

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE
ANGLOPHONE PROVINCES OF CAMEROON
DURING BRITISH ADMINISTRATION
1919-1960

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE ANGLOPHONE PROVINCES
OF CAMEROON DURING BRITISH ADMINISTRATION
1919 - 1960

by



Tabot Timothy MacOjong, B.A. Hons.

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore and assess the development of education in the Anglophone Provinces of Cameroon, during British Administration under the League of Nations Mandate and the United Nations Trusteeship, 1919 to 1960. The introductory Chapter I provides an overview, nature, organisation and methodology of the study. In Chapter II, a historical background of the beginning of westernisation of the Cameroons is provided; it covers the period beginning with the arrival of European traders and missionaries to the end of German Administration in 1918. Although British Administration was only introduced in 1919, British influence, through its anti-slave trade activities at the Atlantic coast, the widespread use of "pidgin" English and the pro-British disposition of the natives was omnipresent and potent, between 1844 and 1918. The mistake of Germany in 1914-18 ultimately gave to Britain a slice of the territory which had been a bone of contention. Consequently, German educational system was replaced by that of the British. Chapter III provides a geographical and cultural framework within which the new system began operating in 1922. Throughout the text, these factors are shown to have impinged on the expansion and extension of education.

In Chapter IV, the examination of the introduction of British colonial education policy is shown to have emerged only as a response to the recommendations from the studies of the state of education in West Africa by the Phelps-Stokes Commission in 1920-21. Although the Cameroon Province was not a British colony, the recommendations applied to it through its joint administration with Nigeria. Chapter V surveys the development of educational institutions.

The educational system developed in the territory was a hybrid of government and voluntary agency schools, with the Missionary Societies bearing a greater burden; the same partnership also existed with regard to teacher training institutions, examined in Chapter VI. The status of the teacher, except for the government teacher, was synonymous with penury and poverty. In Chapter VII, the curriculum and methods of teaching in these schools are examined. As revealed in it, the primary school curriculum was influenced by the philosophy of education for the Negroes in the South of the United States, that of teacher training institution was determined largely by the primary school curriculum, and that of the secondary and the trade school was determined by School Certificate examinations of London and Cambridge Universities and the London City and Guilds Examinations respectively.

The examination of educational finance in Chapter VIII shows the main sources to have been government grants-in-aid, school fees and education rates and contributions from the home boards of Missionary Societies. In mass and cultural education, Chapter IX reveals that it lagged behind formal education except in the plantations of the Cameroons Development Corporation. Outside the C.D.C. plantations, literacy was characterised by laissez-faire. There was emphasis on community, leadership and citizenship education. Chapter X is a summary and conclusion of the study. The development of education in the Anglophone Provinces during British Administration was largely determined by the mandate and trusteeship system of the League of Nations and the United Nations; it was overshadowed by the joint administration with Nigeria. The relative balance in the lopsided educational development between Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons, where a replica of the British education system was firmly established by 1960, was ensured by the Missionary Societies.

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In a season (December), when it was difficult to come by the services of a typist, Mrs. Mary Johnston came

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Anglophone Provinces of the United Republic of Cameroon are that part of West Africa which was occupied and ruled by Germany from 1884 to 1914 and later administered by the United Kingdom as part of the Southern Provinces of Nigeria from 1922 to 1960. The loss of the First World War by Germany in 1918 also led to the loss of her colonies. By the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, German "Kamerun" was divided between the United Kingdom and France; each received that part which it had occupied during the war, to be administered on behalf of the League of Nations by Mandate (1919 to 1939) and later on behalf of the United Nations by Trusteeship (1945 - 1960).

The object of the Mandate and Trusteeship system, as conceived by the world bodies, was to avoid the abuses of colonialism. Thus the League of Nations set up a Permanent Mandate Commission and the United Nations, the Trusteeship Council to oversee the system. The Mandate and Trusteeship Agreements required of the Administering Powers annual reports on the administration of the various territories.

The responsibility of guiding the people of the Southern Cameroons to social, political and economic

development devolved upon the United Kingdom. An important aspect of this task was that of providing the inhabitants with education, as a vehicle of civilization and development. For about forty years, the British Administering Authority tried to fulfill this obligation.

Britain formally assumed the administration of the present Anglophone Provinces (then Southern Cameroons) in 1922, although she had already begun doing so unofficially from the termination of the first World War. The school system planted by Germany had crumbled as a result of the ravages of the war. The surviving mission schools had degenerated into schools for teaching catechism, under Cameroonian ordained pastors and catechists, who combined the dual functions of spiritual leaders and teachers.

The remnants of the school system left by German missionaries taught nothing else but religion. When the three R's were included in the curriculum, this was done as a means of facilitating the understanding of the scriptures. Every village, its size and population notwithstanding, had such a "school", provided there was a catechist in the area. The funds needed to operate such schools came from the few pence paid by pupils as fees. No regulations existed for operating and inspecting schools. Each pastor or catechist conducted the school as he thought fit or as he had learnt from the fleeing German missionaries.

When the British administrative machinery was officially installed in 1922, a new era of educational development was introduced. Government schools were established in each of the administrative headquarters of the four Divisions of the territory, from the Atlantic coast in the south to the grassland in the north. Almost immediately, and consistent with the British policy of indirect rule, Native Administration (the beginning of the local government system in the territory) was introduced. One of the responsibilities of this administration was the establishment of schools. Each Native Administration provided schools in its area of jurisdiction with funds provided from local taxation.

Missionary Societies began to return to play an important role in educational effort in the territory. They came from London, the United States and Switzerland. The first Missionary Society which made its appearance in 1922, was the St. Joseph's Missionary Society of Mill Hill, near London. The Basel Mission contingent arrived in 1925. By 1927, educational work in the territory was being carried on by Government and the Native Administration with the cooperation of Missionary Societies which received grants, first from the Native Administrations and after 1927 from the Government.

Educational activities in the territory before 1926 were carried on without regulations; a sort of

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laissez-faire policy reigned. Missionary Societies opened schools at random, ignoring any requirements of quality in education. Although no evidence of clashes among Missionary Societies exists, it is likely that the competition in opening schools was keen, for the most important pre-occupation of the Missionary Societies was to increase the number of its adherents. Thus, it was not uncommon to find two or three schools in villages with populations of less than one hundred inhabitants.

Schools established by Government applied regulations of the Nigerian Code. This eventually came to apply to the Southern Cameroon as part of the general transfer of the laws, regulations, ordinances as well as the social, political and economic institutions of Nigeria to Cameroon in 1924. The first Education Code prepared in Nigeria with the Southern Cameroons in mind was that of 1926. It introduced order into a "system" which had hitherto been based on laissez-faire, a situation which was prevalent in Nigeria as in the Southern Cameroons.

The Code of 1926 included regulations having to do with the opening and operation of schools, the registration of teachers, conditions for grants-in-aid, supervision and inspection of schools, and the curriculum for all levels of schooling. From this time, the Administering Authority did what it could with the limited resources of the territory, to provide a more systematic education for

the inhabitants of the territory.

From 1940, more funds were made available through Colonial Development and Welfare Fund from London for the general development of the territory, education included. With the creation of the Cameroons Development Corporation from the former German plantations, the economy of the territory improved. Education received a further impetus, not only because more funds became available but also because it created a demand for educated labour. The Corporation opened its own schools and awarded secondary and post-secondary scholarships, as well as providing adult education and on-the-job training. At the end of the British Administration in 1960, a British system of education had been established and today survives side by side with that left by France in the Francophone Provinces of the present day United Republic of Cameroon.

Unfortunately, there has been no study of the development of education in the territory under British Administration; much of the information still remains in various League of Nations, United Nations and United Kingdom official reports, as well as in pamphlets, articles in journals by private individuals and by Missionary bodies which have played and continue to play a major role in educational work in these provinces.

The most recent attempt to study educational development in the territory under British administration

has been that of H.O.H. Vernon-Jackson, an English Canadian who had served in various capacities in the then Southern Cameroons Education Department. His study is a general survey of educational development in both the former British and French Cameroon from 1844 - 1961, and does not devote much attention on the British period.

The present study is designed to investigate in more detail the extent to which the British Administering Authority fulfilled its obligation to the League of Nations and the United Nations in the provision of education to the natives of the territory. More specifically, the study explores the development of British educational theory and practice in the territory under its administration, with particular reference to:

1. The development and expansion of the school system.
2. The development of the curriculum, examination systems and language of instruction.
3. The financing of education in a territory which was still virtually at the subsistence level of her economy.
4. The administration, supervision and inspection of the school system.
5. The development of education for the mass of the people.

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The study of the history of education, like any other historical study, has as one of its purposes, the guiding of present day and future political, social and economic policies; it enables us to avoid previous mistakes and to adopt those theories and practices which enhance the satisfaction of society. Although the independent states of Africa regard with hostility all smack of colonial influence, the historical record contains much that can serve as lessons in the shaping of present policies. In this context, it is hoped that the study of educational development in the colonial era will be of interest to educational planners, teachers and others interested in the educational development of the emerging states.

