

The Yorùbá Literary Activities of the Ijebu People during the Late 19th and Early 20th C

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This paper highlights the contributions of the early Ijebu-Yorùbá writers before the popularisation of Yorùbá literary activities. The Ijebu-Yorùbá mentioned here are the present day people occupying the south-eastern part of Yorùbaland. This article discusses some of these Ijebu-Yoruba authors, highlighting their efforts in the early development of Yorùbá language, literature and culture. Their works are in the areas of history of the people, their folk medicine, and worldview.

Introduction

Research into Yorùbá literary history in the late 19th and early 20th centuries shows that most of the Yorùbá writers of this era were of Ègbá and Òyó origins. This list includes people like Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Emanuel Moses, Lìjádù, Josiah Sówándé (Sóbò Aróbíodu), Àjàyí Kóláwole, Ajísafé, John B. Lósi, Salvador, G.O. George, Adénrelé Obasa, Àjàó, and many more. These wrote books, pamphlets, and edited Yorùbá Newspapers during this period. None of these people is of Ijebu ethnic group. The question is what happened to the Ìjèbú-Yorùbá during this period? Could it be that the Ìjèbú people were less receptive of the White man's education? The goal of this paper is to provide an answer to the question. The end product of our research is that the Ìjèbú people, though did not embrace Christianity early enough, wrote a lot of books in the areas of Yorùbá language, literature and culture; it only happens that some of the authors are today known only by name, while many of their works are not readily found in libraries.

First, I would like to talk discuss how the Yorùbá language was reduced to writing; then, I will on some Ìjèbú-Yorùbá authors of the period, providing a brief profile and significance of their work. This paper will also mention the influence of some Ìjèbú newspapers, almanacs and diaries that were authored by Ìjèbú people. The paper will end with a call for people to surrender and archive books written by the Ìjèbú or any other Yorùbá in the early period of western education.

J. F. Adé Àjàyí in "How Yorùbá was reduced to writing"¹ mentions names of European explorers who collected some words in Yorùbá. He also documented linguist who took interest as far back as 1822. Later, missionaries made remarkable efforts in compiling Yorùbá words. But the man the big name in the early documentation of Yoruba language was Àjàyí Crowther. Crowther was the first to preach with Yorùbá language in as far away places as Sierra-Leone. His Journal for Tuesday 9th of January, 1844 had the following entry:

This afternoon at half past four o'clock, I opened the Yorùbá

service in the mission Church at Freetown. the whole proceeding seemed to myself like a dream.²

The Bible passage which Àjàyí Crowther cited that day was taken from St. Luke 1:35. "That holy thing which shall be born of these shall be called the son God."

He translated the passage in Yorùbá thus;

Ohung ohworth ti aobin ni inch reh li aomakpe li Omoh
Olorung.

The orthography was awkward but it was a good start. After this, various meetings were held by the missionaries and linguists especially in Nigeria to perfect the "miracle" of writing performed by Àjàyí Crowther. From this period people started to write in Yorùbá language. The first known poem: Tani Se Jesu? was written by the Rev. Henry Townsend in Abéòkúta in 1848³.

Early Ìjèbú Authors:

The Ìjèbú people are those occupying the South-western part of the Yorùbá nation. These, in essence, are the people in today's Ìjèbú and Remo Divisions of Ògùn State. They share ethno-linguistic identities. Our research shows that the Rev. David Hinderer had brought Christianity to Oba Adémúyewó Fídípòtè, the Awujale of Ìjèbúland in 1854 from Ibadan. However, but the wars between the Ìbàdàn and Ìjàiyè people prevented the growth of the new faith in Ìjèbúland⁴. Those who also brought the words of God to Ìjèbúland after Hinderer included the Rev. James Johnson who himself was an Ìjèbú man nicknamed, "Holy Johnson", "Wonderful Johnson" and "the Pope of Nigeria." John Augustus Òtúnba Payne, another Ìjèbú who was the Registrar of the Highest Court in Nigeria, was from Gbelébùwà Ruling House. But nowhere in Ìjèbúland was Christianity fervently embrace as the Òdúbèlà House in Ìtantèbó in Ìjèbú-Òde. It was after the Magbon War of 1892 that schools were opened in many parts of Ìjèbú-land where reading and writing were introduced. The art of western education produced the following Ìjèbú writers among others during the period under discussion.

