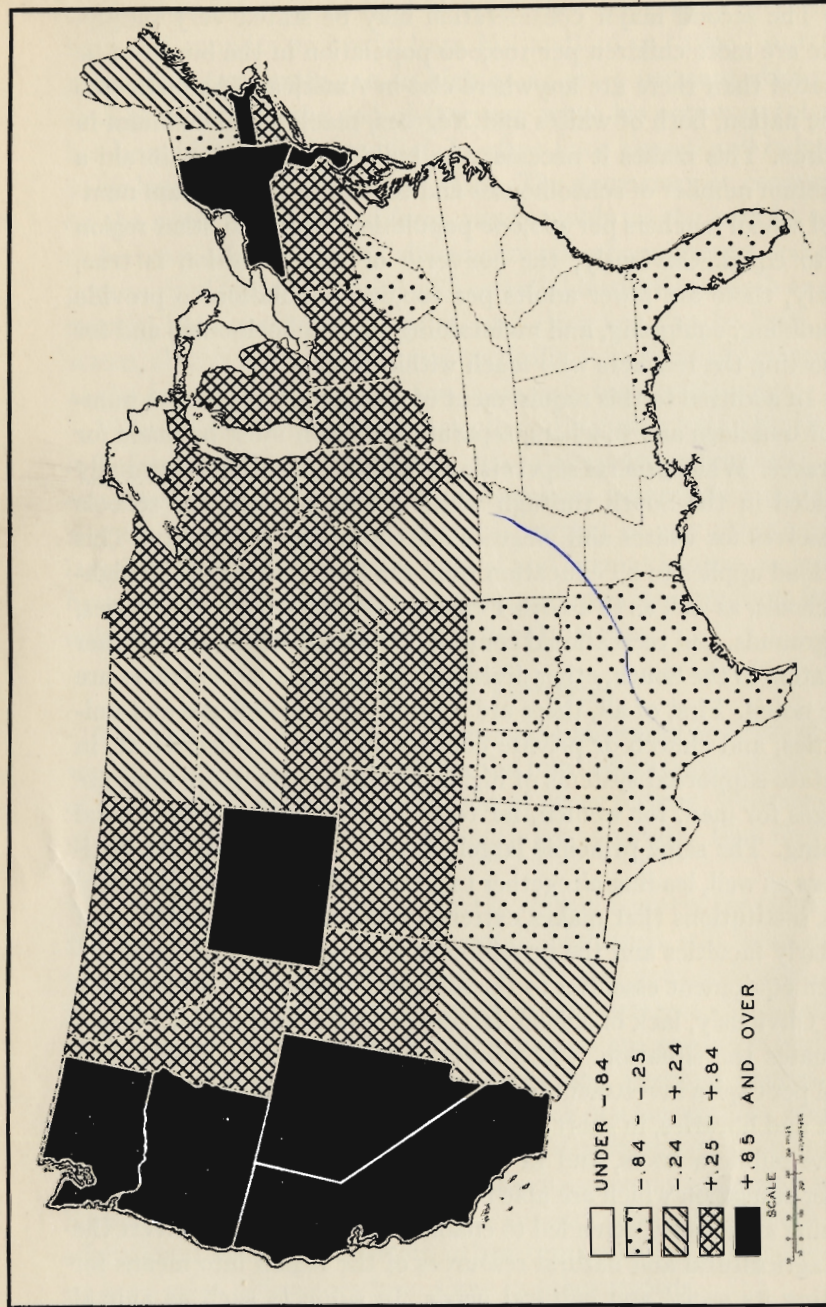


FIG. 8.—Index of public education, 1932. The index includes four items: average annual teachers' salary, daily expenditure per pupil in average daily attendance, percentage of total public school enrolment which is in secondary schools, and ratio of aggregate days attended to total population five to seventeen years of age, inclusive. For an explanation of the index units, see Figure 6. (Goode Base Map No. 119, published by the University of Chicago Press, used by permission.)

nutrition, plant pathology, soil science, electrical engineering, and metallurgical engineering, for example, subjects of unusual importance to the South because they relate specifically to the development of its natural resources, no departments in southern universities and agricultural and engineering colleges were considered competent in 1934, by a Committee of the American Council on Education, to offer training for the Ph.D. degree.<sup>10</sup>