Recently opinion has been moving against the type of education systems left by the imperialists. While these criticisms contain much that is valid, it should be admitted that not all the aspects of the system were insignificant. We are at liberty to select those aspects which can serve our present purposes. One obvious source of condemnation of the colonial system of education stems from the fact that the curriculum failed in its adaptation to social, economic and political realities of the various countries concerned; however, in terms of administration, organization and emphasis on the adequate training of teachers, much can be learnt from our colonial past.

The methodology adopted in this study is designed

to treat each aspect of educational development separately in order to bring it out in clearer perspective and to facilitate an objective assessment of educational development.

Although educational development in the territory was carried on under a colonial framework, the intention of this study is not to discuss it from that perspective; the reason is that, in international law, the territory was not a colony of the United Kingdom.

The method of presentation adopted throughout the text of the thesis is both analytical and chronological; the chronological method is particularly employed to bring out the growth in educational effort from 1922-60. Educational development in the British Cameroons was built on a foundation previously laid by early missionaries and German administrators, it is therefore, necessary to begin this study with a sketch of the historical background leading up to the advent of British rule.

CHAPTER II

THE BEGINNING OF WESTERNISATION

A. The Arrival of Europeans

The Atlantic coast of Cameroon around the estuary of the Wouri River was known to Portuguese explorers as early as 1472 and by the sixteenth century the country began to appear on their maps. When they arrived at the Wouri estuary, they were struck by the innumerable prawns and called it the "river of prawns." This, translated into Portuguese, produced the name "Rio dos Cameroes" from which the name Cameroon evolved.

The Portuguese were followed by the Dutch, the Spanish, the Germans, the English and the French. Originally driven by the spirit of adventure, these European countries became involved in trade with the natives, notably in ivory and slaves. But other articles of trade attracted European traders. As Talbot stated:

In this river (Cameroon) also are many slaves for sale. One is exchanged for 13 or 14 copper bars, value 22 to the pound. The blacks bring symmetrical Akori and elephants' teeth (ivory) for sale as also javelins and knives ... One used to be able to get every year about ten cargoes of tusks and 500 slaves.

¹P. Amaury Talbot, The Peoples of Southern Nigeria. (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1969), I, 348-49.

The trade which began as a trickle received a stimulus and increased in volume in the second half of the nineteenth century with the establishment of sugar plantations requiring cheap labour in the West Indies (especially Cuba) and Brazil.

The trade which was carried on around the Cameroon River between the Europeans and the natives was dominated by the coastal tribes -- the Douala and the Isibu -- which played the role of intermediaries between the Europeans at the coast and the natives in the interior. Thus the first Cameroonians to come in direct contact with the Europeans and consequently with Western civilisation were those at or near the coast. This point helps to explain the reasons for the faster development of the southern part of the country as compared to the northern; the development included education.

Other factors, which serve to explain the reasons for the confinement of the Europeans at the Atlantic coast are the impenetrable nature of the interior areas, at the time. Furthermore, the desire of the Douala and the Isibu tribes at the coast to preserve their trade monopoly usually led to hostility against any Europeans who insisted on penetrating the interior. Stories of human sacrifices and related practices among the natives, particularly those of the interior, were in themselves sufficient to scare the most intrepid Europeans.

In exchange for slaves, Europeans either brought guns, gunpowder (very appropriate for producing more slaves), cloth, clocks, and other trinkets from Europe or bought articles from other parts of Africa which they exchanged for slaves. The Dutch, for instance, bought copper and iron bars, coral and brass basins from the Gold Coast (present Ghana), bloom-colour beads or bugles and purple copper, armlets, rings, presses for lemon and oranges from Angola. Armlets were particularly important to the dresses of slave raiders; they gave the raiders the appearance of soldiers. In that military guise and equipped with guns, the slave raiders caused whole communities to surrender.

The demand and supply of slaves had the effect of perpetuating tribal wars which led to the depopulation of the territory between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Some modern historians are wont to think that the nefarious traffic in human beings has contributed enormously in depriving Africa of some intelligent and inventive clusters of population which might have made something serious out of the continent. Perhaps proof of this assumption can be provided by looking at blacks in the West Indies and the South of the United States of America.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, public opinion in England, especially expressed by philanthropic and humanitarian societies, began to inveigh against her

involvement in the inhuman traffic. Great names in the movements to abolish it included William Wilberforce with whom many a primary school child in West Africa is acquainted. The British Parliament's declaration of May 1, 1807, made slave trade illegal for all British subjects. In 1833 another British Parliament's Act abolished the trade in all British Dominions. From this time onward, Britain was to play a very active role in the complete abolition of slave trade, a role which was to lead to her dominance in the estuary of the Cameroon River and eventually to the accession of a slice of the territory.

In 1827, Britain had asked and obtained permission from the Spanish to occupy Fernando Po, a strategic island on the Atlantic ocean about forty nautical miles off the Cameroon coast in order to police the Nigeria-Cameroon coast against slave traders. Captain W.F. Owen in the same year brought a few already-liberated slaves to begin a settlement there. The island became a settlement for liberated slaves in addition to Sierra-Leone in West Africa and Gabon situated south of Cameroon.

The period saw the steady decline in the trade which, however, remained clandestine, and the gradual development of legitimate trade. The role of Britain not only included the policing of the Nigeria-Cameroon coast, but also involved that of concluding anti-slave treaties

with native chiefs.

It is not known why the chief of one of the coastal towns on the left bank of the Cameroon River, Chief Bill, surrendered the sovereignty of his country to England in return for the English title of King William. Presumably this was not unconnected with British attempt to lure him away from slave trading. Talbot reports that: "An agreement was made between Allen (of the Niger Expedition) and Chief Gando of Dualla (or Agua or Akwa) by which the latter promised to stop all human sacrifices."²

Another treaty signed in 1842 was specifically for the abolition of slave trade and the encouragement of legitimate trade in palm oil and ivory. British governors at Fernando Po constantly made enquiries from the chiefs at the least rumour of any alleged involvement in slave trade. The British, not anticipating the Germans, concluded treaties with native chiefs for the abolition of slave trade rather than for the annexation of the territory. That the Cameroon chiefs welcomed British protection is evidenced by a letter addressed by King Akwa of Douala to Queen Victoria of England dated August 7, 1879:

Dear Madame -- We your servants have join together and thoughts (sic) it better to write you a nice loving letter which will tell you all about our

²Talbot, Southern Nigeria, p. 351.

wishes. We wish to have your laws in our towns. We want to have every fashioned altered, also we will do according to your consul's word. Plenty wars here in our country. Plenty murder and idol worshippers. Perhaps these lines of our writing will look to you as an idle tale.

We have spoken to the English Consul plenty times about an English Government here. We never have answer from you, so we wish to write you ourselves.

When we heard about Calabar River, how they have all English laws in their towns and how they have put away all their superstition, oh, we shall be very glad to be like Calabar now.

Even if the propriety of this letter is questionable, nevertheless, it states the desire of the Cameroon Chiefs for British protection, and a preference for the English system of government. The request was indisputably a source of joy to British traders and missionaries. It should be noted that British traders from Liverpool and Bristol had taken advantage of British presence in the Cameroon River to set up trading stations. These were followed by two German trading firms of Adolf Woermann and Jantzen and Thormahlen.

Frequent antagonism between the English and German traders on the one hand and traders and natives on the other hand, led the British Governor to set up a Court of Equity at Victoria on the Atlantic coast to settle any disputes arising. This was the first British institution

³ Cited in Victor Levine, The Cameroons: From Mandate to Independence. (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1964), p. 20.

in the country, but this in itself did not transfer sovereignty over the territory to the British. The presence of British traders, the unflagging effort of the British Consul to discourage slave trade and promote legitimate trade, his institution of a Court of Equity as well as the increasing spread of the use of English language, were factors which made the British more preferable to any other European Power.

The British were not prepared for annexation, presumably because they viewed it with some misgivings. They would only undertake annexation if the territory was of any practical or economic value, for orders from London requested the British Consul, Hewett "to visit the Cameroon River, to report on the people and the trade of the territory so that the home Government might be in a position to give the question (of annexation) fuller consideration."⁴

The first relationship, therefore, between Europeans and Cameroonians, was mercantile and not cultural. Cultural imperialism in Cameroon was initiated by missionary societies with the backing of colonial administrators. But these first contacts had an impact on the natives. The coastal tribes were already beginning to use Europeans-made

⁴Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons: 1884 - 1914. A Study in Modern Imperialism. (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1938), p. 22.

goods, and to wear European-made dresses. However, the native chiefs were introduced to some informal literacy because they were taught to inscribe a cross on the treaties to stand for their signatures.