"Dr." Joseph Odùmósù: (1863-1911). The contributions of Dr. Joseph Odùmósù to the development of Yorùbá studies: Ìwòsàn, as a case study has been published elsewhere by this author.⁵ We only need to re-state that Odumosu was born in 1863 to the Òdúbèlà family of Ìtantèbó in Ìjèbú-Òde. He was a man of strong character and an eminent leader. He was a noble patriot, a great benefactor of all his people, a prolific writer, midwife, psychiatrist, respected Christian and a curious adventurer. Some of the books which Joseph Odùmósù produced included: Ìwé Íróhín Ìlú-said to be a newspaper, Ìwé Írántú - a History book, Ìwé Egbogi, that is a book of Yorùbá medicine, Ìwé Àlà, a book on dreams, Ìwé Ìwòsàn, a book on cures for ailments, Ìwé Gbédègbéyò. - said to be a dictionary, Ìwé Íròhìn Ìlú, a newspapers, Ìwé Írántú is said to be a history book, Ìwé Gbédègbéyò is a Yorùbá-English Dictionary. What helped Joseph Odùmósù in his writings were his curiosity to learn and his printing press. It is said that he started to learn English language at an advanced age under one Comfort Jákásimi. He died at a relatively young age of 48 in 1911. But the short period was crowded with meritorious deeds in Ìjèbúland to the extent that his name cannot be forgotten especially at St. Saviours Anglican Church, Ítalówájodá, Ìjèbú-Òde.

Reverend David Onàdélé Epégà (1881-1956). He was born on the 9th of June 1881 at Odè-

Rémo. He started schooling while living with his brother, Àrífyò, in Abéòkúta in 1886. He went to some other schools in Ìjèbú and Lagos. Epégà was for a time "banished" from Odè-Rémo because of his Christian activities. He later became a tailor after which he went back to Memorial Grammar School, Abéòkúta, after which he became a teacher. Between 1900 and 1904 the Reverend Oládélé Epégà (Ewépénigà) started to learn Yorùbá medicine and Ifá divination. He established the Ìmólè Olúwa Institute in 1904 and also established the Láhùsì Grammar School, Odè-Rémo.⁶ Epégà wrote Ìtàn Ìjèbú àti Ìlú Míràn (1919); and Ifá, amòná àwon baba wa (1948); and Sónibáré (n.d). He died on June 21, 1906. His son, the late Reverend Olárimíwá Epégà, and his grandson Dr. Afolábí Epégà, have revised and enlarged his book on Ifá, and has been translated into Spanish by Anthonio J. Prada Omo Odun.⁷

Moses Bótù Okùbótè. Not so much is known of this historian. From his book Ìwé Ìkétúrú ti Ìtàn Ìjèbú (1934), we deduce that he was not a young boy during the Magbon war of 1892. Moses Okùbótè became the Apèèná of Ìdèlé area of Ìjèbú-Òde on September 19, 1907.⁸ He was a contemporary of "Dr." Joseph Odùmúsù in Ìjèbú-Òde. He often referred to Odumosu as "My master." Moses Okùbótè started to read the alphabets through the help of friend, Òsókò - the son of Sàrùmí of Ìtóri Abéòkúta in 1885. He left for Ìbàdàn in 1890, probably to trade, and there he started attending church services at Kúdeti.⁹

J. O. Ajíbólá. He was born in Àgó-Ìwòyè Ìjèbú in 1898. He belonged to the Obalólayé age group. He started schooling at the Wesleyan Primary School, Àgó-Ìwòyè in 1905. Ajibola went to the popular Wesley College, Ìbàdàn, and became a tutor there. He later went to England to study law. He was for a time a magistrate in the old Western Region. He started writing Yorùbá books in England. Ajíbólá wrote Òwe Yorùbá (1947); Ìtójó (1947); and Onjé Ilè wa (1947). He died in 1990.

Bishop Seth Rúnsèwé Kálè. This writer was born in Mobalùfón near Ìjèbú-Òde on June 6, 1904. His parents were the first Christians in Mobalùfón. He had pastoral cares by agents and ordained ministers of the Church. Kálè was educated at Mobalùfón and Pòrògún, Ìjèbú-Òde, at the primary school level. He went to Ìjèbú-Òde Grammar School (1918- 1920). He had his University education at Fourah Bay College, Freetown, Sierra Leone, and the University of London, England. He taught in various schools and later became the principal of St. Andrew's College, Òyó, 1951 - 1963.¹⁰ He travelled extensively. His two Yorùbá books were Tibi Tire (1943) and Ìkínì'édè Yorùbá (n.d).