The relation of tenancy and illiteracy on the one hand to wealth and education on the other is very striking in the South. (Both tenancy and illiteracy, twin ills in any social order, are higher in the South than anywhere else in the nation.) In the case of the Negro, the ratios of tenancy and illiteracy run higher than those for whites, while the possession of wealth and the enjoyment of educational opportunities drop much lower. In a recent publication issued by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, entitled *School Money in Black and White*,<sup>11</sup> this aspect of the southern educational scene is graphically portrayed. According to this publication, the average annual school expenditure for every pupil throughout the nation in 1930 was \$99; the expenditure for white children in the South was \$44.31; for Negro children, \$12.57. Georgia spent an average of \$33.42 for each white pupil, and \$6.38 for each Negro. The expenditure for Negroes in Mississippi dropped still lower, to \$5.45. Figure 9 vividly portrays the disparity of these expenditures.

#### LIBRARIES AND OTHER MEDIA FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF IDEAS

In 1921, at a meeting of the American Library Association at Swampscott, Massachusetts, a number of southern librarians went on an outing to Salem, Massachusetts, a city of 43,000 inhabitants at that time. While there, they were informed that the public library of the city contained 70,000 volumes, that an association library contained 20,000 additional volumes, that the Essex County Law Library possessed 30,000 volumes, and that the library of the Essex Institute located there contained 105,000 volumes and a

<sup>10</sup> American Council on Education, *Report of Committee on Graduate Instruction* (Washington, 1934).

<sup>11</sup> Julius Rosenwald Fund, *School Money in Black and White* (Chicago, 1935).



large number of pamphlets. A study of the holdings of these libraries and of similar libraries in the state of North Carolina revealed the fact that the public and association libraries of Salem contained more books for the use of the public than all the public libraries of Asheville, Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Durham, Raleigh, Goldsboro, and Wilmington, North Carolina; that the law library of Essex County contained more volumes than the library of the Supreme Court of North Carolina and the prin-

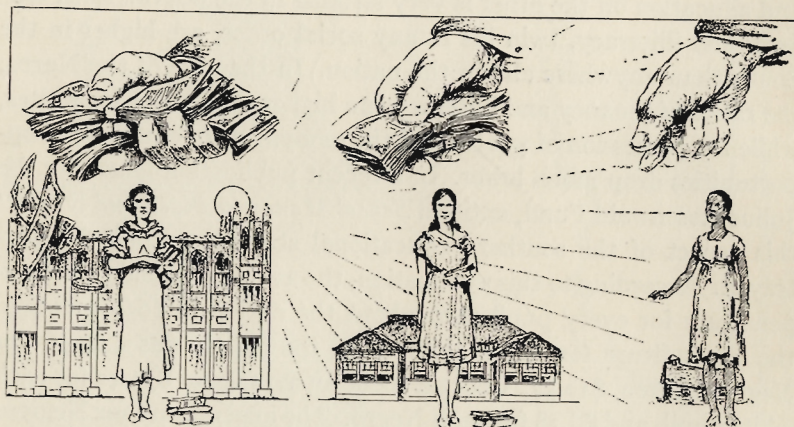


FIG. 9.—Annual per capita expenditures for schools, 1930. Reading from left to right: average for the United States, \$99.00; for whites in the South, \$44.31; for Negroes in the South, \$12.57. (Used by permission of the Julius Rosenwald Fund.)

icipal law schools of the state; and that the library of the Essex Institute contained more volumes and pamphlets than the University of North Carolina Library.<sup>12</sup>

This was in North Carolina in 1921. The question may be pertinently asked: How does the South as a whole rank today in the possession of library resources and other media for the dissemination of ideas, such as bookstores, rental libraries, magazines, newspapers, radios, telephones, motion-picture theaters, churches, and organizations whose activities involve an extensive use of library facilities? The answer is that, except in the case of churches, the South ranks low. Of the 45,130,093 people in the United States who are without

<sup>12</sup> University of North Carolina *News Letter*, August 3, 1921.