B. The Advent of Missionaries

Following closely on the heels of British squadrons and English and German traders, were the Missionaries, mainly British and Jamaicans, in 1843. The presence of British squadrons off the Island of Fernando Po and a British Consul on the Nigeria-Cameroon coast encouraged British Missionaries to undertake missionary work in the area.

Africa had long been associated with heathenism by the first Europeans. With the relative amount of success attained by the British in the suppression of slave trade, religious and philanthropic bodies in Europe began to consider it as a fertile ground for missionary activity. The British Baptist Missionary Society from London was the first Missionary Society to begin work in Cameroon.

Missionaries who came to Africa all had the same aim: to convert the natives to Christianity. But many converted natives acted rather than lived as Christians. Missionaries brought not guns and gunpowder but the Bible and the hymn book, foods for the soul rather than for the

body. Such an enterprise, in an area where hostility was the order of the day, human sacrifice, idol worship and other malevolent practices were deeply entrenched, needed much courage; this the early missionaries did not lack. When these artificial factors are added to such natural factors as climate, vegetation, disease and pestilence, the whole venture was unmitigatedly perilous, occasioning not too small a death toll.

Not only did missionaries convert and proselytise, they were the virtual agents of western civilization. They became the standards to be copied in terms of western dress and exotic foods, as well as styles of building. Talbot reports:

By the end of the year (1849) the Baptist Mission ... introduced the bread-fruit tree, pomegranate, mango, avocado, pear and mamee apple (gave) clothing and medical assistance to about 20,000 persons.⁵

Whenever missionaries opened a station in Cameroon, this part of the town or village became a centripetal point which brought the natives together and in contact with missionaries for daily morning and evening prayers and especially services on Sundays. Thus, a pattern of settlement characteristic of a mission station with its trilogy of mission house, church and school developed.

⁵Talbot, op. cit., p. 353.

As LeVine laconically states, "most of the missions in the Cameroons tried to create microcosmic Christian communities according to whatever vision their particular sectarian allegiance dictated."⁶

While the missionaries were primarily concerned with conversion to Christianity, they also realized that such a service could be made effective only if the people learned to read the Bible and to sing from the hymn books, as well as to perform activities which required a knowledge of the three R's. Consequently, conversion and education (spiritual and secular) went hand in hand. The content of missionary work in Cameroon can be discerned from the code of instruction issued to all missionaries setting out on missionary activities among the heathen:

In your field of labour you may probably be called to engage in the establishment of schools. This work is highly important ... but while general knowledge is beneficial and much of it exceedingly valuable, you will remember that it is the diffusion of knowledge, as direct means of advancing religion, which is your proper subject. Let your plans, therefore, provide for the communication of the spiritual wisdom, with secular instruction. Seek to secure and employ Christian teachers. Make the introduction of the scripture an absolute condition in the establishment of each school. Maintain active and constant watch over teachers and scholars. Encourage every indication of youthful piety. Visit schools as often as your

⁶LeVine, op. cit., p. 70.

other avocations will allow, and consider them as nurseries in which many a plant of righteousness may be reared, afterward to grow and become fruitful in the vineyard of the church. (italics mine)⁷

These instructions constituted the educational policy of the British Baptist Missionary Society, a policy having to do with the establishment, conduct and supervision of schools. Translation of scriptures into native languages to enable them to reach the people, formed an important part of missionary activity in Cameroon. Thanks to these efforts, two Cameroonian languages -- Douala and Bali -- were reduced to written form.

Western education thus made its appearance in Cameroon as elsewhere through missionary activities and even though education is publicly controlled today, the Missions continue to play an active role in providing educational facilities. Much of the growing educated elite of Cameroonian society owes its education to mission establishments. What began as an instrument to inculcate religion, became beneficial to the state and the natives who have gradually been led to regard education as a means to an end.

In response to repeated appeals from liberated Jamaican slaves in West Africa, missionaries of the Baptist

⁷ Cited in H.O.H. Vernon-Jackson, Schools and School Systems in Cameroon, 1884 - 1961. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Columbia University, 1968), p. 18.

Missionary Society, Dr. Prince and Rev. Clarke, went to Cameroon in 1840 to study the possibilities of beginning missionary work there. Accompanied by Jamaican and English clergymen and teachers, the first contingent of the Baptist Missionary Society arrived the Island of Fernando Po on February 16, 1843, led by Rev. Alfred Saker, Joseph Merrick, Thomas Sturgeon, Dr. Prince and Rev. John Clarke.

As far as the Anglophone provinces of Cameroon are concerned, the first formal school was opened at Bimbia, on the Atlantic coast, in 1844 by the Baptist Missionary Society's Rev. Joseph Merrick, with the approval of King William of Bimbia, followed by another at Billidu, a village near Bimbia. In a despatch to his London headquarters in 1849, Rev. Merrick reported that: "A comfortable school-room had been erected, forty-seven by twenty feet, which serves also as a teacher's dwelling."⁸

This despatch reveals the problems and the living standards of early Missionaries. Early school houses served as teachers' quarters (built with their own hands, sometimes with assistance from the natives). It was also common to hold the school in the Missionary's house.

The schools at Bimbia, Billidu, and those subsequently opened were divided into enquirer classes

⁸Baptist Missionary Society, Vol. VII, No. CXVIII, March 1849, pp. 182-183.

for adults and Sunday schools and ordinary schools for children on week days; those were further divided into infant classes taking children of 5 or 6 years old and British-type schools for children of 5 years and older. Infant classes were held in the same classrooms as were used for older children later in the day.

Scriptures formed the core of the early curriculum with the three R's as adjuncts. Much enthusiasm was shown by the natives in the three R's, presumably because they were taught using the Douala and Isubu languages, which had already been reduced to written form. Vocational training was also offered in printing using presses brought by missionaries.

Although education had been added to the activities of missionaries, this was only an instrument for understanding the Bible. A few missionaries, however, devoted too much of their time to vocational training, which was often a source of frequent rifts among the missionaries of the Baptist Missionary Society. In 1863, for instance, the Baptist Missionary Society sent from London, Dr. S. B. Underhill, to:

... enquire into the differences which had arisen between Mr. Saker and some of his younger colleagues, who considered that the former devoted too much attention to printing, translating, language study, brick-making, carpentry, agriculture and other secular instruction, and not enough to spiritual matters.

⁹Talbot, op. cit., p. 358.

But Rev. Saker's activities were vindicated.

The list of textbooks ordered from Europe in 1867 by Rev. Saker, together with some he translated, would tend to suggest that the schools of the Baptist Missionary Society in Cameroon offered a very broad curriculum including the three R's. The books included, Geography for Beginners by Cornwell; Cornwell's Young Composer and Large School Grammar Union Spelling Book (Book I-IV); Barlow's Astronomy Simplified and Evans Introduction to the Knowledge of Science.

The curriculum and the textbooks are ample proof that these first schools were patterned on English models. The inclusion of science was also important. This might have been deliberate and designed to dispel superstition used by natives to determine the origin of nature and the operation of the universe.

The schools were financially supported by the local mission itself and the organisation in London. Although some textbooks were produced locally by the missionaries, generous supplies came from religious societies in London and from Jamaican congregations.

A practice which Vernon-Jackson considers as "the beginnings of what became... boarding schools and in-service teacher training,"¹⁰ was started. Missionaries took some

¹⁰ Vernon-Jackson, Op. cit., p. 37.

children who stayed with them while attending school; some of these, if intelligent, assisted in conducting infant classes and later became pupil teachers. This practice very much resembled the monitorial systems of Bell and Lancaster, already known in England and the early schools in North America.

The supply of teachers, school supervision, and inspection was the responsibility of missionaries, in addition to their preaching duties. Usually some freed slaves supplemented the teaching staff, as well as wives of missionaries who often used methods they remembered from their school days. Many of the missionaries were men who had received a sound classical education in England.

Attendance in the early schools was poor and fluctuating. In 1846, for instance, Rev. Merrick had reported to his London headquarters:

On Friday morning last we had 4 scholars; afternoon 59. Saturday morning 100; afternoon 76. Sunday 47. Monday morning 59; afternoon 47. Tuesday morning 56; afternoon 47. This morning we had 47. The children and young people who had not been clothed seemed ashamed to come to school in their former dress or we should, I think, have a regular attendance of about 80 or 100. ¹¹

The above quotation suggests that early schooling was free. The missionaries had created a precedent of

¹¹ BMS, Missionary Herald, Vol. III, No. LXIV, September 1846, p. 349.

supplying pupils with clothing in order to encourage attendance. For those who did not receive articles of clothing, their enthusiasm for schooling flagged.

By the time of the German annexation of the Cameroons in 1884, the Baptist Missionary Society had already established schools at Bimbia, Victoria, Bonjongo and at Bakundu, all at the Atlantic coast. Disease and illness claimed a large number of the missionaries in the Cameroon; this discouraged other willing adventures but much had been accomplished.