Other Ìjèbú authors whose names could easily be mentioned included people like J. S. Ògúnlésì who wrote Ìlera Li Ògùn Orò (1945) and J. Bamke Oresajo author of Aiyé Àgbè Àjegbádùn (n.d.), Ìwé Orin fún Àwon Omodé (1927), and Ìwé Ìwà Léwa. One can also mention J. A. Olusola the editor of Ìjèbú Weekly News (1927 - 1940), J. J. Odùfuwá - from Ìjèbú Igbo, who was editor and proprietor of The Ìjèbú Weekly Echo (1947) and Ìjèbú National Voice (1952). John Augustus Òtúnba Payne's contributions were in the publications of almanacs and diaries which were later copied by many other people after he started producing his Lagos and West African Almanac and Diary in 1874. This was twelve years ahead of his closest rival, S. S. Saith's Almanac for Lagos and Port Novo, which came in 1896. In what follows, I will examine some of the themes in the books.

History: The only historical writing about Ìjèbú during the late 19th and early 20th century was produced by Moses Botu Okubote's Ìwé Ìkékúrú ti Ìtàn Ìjèbú. It was first published in

1934.¹¹ The first chapter of the book explained the three man segments now called Ìjèbú-Òde viz: Iwáde, Pòrògún and Ìjàsí. The book also treated the life history of some people in Ìjèbú-Òde even though it was silent about specific dates. Men noted included Joseph Odùmósù nicknamed “A-dé-ko bírí sowó, a-sowo-bí-enigò, ògá mi a-mèlè-jà-ju-ekùn,” which translated as “one who makes a small farmland to get a lot of money, he who does good as a foolish-man, he who understands a fight more than a leopard.” Others are Balógun Mátùlúkúrò whose base was in Ìbàdàn, Allí Túbògun, Sánní Òbòròborò, Allí Akáyínòde, Sánní Sàngósànyà Ègbò and Kòkéúkòbèrè. The author also recorded the coming of Islam to Ìjèbú-Òde and its first adherents. Mentions were also made of some religious problems among the early Muslims, especially among the congregations at Ìdèlé, Ìkànìgbò, Ìta-Ògbín and Ìdépo. Okùbótè spoke of events starting from 1954 when David Hinderer brought the words of God to Oba Adémúyewó Fídípòtè. Other highlights include the religious activities of James Johnson in 1877, those of Òtúnba Paynes in 1878, and the establishment of St. Saviour's Church in Ìjèbú-Òde in 1898. One point which must be noted is the description of the first baptism ever held in Ìjèbú-Òde. The author graphically captures the postures of the traditionalists as against the new converts, the Awùjalè, (Adélékè ògbágbá Agbátèwolè) and the Rev. R. A. Coker. This was on September 27, 1895. Forty-one people were baptised that day.¹²

The importance of Okùbótè's Ìwé Ìkékúrí tí Ìtàn Ìjèbú can never be over-emphasised. Naming, which is an important aspect of Yoruba culture, is treated as it relates to the Ìjèbú people. The authors had 25 difference categories of names borne by the Ìjèbú. the names relate to workmanship, worship, kingship, and so on. One topic in the book which all the other Yorùbá groups have borrowed from and used is what was called the Ìjèbú National Calendar. This was borne out of the various traditional worships in the Ìjèbú area. They included festivals which Okubote called Ìtàn Ìsìn Ìbòrisà ní Ilè Ìjèbú. He identified fifteen of them. In all the 12 Gregorian calendar months in the Western world, which have formed our calendar, the Ìjèbú people celebrate one festival except in the month of June, which is known as Òkúdu. According to the author, this is a month of bereavement to the Awujale. The Ìjèbú National Calendar starts from Sééré which is October, Obelú, Ìmún sí-òná and Ìgbè, Ìràwò, Osù, Ìgbésu-osù, Erinnà, Ìròlé-orópo, Èibì, Ìjàsa, Orò, Asemo, Olúde, and ends with Odún ògú (ògún). The last part of Okùbótè's book is devoted to major events in Ìjèbúland from 1760 to 1934 when the book was published.

