

time, no citizens group can effectively upgrade your library without your all-out support and guidance.

Money is the basis for solving our library problems in North Carolina. In the absence of a sound and understandable plan for library support, such as the unique cooperative system under which our public schools operate, the basic responsibility for library construction and operation has been left up to local government. In some instances the response has been heartening, good examples being right here in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, where there has been a valiant and continuing effort to provide modern library services, and my own little county of Dare, with the highest per capita local expenditure for libraries of any county in the state. In many other counties and cities, however, there has been a marked reluctance on the part of local governing bodies to provide even minimum financing for public libraries. Thus, some counties and communities are approaching the maximum extent of their ability to provide library funds, while many others have so far made only token efforts toward this end.

Obviously the Legislative Commission to Study Library Support, created by the North Carolina General Assembly, will be looking closely at the responsibility of the state in this connection. But lest some of you are already entertaining thoughts that the state is now going to take over your local financial responsibilities, I want to emphasize my belief that the Legislative Commission must also work closely with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners and the North Carolina League of Municipalities as well as with library groups such as yours, and agencies of the Federal Government, in the hope that it can come up with a workable, acceptable, and understandable formula for local-state-federal financing of our public library program.

The basic objective for all of us, as I see it, is to make modern library services accessible to all citizens of North Carolina. The success of these efforts will depend to a large degree on whether an appreciable segment of the informed and interested population in each city and county becomes sufficiently familiarized with, and concerned about, the inadequate status of our libraries in today's changing society. In the final analysis it is largely up to *you* — the public librarians and the library trustees — to spread the facts, generate the interest, and lead the fight for modern library services in your home towns.

NEW VISTAS FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

by

JANE S. HOWELL

In 1966 the State Department of Public Instruction initiated the Demonstration School Libraries Project as one of the activities undertaken under ESEA Title II. The purpose of the project was to supplement library funds with a special allotment in order to enlarge collections for libraries in all media of learning, including books and audio-visual materials.

Superintendents and supervisors were asked to apply for the appropriations. As a result of applications and careful screening, ten schools at three levels were chosen. Selections were made on the basis of existing programs, probabilities of expansion, potential for growth, and accessibility to other schools and communities for observation by interested citizens and school personnel.

Miss Cora Paul Bomar, Director of Educational Media and ESEA II, had done an excellent job of challenging librarians throughout the state with the possibilities of and opportunities for establishing a materials center in their schools. As a result, it was with great anticipation and the desire to see what could be done that librarians of the ten schools began the two-year program.

Administrators, supervisors, principals, faculty members, P.T.A., civic organizations, and interested citizens as well as students helped to launch a program that has, in many situations, opened a new world of learning with the materials center as the focal point of newer media.

Careful planning and direction at the state level with guidelines from the Federal offices have been provided by both Miss Bomar and David Hunsucker, State Library Supervisor.

An important phase of the program has been the publicity. This has been done through the medium of talks, announcements, and visuals presented to civic organizations, teacher groups, principals, advisory councils, boards of education, parent groups, and students, individually and in class groups and organizations.

The newspapers have been cooperative and helpful. Daily newspapers, periodicals, and professional journals have given emphasis to the program. Radio and television stations have been a valuable means of communication.

Brochures published at the state level and from local school systems have been auxiliary avenues of reaching the various school systems and presenting the purposes and programs of the various materials centers.

Teacher involvement is one of the most significant aspects of the project. An awareness of broader experiences of learning and teaching enrichment has come about in many instances. Teachers are happy to share in selection of books and materials. Their knowledge of the curriculum and their understanding of the needs of the children according to individual levels of maturity make their help indispensable. Faculty meetings, grade level meetings, and meetings with department heads help in projecting the purpose of the program and the role of the teacher in the various units. As materials have grown, equipment becomes more varied, services expand and interest increases. In-service workshops are increasing, in many situations at the request of the teacher.

As the project has grown, so has the pupil participation and interest grown. An awareness that the project is for them — the books and other materials are for their use — has stimulated enthusiasm. Reports need no longer be just note-taking from one reference source, but can be a transparency, tape, sound-strip, or other media. Visitors come and pupils take pride in showing their materials center, demonstrating the use of materials and equipment, or taking them to the classroom to see how it is done. Students are the best publicity agents. As a result, parents want to come, tour, and help with the program. Volunteers for conducting tours, providing art exhibits, setting up forums, obtaining additional furnishings, equipment, or "that special *objet d'art*," have come about as a result of librarian, teacher, pupil, and parent communication and understanding.

A survey of the projects was made at the end of the first year. Mrs. Jackie Morris, who conducted the survey, found that teacher participation and pupil use had been outstanding. The foundation has been laid by the first ten schools participating in the projects. Fifteen additional schools were selected in 1967. As the number increases and the

project grows this may be the significant service and new dimension in "education on the move."

CHARLES W. CHESNUTT: TAR HEEL AND SOUTHERN AUTHOR¹

by

JULIAN D. MASON, JR.

It is not my purpose to contend that Charles W. Chesnutt was a great writer who deserves our persistent attention and high acclaim. It is clear to all that Chesnutt's place is among the second rank of American prose writers, even though his best work admirably rewards one's attention and received substantial and encouraging praise from respected critics of his own times. Instead, my purpose is to call attention to the curious fact that Chesnutt is very seldom treated as a Southern writer and, by focusing on his "Southernness," to contend that such a situation inappropriately does a disservice to Chesnutt, to his fiction and its concerns, to the South, and to the integrity and accuracy of histories of Southern literature.

Ironically, Chesnutt has been included in many of the accounts of North Carolina writing even though he has usually been omitted in accounts of Southern writing which do include others whose works are less distinguished; and the State of North Carolina has erected an historical marker honoring him in Cumberland County.

Chesnutt's mother and father were both North Carolinians who had moved to the then Northwest in 1856 in order to escape the oppressiveness of the Southern slavery system. Therefore, Charles' birthplace in 1858 was not the South, but Cleveland, Ohio.² However, after the Civil War, Charles' father felt a strong pull to return to Fayetteville, North Carolina, where Charles' grandfather still lived; and the Chesnatts did move back to Fayetteville in 1866. So for seventeen years, from 1866, when he was eight years old, until 1883, when he was twenty-five, Charles W. Chesnutt lived in the South, growing up, serving his apprenticeship years of life, going to school, working, marrying, and beginning a family. During these important, formative years Chesnutt sank deep roots into the South, roots which were to live and to nourish his ambition, concerns, spirit, conscience, manners, his understanding of life, and (most important here) his writing for the rest of his life.

However, it is important to remember that the experiences of this particular young Southerner were distinctly different from those of most other young Southerners who were to become writers, for he was a Negro and these were the days of Reconstruction. It is also important to remember that these experiences did not keep Chesnutt from developing a deep and very real love and respect for the South and its best aspects, a love and respect which therefore even demanded of him that he use his abilities and the understanding gained from his particular experiences to do what he could to try to help the South.

From the biography which Helen Chesnutt wrote of her father, we learn a good bit about his experiences as a young man in North Carolina and how these affected him.