The efforts of early missionaries in their civilising mission to Cameroon was confined to the coastal areas, where mercantile houses were already also established. Society around the coast began to undergo a gradual transformation in habits of dress, sanitation, styles of building and exotic articles of clothing. Religious marriages constituted a public manifestation of conformity with the tenets of the new religion. Above all, education in the Western sense made its beginning.

C. The Genesis of Colonial Rule

Many European countries were present on the Cameroon River before 1884, but none claimed any political control. The British came near to such control during their efforts to suppress the slave trade and encourage

legitimate trade, and when they concluded treaties with native chiefs and instituted a Court of Equity. They remained indifferent to annexation, despite repeated appeals from native chiefs in 1879, 1882, and 1883. Even the German traders represented by the firms of Adolf Woermann and Jantzen and Thomahlen acquiesced to British annexation. As Talbot states, the request of the Douala chiefs for British annexation in 1882 was "endorsed by the German as well as British merchants but the British Consul refused to give any decisive answer."¹²

British indifference did not please the British traders and the missionaries, who had founded Victoria and named it in honour of the reigning monarch of England. As a result of competition between British and German traders at the Cameroon coast, the former anticipated annexation with impatience. British annexation was accepted by the German traders as the lesser of two evils; the hostility of the natives against German traders was escalating by 1883.

The French, who had been operating south of Cameroon, at Malimba, with an eye on the Cameroons, appeared in 1883. But protests from Douala chiefs compelled them to withdraw. The anti-German sentiments of Cameroon chiefs culminated in 1883 in an open quarrel. The German firm of Adolf Woermann

¹² Talbot, op. cit., p. 360.

from Hamburg, in its attempt to out-sell the British merchants, had resorted to the granting of credit facilities to native chiefs. The firm became pessimistic over the recovery of debts owing, should Britain annex the territory.

For this reason, Adolf Woermann became instrumental in the annexation of the territory in 1884, by putting into operation a desperate move to convince the German Reich, in the face of opposition from the enigmatic and apparently uninterested Bismarck. Woermann brought pressure to bear on the German Government, giving strong reasons for the necessity of such an undertaking. Woermann considered the Cameroons useful for strategic and economic reasons. When the annexation was duly executed by Germany, the traders were initially asked to shoulder the cost of administration. But eventually the Reich assumed the burden.

When the British were prepared to annex the Germans and the French had already entered the competition. The race for annexation began in mid-1884. The Germans edged out the British by eleven days. The ground for annexation had been secretly prepared by the German traders who had used all dubious means to entice the Douala chiefs; the latter's patience with the British had exhausted.

Hewett, the British Consul, learning of German moves, arrived in Cameroon on July 19, 1884, five days

after Dr. Nachtigal, the German plenipotentiary had signed treaties of annexation with the native chiefs, declared Cameroon a German Protectorate and raised the German flag there. The French followed on July 25 but withdrew for a second time. German claim was confirmed at the Berlin Conference of 1885. Article VI of the resulting Act included safeguards to the effect that, the signatories:

Shall without distinction of creed or nation protect and favour all religions, scientific, or charitable institutions, and undertakings created and organised for the above ends or which aim at instructing the natives and bringing home to them the blessings of civilisation.¹³

The protection contemplated by the above-quoted clause was not applied in Cameroon by the Germans, hence the British Baptist Missionary Society was compelled to abandon its activities in Cameroon in 1888 and turn its property over to the German Basel Mission at a compensation of £2,000, with the additional condition that the Native Baptist Church, a product of the Society, be allowed to "retain their own chapels and their Baptist faith and in ... no way to lose their independence."¹⁴

The Germans began to effect a series of changes

¹³ Raymond Leslie Biell, The Native Problem in Africa. (Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1965), II, p. 895.

¹⁴ Thomas Lewis, These Seventy Years. An Autobiography. (London: The Carey Press, 1927), p. 90.

aimed at consolidating their hold on the territory as well as extending it geographically. Plantation agriculture made its appearance, infra-structure was undertaken, an administrative machinery was immediately installed, and German laws and ordinances replaced native laws and customs. The new administrative and economic structure created a demand for manpower, and, as a corollary, a demand for the numerical and geographical expansion of education, the foundation of which had been laid by the British Baptist Missionary Society. German responsibility in education first took the form of financial assistance to German Missionary Societies; later government itself became involved by opening what were the first government schools in the territory.

German education in Cameroon emphasized practical skills in order to ensure a local supply of artisans. For a country poised for economic exploitation, it could hardly have been otherwise. Thus, mission workshops and government departments were virtual training schools.

In 1896, the Basel Mission established central schools at Buea, the German Cameroon headquarters at the foot of the Cameroon volcanic mountain and at Nyasoso inland in the forest zone, with feeder schools in remoter areas, a common feature of the school system in the territory under the Germans and later under the British. By 1905, the Basel Mission were operating a total of 222

schools with 7,426 pupils on the roll. With increased grants from the German colonial government, the number of schools correspondingly increased.

A characteristic of German administration was the use of brute force and discipline. This was employed in labour as in schooling where the method was used to compel school attendance. This generalized state of affairs led native rulers whose cooperation was indispensable to the success of schools, to do the same. A document of recollection by a product of the system survives to confirm the practice:

In 1904 ... I accompanied my mother to the farm, as did other boys ... We took a road near the mission station ... We came upon his late Highness Fon Nyong II ... As boys came along they were caught especially the younger ones... We were taken to the Fon's (chiefs) Palace ... we were given food ... and ... enough cloth to make a loin cloth ... A powder was rubbed on our foreheads ... we were told that whoever escaped would be caught or ... would die ... The Fon then announced we had become school children and that we were attached to the Basel Mission ... Our names were enrolled ... we were told to report ... This we did and our school career began ... The beginnings were not easy, but ... we grew to love the school ... we became happy scholars. We paid no school fees, but paid by working for the Mission, cutting grass and planks and carrying sticks. (Four years later I) acted as pupil teacher for the lower classes ... (I) was writing essays and proverbs in the Bali language ... (and with a) ... phonograph, made local records.¹⁵

¹⁵ Maxwell Gabana Fohung, Portrait of a Gentleman, an Autobiography, Buea, unpublished typescript, 1962, p. 3, cited in H.O.H. Vernon-Jackson, Schools and School Systems in Cameroon, 1844 - 1961. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Columbia University, 1968), p. 37.

The passage has been quoted at length for its revelation of not only the forceful method employed to secure enrolment and attendance but also for the information it provides on curriculum, the pupil-teacher system and the first attempts at free education.

In 1894, the German Pallotine Missionary Society which had already been operating schools at Douala, on the eastern bank of the Cameroon River, extended its activities to the western bank, where they opened a mission station at Buea. In the same year, with the assistance of a local chief (Chief Efesoa of Bonjongo), a girls' boarding school was founded. In 1897, a teacher training course was started with students drawn from Calabar in Nigeria, and in 1906, the Ikassa Mission Station in Ndian was begun. The curriculum in the teacher training classes essentially comprised craftwork and manual training, and, in the primary school, religious instruction, the three Rs, general knowledge, singing, games, gymnastics as well as German which gradually became dominant.

The German colonial administration employed every device to supplant the use of English language which was still very influential. German was to form the core of the curriculum and grants-in-aid to missionary societies were made with the avowed purpose of encouraging the teaching of German. It became an annual feature to award prizes to pupils for excellence in German and scholarships

were awarded to outstanding Cameroonians to study in Germany even though the German Administration entertained the "fear that Cameroonians who were proficient in German might constitute a potential threat to German domination."¹⁶

The language policy of German Cameroon colonial government was not only a means to cultural domination, but also had political overtones: for it was found necessary that:

The study of German should be intensified in order to reinforce German influence and to deepen the German-Kamerun connection as well as for the convenience of German administration, communication, and trade.¹⁷

This policy was effected through decrees issued by the government to commercial houses, as well as to schools in which the vernacular was proscribed.

The first education conference by the German administration was held at Douala in 1902. The main deliberation centred on the need to emphasize the German language in schools and omit and limit other languages, English and vernacular (Bali and Douala). Other related matters included conditions of grants-in-aid (determined by efficiency in the German language) and the prescription

¹⁶ Vernon-Jackson, op. cit., p. 11.

¹⁷ Ibid. 3

of a common syllabus. This conference marked the first official attempt by government to control education. The first Education Ordinance in the territory was issued in April 25, 1910.

Later the government directly entered the field of education by setting up government schools, the first of which was opened at Victoria in 1913, the eve of the first World War. Thus, by the end of the German administration government institutions included a Government Elementary School at Victoria, a Government Agricultural School at the Botanical Gardens at Bota near Victoria and a Carpentry School at Buea. It was also in 1913 that the Basel Mission opened one of their important Stations at Besongabang, one hundred and eighty miles inland.