Folk-medicine: The late Dr. Joseph Odùmósù's name readily comes to mind when one considers the reduction of Yorùbá therapeutics into writing. For one thing, Joseph Odùmósù lived during a very difficult period in history of the Yorùbá people when there were wars, diseases, ignorance and poverty. He had foresight about the need meet the needs of the people because there were no hospitals in Ìjèbúland during his period. Besides, Joseph Odùmósù extended the frontiers of Yorùbá language and culture. Thus, thousands of medicinal herbs were mentioned in his book, Ìwòsàn which first published in 1905. Ìwòsàn is a combination of three sub-books called Ìwòsàn 1, Ìwòsàn 2, and Ìwòsàn 3. When taken together there are 172 different diseases with a total of 5,621 recipes for treating them.¹⁴

World View: Yorùbá folklore and folk life as they relate to oraculum, astrology, physiognomy and interpretation of dreams were treated by the same author, Joseph Odùmósù, in his Ìwé Itúmò Àlá àti Ohun tí Ayípadà which first appeared in the market in 1907.¹⁵ The first part deals with 643 dreams in alphabetical order. The next is divination, and is based on

the 16 Great Poems of Ifa called Ojú-Odù with interpretations, even though no actual divination poems are recorded. Following this is celestial palmistry in which days and months that are either good or bad within the year are clearly explained. Joseph Odùmósù treats physiognomy at the end of the book. There are two observations to make on the book. First, Joseph Odùmósù was highly responding to the yearning aspirations of the Yorùbá in general and the Ìjèbú people in particular. At that time, the Ìjèbú were still agonising under the brutal but inexplicable weight of Governor G. T. Carter's over-zealousness and British authoritarianism. The five-day 1892 war called Magbon War, no-doubt, left the Ìjèbú people bruised. Thus, as a psychologist, philosopher, and a religionist, Joseph Odumosu produces Ìwé Ìtumò Àlá to cater for those whose emotions were destabilised and those who had diseases. Second, it does seem that the late Joseph Odùmósù was more literate than was at first conceived. He possessed a good working knowledge of the English Language from where he was able to read certain books published outside Nigeria in the late 19th century. For instance from pages 57 to 85 of the 1953 edition of the book is the same as Foulsham's book, Napoleon's Book of Faté⁶ (pages 75 to 93). Also, one would find in certain parts of the French man's book translated into Yorùbá in Ìwé Ìtumò Àlá. In spite of the criticisms of translating from another book, Odùmósù's efforts should be appreciated rather than depreciated.

More Cultural Aspects: The late Chief J.O. Ajíbó alá's book Òwe Yorùbá unearthed a lot of cultural elements. Proverbs defined as witty sayings of our forefathers, got a good treatment in their compilation and translation. Many of the Yorùbá ideas of religion, morality and courtesies are woven into the proverbs, which contain traditional and ingenious play on words. Arranged alphabetically, the book contains 854 proverbs in Yorùbá. The same proverbs are translated into English language to enable the non-Yorùbá understand their intrinsic values. The author in chapter 4 of the book also attempts some dictionary work. The Ifá book written by Rev. D.O. Epégà in 1908 and which has since been expanded by his son, the late Oláríníwá Epégà in 1965 has an interesting preface:

Ìwé yì jé nínú àwon ìwé tí a n se láti fi èkó tí a jogún lówó àwo n bàbá wa hàn pé Olórun bá àwon bàbá wa sòrò ìmò, òtító. Ifá ni òtító ná tí ó tó àwon bàbá wa. Kristian ni àwa bè ni àwa kò jé tìtorípé pé àwa jé Kristian kí a bó aso olá kúrò àwon bàbá wa?

'This book is one of the books we write to show that it is true God spoke truthfully with our fathers through the knowledge we inherit from them. Ifa is the truth that guides our fathers. We are Christians, but we cannot because we are Christians remove their honour.¹

The excerpt goes to show that Epégà embraced Ifá divination in spite of the fact that he was a reverend gentleman. His two books, Mysteries of Yorùbá Gods I & II also show that the author, and later his children, was not ready to discard cultural values and beliefs in spite of their western education.