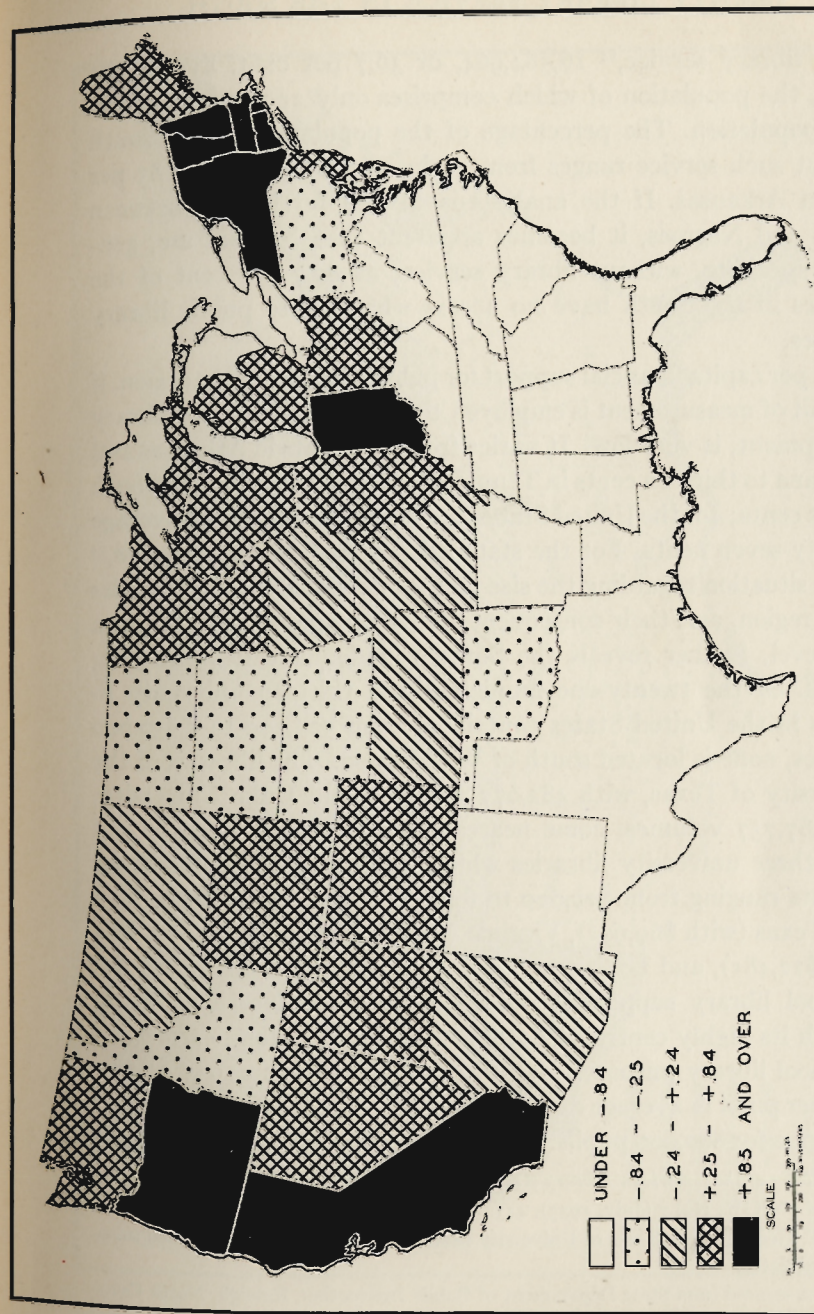


FIG. 10.—Index of library development in the United States, 1929. The index is based on the following six items, equally weighted: percentage of population registered, and per capita figures for annual circulation, total annual expenditure, annual expenditure for books, total number of volumes held, and number of volumes added in one year. The data are from "Statistics of Public, Society, and School Libraries," U.S. Office of Education *Bulletin No. 37* (1930); for an explanation of the index units see footnote to Figure 6 on page 10. (Goode Base Map No. 110, published by the University of Chicago Press, used by permission.)

public library service,<sup>13</sup> 16,584,964, or 36.7 per cent, live in the South, the population of which comprises only 21 per cent of the total population. The percentage of the population in the South without such service ranges from 55 in North Carolina to 85 per cent in Arkansas. If the analysis is carried further, as between whites and Negroes, it becomes apparent that Negroes are, generally speaking, without library service, as 80.7 per cent of the Negroes in the South have no access whatever to public library facilities.