During German administration, the modern principles and practice of education made their beginnings: The Germans laid the foundation of education on which the British were later to build. German education emphasised vocational training for a more efficient exploitation of the territory. Grants-in-aid were made to foster the German language and not for educational efficiency. But for missionary effort, the disparity in the geographical distribution of schools between the coastal and the inland areas of the territory would have left the people of the interior in perpetual ignorance.

D. The Advent of British Rule

German rule in the Cameroon ended in 1918, as a result of her loss of the war, which resulted to the loss of her overseas empire. The country was divided between the British and the French (to re-unite in 1961), by the League of Nations.

Believing that the ex-German territory was not sufficiently viable to stand on its own, the League of Nations considered the mandate system necessary in the interest of development of the areas and to avoid the abuses of colonialism. It was therefore decided "to entrust these races to the protection of nations in an advanced stage of development."¹⁸

Thus the social, political and economic development of the territory was made a responsibility of Great Britain, but the British Government was permitted to administer it as an integral part of the neighbouring and wealthier British colony of Nigeria. Thus, it came to pass that: "Development in the Cameroons, ... was tied to the needs of Nigeria rather than to the particular needs of the

¹⁸League of Nations. The Responsibility of the League Under Article 22 of the Covenant, Memorandum from the German Government Concerning the Fate of German Colonies. Document of the Assembly 106, League of Nations (20/48/106), 20th November 1920, p. 1.

mandated territory,"¹⁹ a situation which had been unforeseen by the League of Nations.

With particular reference to education, the League of Nations stated:

There shall be a gradual but steadily progressive education and training of the inhabitants of the territory with a view to the development of such a system of self-government as may be appropriate for the territory and to the development of the territory for the benefit of its inhabitants.²⁰

In 1924, all the laws, ordinances, political, economic and social institutions of Nigeria became applicable to the territory and remained so throughout British Administration. Consequently the whole history of the region from 1922 to 1960, is an appendage of the history of Nigeria.

Educational policies dealing with the opening and closing of schools, curriculum, finance and the registration of teachers from 1922 to 1955, originated from Lagos, the capital of Nigeria, with only nominal representation by the inhabitants of the mandated territory. Although from 1955 when a House of Assembly was created in the territory,

¹⁹ Harold D. Nelson, et al., Area Handbook for the United Republic of Cameroon. Washington, D.C.: The American University, 1974, p. 22.

²⁰ League of Nations. Mandates. Report of the Subcommittee, VI(c) (Draft Mandate Class B, Prepared by British League of Nations Union) Document of the Assembly 246, 10th December, 1920, p. 11.

policies were formulated locally, they were still subject to approval from Lagos.

Nevertheless, what remains clear is that the development of education in the Southern Cameroons was incumbent on Britain. How it carried out the responsibility constitutes the subject-matter of this study. But before examining that, it would be necessary to give a brief view of the society with which the British Administering Authority had to deal and the stage of development it had already attained by 1922. This would include a geographical and cultural framework for these factors helped to determine the pattern of educational development.

CHAPTER III

GEOGRAPHICAL AND CULTURAL FRAMEWORK, 1922

A. The Country

The Anglophone Provinces of the United Republic of Cameroon consist of the same territory as was administered by Britain from 1922 to 1960. They are bounded in the east by the former Eastern Cameroon (now consisting of the five Francophone Provinces), in the west and north by Nigeria and in the south by the Atlantic Ocean.

In terms of climate, topography and vegetation, it varies from south to north in a series of parallel bands. At the coast it is dominated by mangrove swamp forest; annual mean temperatures are about 80° F., rainfall from 45 inches to 494 inches at Debunsha near Victoria. Succeeding this zone is the tropical rain forest (areas of Victoria, Kumba and Mamfe Divisions), of tall luxuriant trees and thick undergrowth. The mean annual temperature here is between 50° and 80° F. Further north is the Savanah grassland with low-lying terrain rising to about 2,000 feet. The territory experiences two main seasons -- the dry and the rainy season -- each lasting about six months. Rainfall and vegetation diminish as one moves from

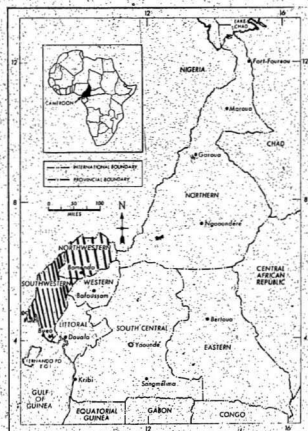


Figure 1. The United Republic of Cameroon: Anglophone Provinces Shaded

the coast northwards.

Topographically, the country is much broken, thus constituting an impediment to communication. The mountain system forms part of the Central African plateau system dominated by the volcanic Cameroon Mountain (the highest peak in West Africa). The drainage system is composed of three main rivers -- the Meme, Mungo and Cross -- The Cross being navigable up to Mamfe from Calabar in Nigeria.

One of the physical problems that stood on the way of development generally and education in particular, was the lack of communication. Before German occupation, there were virtually no roads; each village or community was linked to the other by forest footpaths, a source of very trying moments for school inspectors, visiting teachers and supervisors to schools in remoter areas.

Up to the advent of British administration, the only roads built by the Germans covered short distances, and mostly around the coastal areas. From Victoria, a road went to Bikundi (25 miles), to Buea, the headquarters (16 miles); from Buea to Tiko, a port town at the coast, all of permanent construction with stone bridges and culverts. From Kumba, inland, a road of temporary structure ran north towards Mamfe for 20 miles and from Mamfe southwards for 12 miles. Thus intercourse between the coastal peoples and those of the interior was minimal.

Although the Germans had built two-foot gauge

railways, these were designed to serve their scattered plantations in Victoria and Kumba Divisions. Victoria and Tiko on the Atlantic coast were accessible by ocean liners and thus brought the country in the mainstream of international intercourse. Of the inland water ways, the 'Cross River' in Mamfe was important.

B. The People

The people are divided into two broad groups on the basis of language -- The Bantu and the Semi-Bantu. They are said to have settled in their present areas as a result of migration from the Congo area (the historical dispersal point of the Bantus of Central Africa).

From the coast to a point mid-way between Kumba and Mamfe Division, are to be found the Bantu group comprising various tribes -- the Bakweri, described by British administrators as very "low in the order of civilisation until the British Missionaries began to teach them a better way of life,"²¹ the Balundu and Bafaw. These tribes are further divided into groups of villages claiming the same ancestor, even though they are more often separated by considerable distances. From Mamfe northwards to Bamenda,

²¹ United Kingdom, Colonial Office, Report on the British Sphere of the Cameroons for 1921. (London: H.M.S.O., 1922), p. 48.

the people comprise mostly the Semi-Bantu. A notable characteristic among the Bantu and Semi-Bantu is the multiplicity of native languages, a factor which accounts for the inability of the British administrators to adopt the vernacular as a general medium of instruction in the school system. But as would be seen later, some attempt was made to adopt it in the first two or three years of primary schooling.

By the time of the installation of British administration, the population had become more heterogeneous with some accessible towns and villages becoming more and more cosmopolitan to include other Bantus and Semi-Bantus from Nigeria -- Ibibios, Yoruba, Ibos and Hausas and Fulanis. From other parts of West Africa came the Gold Coastians (present Ghana). This new immigration was dictated by trade, "national" and international.

C. Economic, Political and Social Structure

1. Economy

The economy was still at the subsistence level. The mainstay of the economy was and continues to be agricultural. The coastal natives cultivate cocoyams (cocolosia), plantains, yams, cassava, maize and vegetables which constitute the staple foodstuffs of the people. In the north, cereals and Irish potatoes are important. But

generally, maize beans, plantains, cocoyams, yams and vegetables are common throughout the country.

Livestock is an important source of wealth, the breeds differing from region to region. In the northern part where the vegetation is predominantly grassland and free from the tse-tse fly, cattle-rearing forms an important part of economic activities. Goats, pigs, sheep, ducks and chicken form an important part of the wealth of a villager, and constituted one important source of money for school fees. Fishing normally was undertaken in riverine areas. Thus, one of the important activities of the coastal people was fishing for local consumption, both males and females taking part, using locally made nets and hooks, as well as such other primitive methods as poisoning. Hunting was no less important but this occupation is reserved for males.

Cash crops -- cocoa, coffee -- were already becoming popular. A few native industries corresponding to cultural groups and dependent on natural resources existed. In the northern part of the territory, the people are skillful in carving objects from blocks of wood, iron works and smelting from local ore, fashioning of weapons and agricultural implements as well as cloth and raphia weaving. In Mamfe division in the forest area a salt pond had been founded by the Germans at Echitako. This formed an important source of wealth for females due to its high demand as far afield as Calabar in Nigeria. Crude pottery from

local clay, mat-weaving from raphia palm fibre and palm oil production - using native methods are important. Tapping wine from the palm trees is a very lucrative occupation. An individual who could not tap wine, hunt or keep a few chicken could not hope to educate his child.