Newspapers: It must be said that the first Newspaper in Nigeria; Ìwé Ìròhìn fún àwon Ègbá àti Yorùbá was published in Abéokúta in 1859 by the Rev. Henry Towasend.¹⁸ Robert

Campbell edited and published the first English Newspaper called Anglo-African in Lagos in 1863.¹⁹ Between 1859 and 1950, more than 15 Yorùbá Newspapers were published and edited in Nigerià.⁰ Most of the papers were based in Lagos. The first Newspaper published in Ìjèbùland is not known until now but there is indication that the late Joseph Odùmòsù published a Yorùbá Newspaper called Ìròhìn Ìlú in his press in Ìjèbù-Òde. He was said to have helped St. Saviour's Church, Ìjèbù-Òde advertise events free of charge. This writer has not been successful in tracing any copy of the newspaper. In 1934, J. A. Olúsolá, a printer and publisher, established The Ìjèbù Weekly News at Ìta Òsù, Ìjèbù-Òde. Another Newspaper, The Ìjèbù Weekly Echo published by J. J. Odùfuwa an Ìjèbù Igbó indigene was established at 58 Macullum Street, Èbúté Méttá, Lagos. Its maiden edition was on August 2, 1947. Though based in Lagos, it was mainly concerned with activities in Ìjèbùland. The same Odùfuwa published Ìjèbù National Voice in 1952 with its first edition on February 16. The interesting thing about these papers is that they were bilingual i.e. stories were carried both in English and Yorùbá. The Ìjèbù Weekly Echo even wrote some stories in Igbo and Hausa. All the Newspapers had news, views, advertisements, comments and exhortations. Today's columns such as sports, health, arts, leisure etc. were seldom included. One paper, Ìjèbù Weekly News, stood for the emancipation of the Yorùbá in general and the Ìjèbù in particular. At a time, and for a long period, the newspaper formed a league called Egbé Máro Sílè; (Fight Against counterfeiting). In one of such adverts the paper made a call for people to join the crusade of ridding Ìjèbùland of coin counterfeiters thus:

We hate being called a race of counterfeiters and we are determined to fight against coins counterfeiting in Ijebuland and in Nigeria as a whole. The Ijebu Anti-Counterfeiting League has been established in Ijebu with Headquarters at 20 Abasi Street, Ijebu-Ode with the object of employing every possible means to fight against the crime. This is our desire and may God help us.²¹

The patronages enjoyed by these newspapers were informed by the fact that most of the publishers owned the press from where they were produced. For example The Ìjèbù Weekly News was printed on the Ìjèbù National Press owned by the printer/publisher.

Òtúnbá Payne started producing his Lagos and West African Almanac and Diary in Lagos in 1884. It must be said that he had started keeping diaries of events from 1851. These can be categorised under (a) names of consults and governors, (b) names of judges, (c) fire occurrences, (d) civil strives and (e) miscellaneous. For example, he had these entries:

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-----------|
| (a) | Consul Beecroft was called Ajélè Onírùngbòn | - | 1851 |
| | Consul W. McCoskry was called Ajélé Apóngbòn | - | 1862 |
| | Governor Glover was called Agba Gólóbà Afáriógun | - | 1863 etc. |
| (b) | G. W. Watson Chief Magistrate was Olóri Adájó | - | 1863 |
| | B. Way - Chief Magistrate was Adájó Yegi | - | 1863 |
| | Salman Smith- Chief Judge was Adájó Onírúnú | - | 1883 etc. |
| (c) | Iná Ìsàlègangan - an area of Lagos was on April 9, 1873 | | |
| | Iná Ìtta Kakáwà (100 houses burnt) was on January 7, 1887 | | |

Iná Òbùn Èkó (500 houses burnt) was on September 10, 1877.

Iná Ìta Obádínà which spread to Oko Faji and Aroloya (300 houses destroyed) November 21, 1887.

Iná Enu Owá to Ìdúmàgbò (a blind woman was burnt to death) August 31, 1891 etc.

(d) Ìjà òpolú was on - December 1, 1833
Agidìngbì, British Squadron under Admiral Bruce bombarded
Lagos and Kòsókó expelled - December 20, & 27, 1851 etc.

(e) Miscellaneous:
Cession of Lagos - August 6, 1861
C.M.S. House (Ile Alapako built) October 23, 1852.
Madam Tinubu expelled by King Docemo (Dòsùmú) from Lagos - April 15, 1856.

All these and many more were recorded in the diaries of this great Ìjèbú author.

Conclusion:

From the discussion above, it is clear that the Ìjèbú people contributed their own quota to the general pool of Yorùbá writing in the late 19th and early 20th century. One has to say with emphasis that the M̀agbon War of 1892 quickened Ìjèbú Western education. Hitherto, literate Ìjèbú were restricted to Lagos, Ibadan and Abéòkúta and they were not highly regarded in Ìjè búland. Most schools were opened immediately after the M̀agbon War for school children. It must be said that many adults also took to reading and writing in spite of public ridicules they received. Joseph Odùmósù was referred to as “Omo n kó? ABD n be lápò,” for he always went about with the Yoruba primer in his pocket. The various printing presses set up in Ìjè búland helped to propagate Western education. We cannot locate these presses today. We heard of those owned by Joseph Odùmósù, J.A. Olúsolá, and one Wellington Osilàjà, all which were said to have been located in Ìjèbú Òde. More research is necessary to place Ìjèbú literary activities in proper perspectives.