The per capita financial support for public libraries in the region, if this unit of measurement is employed to reflect the status of library development, is very low. It varies from two cents in Arkansas and Louisiana to thirteen cents in Tennessee. The average for the South is eight cents; for the United States, including the South, the average is thirty-seven cents. For the state holding first rank, it is \$1.08.<sup>14</sup>

The situation regarding the size and support of scholarly libraries in the region, and their consequent ability to support research at a high level, further reveals the South's inadequacy in library resources. Of the twenty-one municipal and thirteen university libraries in the United States containing from 500,000 to 3,250,000 volumes, none is located south of Washington. The libraries of the University of Texas, with 482,077 volumes, and Duke University, with 387,737 volumes, come nearest to these. Again, in a list of thirty-three university libraries which in 1933-34 spent for books amounts ranging from \$20,000 to \$215,737, only Duke (with \$74,364), Texas (with \$69,992), Virginia (with \$40,264), North Carolina (with \$22,481), and Louisiana State (with \$21,527) were included.<sup>15</sup>

School library support is on a similar basis. North Carolina, through its highly centralized state educational system, earmarked for school library purposes each year of the biennium 1933-35 two cents per pupil in average daily attendance—a total of approximately \$16,000 for 800,000 pupils.<sup>16</sup> The schools, locally, through various

<sup>13</sup> *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, XXIX, No. 5 (May, 1935), 254.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, XXIX, No. 7 (July, 1935), 443.

<sup>15</sup> J. T. Gerould, "Statistics of University Libraries," 1933-1934 (unpublished mimeographed data).

<sup>16</sup> Data secured from State Department of Public Instruction, Raleigh, North Carolina, Mrs. Mary Peacock Douglas, supervisor of the school libraries.