An important aspect of the economic activities of the native Cameroonians was the participation of all members of the family. Farm work was and still is undertaken on a coöperative basis with various age-groups forming societies for cleaning the bush and tilling the soil. This pattern of economic organisation presented a veritable problem to formal education in terms of attendance and enrolment, absenteeism being rampant. An analogy may be made here with child labour and education in England during and after the industrial revolution. The emphases on agriculture, as part of the school curriculum, was usually resisted, albeit unsuccessfully.

2. Political Organisation

Political systems are different between the north and the south. In the north the political system was more centralised while among the southern and coastal tribes the system is different. In Mamfe Division, for instance, an area of the Semi-Bantu, villages and towns are independent of one another, each having its own chief, while among the Bantus of Kumba and Victoria, tribes are divided into clans

governed by semi-hereditary chiefs.

A common characteristic is, however, the fact that the titular chiefs were surrounded by a council of elders with advisory functions, but in some cases, as with the Banyangi and Keaka of the Semi-Bantu in Mamfe Division, the governing power ultimately rested with a secret society (Ekepe). The chief and his council took care of local administration and settled minor civil and criminal matters, meting out various forms of punishment and fines on the losing party.

During German administration, the authority of the chief was greatly undermined, with the consequence that no co-operation existed between the governors and the governed. Their authority was, however, restored by the British in accordance with British policy of "indirect rule" enabling the colonial administration "to rule through the chiefs, endeavour to educate them in the duties of rulers, to seek their co-operation, and maintain their prestige."²²

It was through the co-operation of native chiefs that missionary effort in educational activities were successfully carried out. For instance, land grants were made by chiefs to Missionary Societies for the purpose of erecting

²² Cited in United Kingdom, Colonial Office, Report on the British Sphere of the Cameroons for 1922. (London: H.M.S.O. 1923), p. 52.

schools. Again, the chiefs were virtually the local administrators of Native Administration Schools, introduced in 1922.

3. Social Organisation

The unit of social organisation is the extended family. Kins or near kins could live under the same roof or in different residences, more commonly in the same compound. Beyond the extended family is the "quarter" usually comprising a group descended from a common ancestor. The clan and the tribe form the larger unit of social organisation. This organisation has a functional value, especially in continuity, cohesion and economic co-operation.

Westerners view this organisation as one of the factors inhibiting modernisation in such societies; on the contrary it would appear to contribute to it. In the sphere of education, for instance, a man who could afford the means, might undertake to shoulder the responsibility of educating the son or daughter of a poor brother, an uncle, a cousin and so on. Even where relationship is traced to first, second and third cousins, in as much as a common ancestor is the basis of relationship, children or other relatives are always sure of support. In modern economic organisations, members of the extended families pull their resources together to establish enterprises. Such business names as "X Family Store," "Y and Sons Company," "Z and

Brothers Enterprises" and so on are a reflection of the extended family system.

At this point, a word on traditional education is in order. The advent of Western education has tended to obscure the fact that the Cameroonians had and still have a way of educating their young. Education is concerned with the transmission of culture and it is difficult to think of a society without a system of cultural transmission.

As occurs in other parts of Africa, traditional education formed an integral part of the life of the people; it was not given in any particular place or time, employed no special teachers except where specialised skills were involved and apprenticeship became necessary.

The education of the Cameroonian occurred from birth to adulthood. Where Western education has been introduced, the rudimentary-acculturative education ends at about 5 or 6 to make place for Western schooling. Where Western education has not been introduced, as the situation was before the advent of missionaries, traditional education continued through adolescence to adulthood.

Traditional education was functional and practical; the curriculum was directly relevant to the needs of the individual and the community. In many respects, it was also intellectual, if by this we mean ability to reason abstractly. The child was taught to greet with signs which convey respect, to elders and others above his own age.

Hygiene was greatly emphasised. A child was taught to wash the hands before eating; he was taught to receive with the right hand and not with the left, which is considered a sign of ungratefulness or disrespect; to receive from elders, the two hands must be used.

At the appropriate age, the child begins to learn the local geography and history; biology and zoology are studied by observation, with proverbs and riddles constituting a very important intellectual exercise. Many communities have produced professional story-tellers whose only limitations were the lack of native literacy to be able to produce local literature.

In physical education, it very much resembled ancient Greek education. Wrestling, dancing, climbing, and music, form a very important part of the curriculum of native education, not only as outlets of emotions but also as cultural vehicles and encouragement of group cooperation. Among the coastal peoples (Kumba, Victoria and Mamfe Divisions), wrestling was a way of life and provided occasions for competition among villages.

Vocational education featured prominently in the daily activities. Crafts, trades of various sorts, agriculture, participation in community activities, and the promotion of cultural heritage formed and continue to form parts of the encyclopaedic curriculum of traditional education. Secret cults constituted institutions of

higher learning.

Traditional education did not require any special teaching methods. As Fafunwa states: "Culture, in traditional society, is not taught: it is caught."²³ Broadly stated, the aim of traditional education was much the same as that of Western education -- it aimed at developing the child morally, physically and intellectually. It was not deliberate and it served to make the child useful to himself and the community. There was no educated unemployment.

Changes which affected traditional education began to take place in mid-nineteenth century with the advent of Europeans -- traders and missionaries. By 1922, formal education of the Western type was already well established. During the first few years of British rule, some antipathy to Western education existed, presumably because its full impact had not then become apparent; political, economic and social institutions which render such education attractive had not been established. The British Administering Authority, on the other hand, was not at the time well disposed to introduce a definite education policy to control the system, which was left, until 1926, to the whims and caprices of whoever operated a school.

²³ A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria. (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1974), p. 48.

CHAPTER IV

EVOLUTION OF BRITISH COLONIAL EDUCATION POLICY

A. Educational Development, 1914 - 1925

The period between 1914 and 1925 can rightly be described as one of laissez-faire in educational development. Educational activities proceeded with no official policy, regulations and ordinances. Although an Education Department had been created in the territory in 1922, the regulations introduced were an application of those existing in the neighbouring British colony of Nigeria. These regulations, however, applied more strictly to the government schools. As officially reported in 1922 to the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission:

No formality of any kind are required in order to open a church, a chapel or school, and native catechists are free to go where they like (to open a school) ... no control is exercised over Mission Schools, and the teaching, whether secular or religious, can be given in any language.²⁴

What type of system and what quality of education might have resulted if things had not changed can only be conjectured. But it was precisely this laissez-faire and

²⁴United Kingdom, Colonial Office. Report on the British Sphere of the Cameroons for 1922. London: H.M.S.O. (Cmd. 1647), 1923, p. 40.

lackadaisical attitude of the British Government that produced a system against which the Phelps-Stokes Commission was to inveigh, as we shall see in the next section. The same report of 1922 revealed:

No Regulations have as yet been drawn up, but those made under the Education Ordinance of the neighbouring protectorate of Nigeria are followed as closely as circumstances permit.²⁵

During the war, the German school system had collapsed. The few surviving schools were administered by British military personnel. The rest were either destroyed or converted into sick bays for the wounded. When civil administration was introduced in 1916, five more government schools were opened, in addition to the ex-German elementary school at Victoria. This was, in fact, the beginning of a fairer distribution of government schools on a geographical basis, for educational activities had hitherto been confined to the coastal areas.

This first direct involvement of the government in education originated from the fact that, at the end of the war, the missions had been left to local catechists in straitened circumstances, with no financial assistance coming from mission organisations in Europe. Thus, the amount of educational facilities which they could provide was glaringly inadequate to satisfy increased demand for

²⁵ Ibid., p. 43.

education. In its official report of 1921, the Administering Authority stated:

The Government has, therefore, begun to fill the breach by providing five adequately staffed and inspected schools to meet the large and growing demand among the natives for education.²⁶

It is difficult to explain the origin of the "large and growing demand" by the natives for education, at a time when no discernible incentives existed to warrant such a demand. This might have been spontaneous. To the Administering Authorities, and to a large extent, the missions, the provision of schools was a social service, and the school was merely a civilising agency. On the other hand, the natives regarded schools as places for children to meet friends and study the White Man's craft as well as to learn new values, habits of dress and hygiene. It was also a place for disciplining the stubborn child. It is therefore no surprise that in many cases the child who was sent to school was more often than not a disciplinary problem at home. These factors explain the early clamour and demand for education by both parents and children. As shown in Table 1, enrolment in the six government schools in 1925 does not indicate the "large and growing demand"

²⁶United Kingdom, Colonial Office. Report on the British Sphere of the Cameroons for 1921. (London: H.M.S.O. (Cond. 1647), 1922), p. 56.

for education in any significant way.