Just five years after the M̀agbon War, a book (the title of which was lost to termites), on reading, translation, biblical studies and 400 years almanac was published in Ìjèbú-Òde in 1897 by D. John-Sorinolu (Gbédègbéyò-oba). John Sòrìnlú was probably Oba Adélékè Ògbágbá's interpreter. The calendar in the book is from 1901 to 2,300. Our conviction is that there are still many books written by the Ìjèbú people in particular and the Yorùbá in general in Yorùbá language during the period under review. It would be helpful if these rare books and manuscripts were archives so that researchers may have access to copies of such materials. Books evaluated in this paper were obtained through various sources and tortuous journeys, not to talk of expenses.

Notes

1. Àjàyí, J. F. Adé. "How Yorùbá was reduced to writing": ODU, No. 8 1960
2. Àjàyí, J. F. Ade. opt cit.
3. Adébàjà, Olúsolá Oládípò; Àgbéyèwò Isé Àwon Asíwájú Ònkòwé Yorùbá láti Odún 1848 si Odún 1938, Ph.D. Thesis, Obáfémi Awolówò University, Ilé-Ifè, 1991.
4. Okùbòtè, Moses Bótù, Ìwé Ìkékúrú ti Ìtàn Ìjèbú, Ìbàdàn. The Author. 1934p. 37.
5. For this article - See Ifè African Languages and Literatures: In Honour of Professor Ayò Bámgbósé, by F. A. Soyoye and L.O. Adéwolé 1991, p. 4-11.
6. Adébàjà, Olúsolá Oládípò opt cit. p. 49.
7. Ibid. p. 49
8. Okubòtè, Moses Bótù: opt. cit p. 95.
9. Ibid. p. 40.
10. Personal discussion with Bishop Kalè in March 1988 at Mobalùfòn. He gave this writer access into his rich library.
11. Okùbòtè, Moses Bótù, Ìwé Ìkékúrú ti Ìtàn Ìjèbú, Ìbàdàn. Ola-Olu Stores, Ibadan.
12. Ibid., p. 43 and 44.
13. Adébàjà, Olúsolá Oládípò, opt. cit. p. 264.
14. Opt. cit. p.6.
15. Odùmósù, Joseph, Ìwé Ìtumò Àlá àti ohun tí a yípadà, Ifé-Olú Printing Works, Lagos, 1953, edition.
16. Foulshamm, W., Napoleon's Book of Fate: Foulshamm & Co. Ltd., Veoril Road, Slough, Berks (n.d.)
17. Epégà, David Onàdélé: Ifá: Amòná, Àwon Bàbá Wa. Lagos, The Author, 1908 (1965 edition)
18. For a record of all Yorùbá Newspaper published during the period, see Adébàjà, Olúsolá Oládípò, - Àgbéyèwò Isé Àwon Asíwájú Ònkòwé Yorùbá láti Odún 1848 si Odún 1938, PhD Thesis, Obáfémi Awolówò University, Ilé-Ifè 1991. p. 281.
19. Ibid. p. 282
20. Opt. cit.
21. Ìjèbú Weekly News (1936) We are grateful to the authorities of the National Archives, Ìbàdàn for allowing us to use the establishment for research purposes as regards records of early Yorùbá Newspapers.
22. The front and back of the book are not available but page 5 of the book has Àkíyèsí in which the author paid glowing tributes to the following people- Mr. E. Fry, Misses M. Tynan, J. Palmer and P. Leach. To end Àkíyèsí, the author writes;

Ìwé yí dára fún àwon òdómokùnrin àti òdómobinrin ilú wa fún àti gbìyànjú lábé ilé olukúlùkù won. Aíye sá di aiyé èdè òyìnbó ná. Èmi ni ti nyín nítòto

This book is good for boys and girls in our land for encouragements under each person's roof. This is the age of Western education. I am yours sincerely.

John-Sorinolu (Gbédègbéyo-oba)
Ìjèbú-Òde. June, 1897.