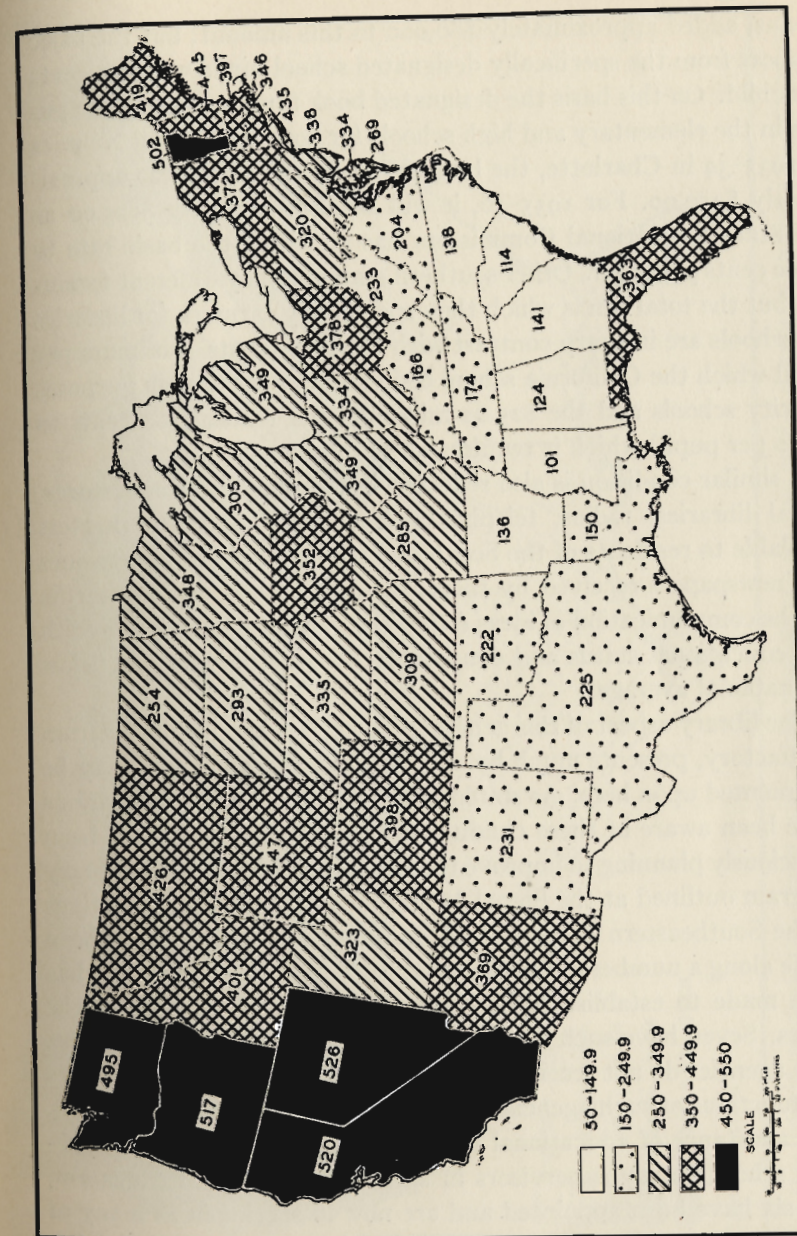


FIG. 11.—Combined circulation per thousand population of forty-seven national magazines. (Circulation data for 1931, from *International Yearbook, Editor and Publisher*; population of 1930.) (Goode Base Map No. 110, published by the University of Chicago Press, used by permission.)

means, added approximately \$80,000 to this amount; but the basic support from the specifically designated school funds was two cents per child. On this basis the designated book fund for the 17,500 pupils in the elementary and high schools for both whites and Negroes in 1933-34 in Charlotte, the largest city in the state, was approximately \$350.00. For 1935-36, it will be approximately \$525.00 as the State Educational Commission has increased the basic rate to three cents per pupil. Other southern states employ different formulas, but the total funds which they specifically earmark for libraries for schools are in sharp contrast with the forty cents' minimum per pupil which the California school code requires for library purposes for city schools and the \$25.00 minimum per teacher (60 cents to \$1.00 per pupil) which it requires for rural schools.<sup>17</sup>

A similar condition is also reflected in the number of bookstores, rental libraries, radios, telephones, and moving-picture theaters available to residents of the South and in the number of magazines and newspapers received by them. Ranked indices of these media for the communication of ideas follow the general patterns of wealth and educational status and consistently reveal the South as below the national average.

The library aspect of this general picture, however, while far from satisfactory, presents much by way of encouragement and may be commented upon here. As stated in the Preface, southern librarians have been aware of these conditions for some time and have been consciously planning to improve the situation. Following the library program outlined at the Signal Mountain and subsequent meetings of the Southeastern Library Association, steady progress has been made along a number of fundamental lines. A determined effort has been made to establish library extension agencies in each of the states. Seven have such agencies with regular state appropriations. Two agencies do not receive appropriations, and in two other states the functions of such agencies are limited to the school library field. The assistance of educational foundations has been sought to provide school library supervisors in state departments of education, and six have been appointed and are now in service in as many of the southern states. Close co-operation has been established be-

<sup>17</sup> *Library Laws of the State of California* (1931 ed.), pp. 120-22.