Table 1

School Enrolment and Average Attendance in
Six Government Schools, 1925

School	Division	Number on Roll		Average Attendance	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Buea	Victoria	161	24	132	17
Victoria	Victoria	263	66	210	55
Kumba	Kumba	208	9	166	9
Nyasoso	Kumba	141	3	122	4
Mamfe	Mamfe	158	11	130	12
Bamenda	Bamenda	162	9	134	6

Source: United Kingdom, Colonial Office, Report by His
Britanic Majesty's Government on the Administration
Under Mandate of British Cameroons for the Year,
1925. London: H.M.S.O. (Col. No. 16), 1926.

The policy of the Administering Authority was to provide a government school in each of the four Divisions and at the headquarters of the territory. But influential chiefs could have government schools provided in their areas. For instance, the government school at Nyasoso is an example of such influence by traditional rulers. As the table above would seem to

indicate, there was more enthusiasm for education among the people of the Atlantic coast, where European presence for a long time had had a great impact on the lives of the people, than among those of the interior of the territory. It may be assumed that increased enrolment in the coastal areas was due to the hope of job opportunities in the plantations, but this is a mistaken view. Increased enrolments were determined by the overall population of school-age children in the four Divisions of the territory, and the greater enlightenment of the coastal peoples.

Besides the necessity "to fill the breach," Government schools were also intended to stand as models and to furnish examples to non-government schools in terms of qualified teaching personnel, equipment and management. At a time when communication problems precluded regular inspection of schools, the management of government schools was entrusted to the local Divisional Officers who were made responsible to the Education Department for their maintenance and control.

With regards to mission schools, the German Missionary Societies had abandoned their work when the defeat of German troops in the territory became imminent. What remained of mission schools were, in fact, schools for giving religious instruction. The British official report of 1924 described them as:

"Hedge Schools which consist almost entirely of irregularly attending children ... often closed for long periods during harvesting and planting and have

no organisation, materials or qualified staff ... employed by catechists of German days to keep together the numerous mission nuclei to be found in almost every village of any size ...²⁷

By 1922, there was the return of peace in the territory. Missionary Societies, which had been forced to flee, began to apply for permission to return. Bishop Shanahan of Onitsha in Nigeria, whose jurisdiction came to include the British Southern Cameroons and who had previously undertaken an inspection tour of the territory, applied for the re-establishment of Catholic work there.

In 1922, led by Father Campling, the Saint Joseph's Missionary Society of Mill Hill, near London, arrived to take over the work which had been started by the German Catholic Pallotiner, with headquarters at the German military station buildings at Soppo, near Buea. British official reports of the same year, described their schools as the most organised.

The Basel Missionary Society from Switzerland followed three years later; three of their missionaries arrived in 1925. It was officially reported in the same year that they had opened thirteen schools in various villages and twenty-six out-stations. The number of schools

²⁷ United Kingdom, Colonial Office. Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government on the Administration Under Mandate of British Cameroons for the Year 1924. London: H.M.S.O. (Colonial No. 16), 1925, p. 37.

in so short a space of time would tend to suggest that the exercise was a reorganization of schools already described as "hedge" schools, rather than the opening of new ones.

The arrival of the Basel and Catholic Missions between 1922 and 1925 provided impetus to the spread of educational facilities. The Missionary Societies adopted a pattern similar to that of the German days. It became customary to establish a Central School in a sizeable village or a town with a radiation of feeder schools in the remoter villages. Central Schools offered a complete primary school course of eight years, while the village schools offered a junior primary course of four. Successful pupils from the latter went to complete the course in the former.

The rationale for this organisation is not clear. However, the Missionary Societies were usually not in good financial standing to provide the buildings, equipment and staffing required by equal provision of full primary schools everywhere. Secondly, at a period when infrastructure was not sufficiently developed and when travelling from one community to another was considered an adventure, children in remoter areas ran the risk of being deprived of a modicum of education. Implicit in this organisation was also the desire to extend missionary tentacles to all parts of the territory. There was no restriction as to where to open a school. Two or three missionary bodies could and

did open schools in the same town or village. In numerical terms, there were schools in almost every village in the territory but qualitatively they fell below standards required of a school.

As early as 1922, Native Administrations were introduced. One of their responsibilities was the provision of educational facilities. This was an act of wisdom on the part of the Administering Authority. Areas which could not be reached by Government or Missionary Societies were able to benefit from the spread of education. Twelve Native Administration (N.A.) Schools were established throughout the territory in April, 1922,²⁸ with a total enrolment of 843 pupils. N.A. Schools were more fortunate than Mission schools. They were financed by the people themselves through local taxation; buildings were provided by the local people. Books, equipment and teachers' salaries were the responsibility of the Native Administration, usually on the advice and recommendations of the government inspector.

The survival of N.A. Schools depended, to a large extent, on the cooperation of the people and the chief of the locality. A common occurrence during the period before the outbreak of the Second World War was the opening and closing of Native Administration schools, often due to lack of attendance or interest of the local people and the chiefs.

²⁸Appendix E.

Native Administration Schools were confined to infant classes. As officially reported to the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission in 1924:

The Native Administration schools aim at elementary education for the mass, just sufficient to enable them to pursue their normal occupations more efficiently and give them the necessary grounding so that, if they desire it, they can continue their studies at the nearest Government school.²⁹

From their inception, it was made clear that N.A. schools were only a temporary measure. The emphasis placed on character formation as an educational philosophy made the mission schools more preferable to Government or N.A. schools. Consequently the N.A. schools were planned to pass eventually, to the control of Missionary Societies which were considered "in a better position than the administration to develop disciplined character, with the aid of those moral sanctions without which all knowledge becomes harmful to the individual and a danger to the State."³⁰ Implied in this view was the desire to turn out docile and obedient colonial subjects.

A direct outcome of emphasis on character training was the introduction of boarding schools. It is here that

²⁹ United Kingdom, Colonial Office. Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government on the Administration Under Mandate of British Cameroons for the Year 1924. London: H.M.S.O. (Col. No. 16), 1925, p. 37.

³⁰ United Kingdom, Colonial Office. Report on the British Sphere of the Cameroons for 1922. London: H.M.S.O. (Cond 1647), 1923, pp. 43-44.

we see the influence of Lord Lugard, Governor-General of Nigeria from 1913 to 1919. Using his previous experiences in India, Hong Kong and East Africa, Sir Frederick Lugard, author of The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa and a proponent of boarding school systems recommended it for Nigeria, stating that:

Character is formed "by the public opinion of the school-boy world in which a boy moves" -- by example and influence rather than by precept. The first object, then, must be to see that the pupils are brought continuously under the right influences. This can best be effected by the boarding-school in which a boy lives wholly in the atmosphere of the school and is removed from the subversive influences of his normal environment ... The boarding-school must not be too near to a native town. It should approximate to the model of an English public school in its internal organisation ...³¹

Boarding-schools were not new to Cameroonians. Missionary Societies had had the same views under the Germans and before, but it was given a definite direction, becoming official policy in Nigeria and by extension applied to the Southern Cameroons. Boarding-schools were provided in the early years from the primary school level. In latter years, they became limited to post-primary institutions.

In both Government and N.A. schools, the entry age was not to exceed 13. Thus, in many schools there was a

³¹ Lord Lugard. The Dual Mandate in British Africa. (London: Frank Cass and Co., Ltd., 1965), p. 433.

mixture of both younger and older pupils. In a society where schooling had not become widespread, it was considered necessary to take older pupils. Secondly, sending a child to school was determined by size rather than by age. A child was made to touch the opposite ear passing his hand above his head. If he did this, he was declared to be of school age.

Educational activities were being carried out by 1925, by four agencies -- Government, Native Administrations, the Catholic and the Basel Missionary Societies -- all virtually pursuing independent policies, in terms of opening and closing of schools, supervision and inspection, finances and the curriculum. The small grants which were made to qualified mission schools at the time came from Native Administrations in whose areas such schools were located.

Native Administration grants were made to mission schools which qualified on the basis of attendance and results under Nigerian education regulations, all of which had become applicable to the Southern Cameroons. Payment of grants on the basis of attendance and results resembled the British system of grants-in-aid introduced in 1862.³² Grants to Missionary Societies were made by the Native Administrations rather than by the government. In fact,

³²See Michael Hyndman, School and Schooling in England and Wales: A Documentary History (London: Harpur and Row, 1978), p. 31.

this practice was consistent with British policy at home, where education was more a responsibility of the local authorities than that of the central government. The Table below shows expenditure of Native Administrations in the Southern Cameroons during the period 1923 to 1925.