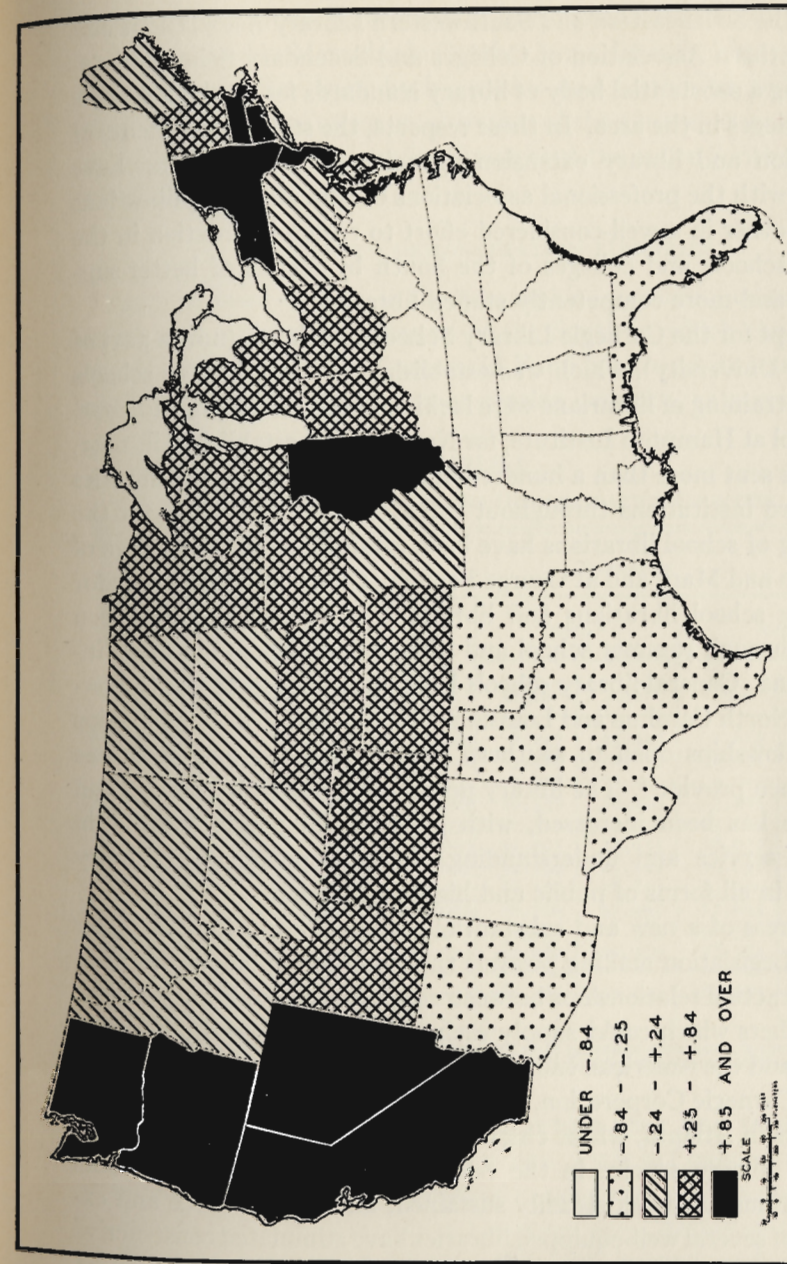


FIG. 12.—Index of communication. (Based on per capita telephone calls per year, number of residence telephones per hundred population, percentage of urban families having radio sets, percentage of rural farm families having radio sets, percentage of non-farm families having radio sets, number of business telephones per hundred population, hotel rooms per thousand population, percentage of farms on hard surfaced roads, number of airports per million population. (Goode Base Map No. 110, published by the University of Chicago Press, used by permission.)

tween the Southeastern and Southwestern Library Associations and the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in developing a substantial body of library standards for the high schools and colleges in the area. In these respects, the state departments of education and library extension agencies on the one hand have united with the professional associations of educators and librarians on the other in a well-considered effort to enrich instruction in the public schools and colleges of the South by means of better-supported and more competently staffed libraries.

Except for the Carnegie Library School at Atlanta (now a part of Emory University), which was established in 1905, library schools for the training of librarians were lacking in the South prior to 1925. A school at Hampton Institute, for Negroes, was established in 1925, and has sent more than a hundred of its graduates into the libraries of Negro institutions throughout the area. Special schools for the training of school librarians have been established at the College of William and Mary and at George Peabody College, and provision for training school librarians and librarians in service has also been made through summer school and library departments in other institutions. General library schools have been opened at the University of North Carolina and Louisiana State University. Scholarships and fellowships open to southern library students and librarians have been provided. The library personnel required by schools and colleges has been increased, with corresponding improvement in library service and understanding of the importance of library service in all forms of public and higher education.

Progress of a new and substantial sort has shown itself in other ways. Legislation making possible the extension of county libraries or contractual relationships between counties without library service with others which could supply such service has generally been enacted; and the American Library Association, through the assistance of the Carnegie Corporation, has appointed a field agent, with headquarters in Atlanta, whose chief concern is the guidance and extension of library service in the South. The interest of educational foundations has been steadily sustained, and the influence and example of several well-equipped libraries have stimulated constructive thinking concerning the entire library program of the region. A

joint meeting of the Southeastern and Southwestern Library Associations, held in Memphis in October, 1934, brought librarians and educators together from both sections and further united efforts directed toward the common objective of the general extension and improvement of library service throughout the entire Southeast and Southwest.

## THE ELEVEN DEMONSTRATION LIBRARIES

Such, in brief outline, is the geographic, economic, educational, social, and cultural background of the South in which the library experiment of the Julius Rosenwald Fund has found its setting. In many respects the eleven demonstration counties, as a group, are

TABLE I  
AREA AND POPULATION OF THE DEMONSTRATION COUNTIES

COUNTY AND STATE	AREA IN SQUARE MILES	POPULATION				
		Total	White*		Negro	
			Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Walker, Ala. . . . .	792	59,445	6,217	45,415	1,615	6,198
Webster, La. . . . .	609	29,458	3,589	12,779	2,034	11,056
Coahoma, Miss. . . . .	530	40,327	5,018	5,451	5,025	30,833
Davidson, N.C. . . . .	569	47,805	16,537	26,093	3,205	2,030
Mecklenburg, N.C. . . . .	597	127,971	57,512	32,436	25,163	12,860
Charleston, S.C. . . . .	923	101,050	34,203	12,035	28,062	26,750
Richland, S.C. . . . .	765	87,667	34,399	15,141	20,097	18,030
Hamilton, Tenn. . . . .	545	159,497	86,509	36,833	33,289	2,866
Knox, Tenn. . . . .	504	155,902	88,709	47,995	17,093	2,105
Shelby, Tenn. . . . .	801	306,482	156,593	22,565	96,550	30,774
Jefferson, Tex. . . . .	920	133,391	80,080	20,289	28,554	4,468
Total . . . . .	7,555	1,255,055	569,366	277,032	260,687	147,970

\* All races except Negro are included; Jefferson, with 2,918 persons of other races, is the only one of the eleven counties having a significant number of persons of races other than white and Negro.

not typical of the general setting in which they find themselves. Their population is predominantly urban. Only in Coahoma County and Webster Parish do those engaged in agriculture outnumber those engaged in industry, and only in Coahoma and Charleston counties do Negroes outnumber whites. Personal income and savings,

longer school terms, better library facilities, less illiteracy and tenancy, and a smaller ratio of persons under twenty years of age to those above, are associated with urban conditions rather than with rural. And libraries for urban whites were established in ten of the counties before the demonstration began. Nevertheless, these counties are a very definite part of the South and are conditioned by the economy and culture surrounding them. The succeeding chapters will describe the work of the libraries in this setting, will evaluate the results of the experiment, and will present recommendations for the future enrichment of the South through the library.

Table I shows the area and population, white and Negro, urban and rural, of each of the counties taking part in the library demonstration. The black disks on the map on page 3 show the approximate location of each of the counties.

## CHAPTER II

### GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF THE LIBRARIES

**N**O LEGAL sanction is necessary for an individual or a group of individuals to organize a book collection and engage in most of the activities which are common to libraries. In such cases, however, the right to hold property, to incur debt, and to engage in various kinds of transactions rest on one or more of the individuals. In order for the library to have a legal entity (to own property, to incur debt, to make contracts, to sue and be sued), it must have recognized standing before the law.

A public library has been defined as one which receives a part of its support from a governmental unit, such as a city, township, school district, or county. These governmental units are creatures of the state and derive their powers from the state. Authority for the governmental unit to contribute to the support of libraries must therefore be specifically stated in the legal structure of the state.

Legal status may be conferred on a library by constitutional provision, legislative enactment (general or special), or through provision of a charter from the state either to the library itself or to a local government.<sup>1</sup> Of 297 public libraries in cities of 30,000 or more population for which he identified the legal basis of organization, Joeckel found that 109 were organized under general state library law, 51 under city or library charters, 31 under special library laws, 21 under city ordinances, and 61 under combinations of several methods.<sup>2</sup>

The legislative basis of the public library is particularly important, since it affects such vital measures as financial support, method of organization, duties, powers, etc. The county library law of California has strongly influenced library legislation in many other states. It has proved to be one of the most satisfactory measures of this

<sup>1</sup> C. B. Joeckel, *The Government of the American Public Library* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935), chap. ii, "Legal Basis of the Public Library."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 73, Table II.