Table 2

Native Administration Expenditure on
Education, 1923 - 1925 (£ Sterling)³³

Native Administ- ration	1923		1924		1925	
	Budget	Education	Budget	Education	Budget	Education
Bamenda	1998	155	2332	206	3021	298
Kumba	2491	320	2122	309	3321	415
Mamfe	3161	493	2980	674	3344	681
Victoria	2258	467	2847	305	2963	381

Source: Compiled from Her Majesty's Government of U.K.
Reports on the Administration of British Cameroons,
1923 - 1925.

³³ Expenditure covered salaries for N.A. teachers, equipment, books, contingencies and Grants-in-aid to Missionary Societies.

Native Administrations expended between 5 and 10 percent of their budget on education. The Native Administrations near the coast (Victoria and Kumba) spent more than those in the north.

Government expenditure on education was specifically for government schools and covered equipment, salaries and Empire Day Celebrations. In 1923, the Government budget was £2,923, out of which £106,356 was allocated to education; in 1925 there was an increase in the total government expenditure on education: the budget was £129,708 and expenditure on education was £4,850.

The Missionary Societies derived their funds from two other sources: their home organisations and school fees paid by enrolling pupils. School fees was, however, not a very reliable and significant source of mission funding. Although 6d a month was charged as fees (a very considerable amount in those days), fee remissions were made in respect of pupils whose parents were not able to pay. The financial problems of the Missionary Societies had a degenerating effect on the quality of education which they could offer. Their inability to procure and pay qualified teachers gave recourse to the reliance on unqualified and pupil-teachers.

The problem of procuring teachers was, however, a generalised one, which affected not only the Missionary Societies but also the Native Administration and, to a certain extent, even the Government, as Table 3 reveals.

Table 3

Teaching Staff in the Southern Cameroons, 1924

School	West Indian	First Class Certif- icated Teachers	Second Class Certif- icated Teachers	Third Class Certif- icated Teachers	Assistant Teacher	Without Certif- icate	Second Year Pupil Teacher	First Year Pupil Teacher
Government	1	7	6	2	9	-	3	7
Native Adm.	-	-	-	1	21	-	-	-
Mission	-	-	-	-	-	48	-	-

The lack of teachers in the Native Administration Schools was attributed to the difficulty of finding qualified teachers; for the missions the additional problem of funds was imposed.

In 1922, the first inspector of education in the territory (posted from Lagos, Nigeria) had found the teaching staff very inadequate for the six government schools in the Province resulting from the number of schools being reduced in order to increase the number of teachers. Annual enrolment in all the schools was outstripping the number of teachers available. In the same year, the annual report of the British Cameroon Administering Authority to the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission, stated:

The subject of education is one of the greatest concerns to the local administration and may be said to be limited in its expansion only by the lack of teachers... qualified teachers or even unqualified teachers possessed of character, are not forthcoming in any way commensurate with the demand.³⁴

Refresher courses initially adopted to improve the quality of the teaching staff in all schools became annual features for uncertificated teachers. Three years later, the first attempt was made to provide an institution for the training of teachers. This Normal Class was opened

³⁴ United Kingdom, Colonial Office. Report on the British Sphere of the Cameroons for 1922. London: H.M.S.O. (Cond. 1647), 1923, p. 42.

at the Government elementary school Victoria under a West Indian Schoolmaster, who was also head of the secondary department. Admission to the Normal class was reserved to pupil-teachers who had put in two years of service or passed Class Two of the Secondary Department. The organisation of post-primary education before the Second World War was patterned on the model of an elementary system which had been developing in England, amidst protests, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.³⁵ A secondary department was usually created as an extension of the elementary school. This pseudo-secondary system offered secondary subjects to elementary pupils in the higher classes. In the opinion of the Administering Authority, the need for secondary or higher education had not yet arisen, due to the lack of overall development of the territory, the limited financial resources and insufficient school enrolment and attendance.

Developments in the territory from 1925 began to introduce conditions favourable to a burgeoning economy and the stimulation of educational development. The ex-German plantations unsuccessfully put up for sale to non-enemy nations were re-purchased by their former owners. The "economic recovery of these plantations, at a time of world-wide economic expansion and prosperity, overall

³⁵See John Lawson and Harold Silver. A Social History of Education in England. (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1973). Chapter IX.

economic conditions in the Southern Cameroons became positively affected and with widespread social repercussions including demand for and ability to make greater provision for schools."³⁶

That the missions were exhilarated about the economic recovery is implicit in Rev. Campling's proposal for a high school. It was during this period that the Basel Mission also resumed their work in the territory and the three Missionary Societies -- Catholic, Baptist and Basel -- entered the field of education in earnest.

Another factor which influenced educational development was the Anglo-American Convention which conferred rights of entry into the territory to American Nationals. This Convention had the effect of increasing international trade and facilitating the entry of American Missionaries who were to make a significant contribution towards the development of education in the Southern Cameroons long after the British period. This increase in the number of educational agencies, notwithstanding, a "system" of education cannot be said to have begun.

Characteristic of the period 1914 - 1925 was the absence of an educational policy. In 1924, the Nigerian laws, ordinances, and regulations had become extended to the Southern Cameroons, but the Nigerian education code

³⁶Vernon-Jackson, Schools and School Systems, p. 341.

was only applicable to government schools. Missionary societies operated schools with virtually no aid from the government; what little aid they received came from Native Administrations. There was no generally applied system of school supervision and inspection. Although government schools were inspected by a government inspector, Mission Schools were only inspected if request was made by the proprietors. This was the state of education which reigned when the Phelps-Stokes Commission undertook the study of education in Africa in 1920-21.

B. The Phelps-Stokes Report and the Emergence of British Education Policy

The evolution of British education policy in its dependencies was not voluntary. Berman states that the British "were forced to take an active role in African education by a combination of missionary pressure and world opinion, manifested by several articles of the Treaty of Versailles."³⁷ For a long time, missionaries and colonial administrators in African dependencies had acted in concert, maintaining a reciprocal relationship in the educational

³⁷ Edward H. Berman. African Reactions to Missionary Education. (New York: Teachers College Press, University of Columbia, 1975), p. 17.

and political sphere. But the former had borne the educational burden with no assistance from the latter. This indifference by British administrators led to the demand by Missionary Societies for government subsidisation.

The absence of a British education policy and the growing criticisms against the education policy of Missionary Societies in matters of financing and staffing rendered new directions in African education necessary. Other Missionary Societies interested in extending their educational activities to Africa, called for an investigation of the state of education there, in terms of needs and resources. The American Foreign Missionary Society importuned The Foreign Mission Conference of America to persuade the Trustees of the Phelps-Stokes Fund to sponsor a feasibility study of education in Africa. The Phelps-Stokes Fund was established by will in 1911 by Miss Caroline Phelps-Stokes, for the purpose of furthering Negro education both in America and Africa.

Two commissions were appointed to undertake the task in 1920-21 and 1922-23, the first in West Africa and the second in East Africa. The West African Commission was composed of Thomas Jesse Jones, a sociologist and Director of Research at Hampton Institute, a Negro institution, Dr. J.K. Aggrey of Achimota College in the Gold Coast (present Ghana), Dr. Henry Stanley Hollenbeck who had been a missionary in Angola, Mr. & Mrs. Arthur

Wilkie of the Church of Scotland Mission, Calabar, Nigeria, and Mr. Leo A. Roy, an accountant and specialist in Industrial Education who had supervised the technical training of Negro soldiers during the First World War. These members were carefully selected for their special knowledge of the Negro. The terms of reference were:

1. To enquire as to the educational work already being carried out in the areas to be studied.
2. To investigate the educational needs of the people in the light of religious, social, hygienic and economic conditions.
3. To ascertain to what extent the needs were being met.
4. To report on the results of the findings.

The Commission visited schools in towns and villages. It interviewed peoples of all walks of life -- from streetsweepers to colonial governors, and administrators, including teachers; pupils were tested in the process. An observation made by Dr. Henry Carr, a Nigerian educator, who accompanied them in some of the visits to schools, indicates its methods:

The questions were put by different members of the commission with a view to testing the intelligence of the scholars and to ascertaining their attitude and outlook on life. The aim of the commission was to discover whether the education of the boys and girls is in touch with the actual development of the

country. It cannot be said that the answers given to the various questions were very satisfactory ... The questions asked had but little bearing on the subjects which many of these boys were studying for such examinations as the Oxford or Cambridge Local Examinations ... The problem here is to get the scholars to be taught to think, and how to get our teachers to realise the fact that information is the least part of our education, that our aim in education is not to produce a stock of facts, but to develop a certain habit of mind and a certain type of character.³⁸

The investigations exposed the quality of education in Africa to the world at a time when "the role of education as a lever of social, political and economic change was receiving consideration by international leaders throughout the world."³⁹ As a result of the study, two reports were published: Education in Africa (1922) from the study of West, Equatorial and South Africa and Education in East Africa (1924). The report noted the invaluable contribution of the Missionary Societies and the mediocrity of colonial education system. The curriculum had no bearing on the needs of the community. The recurrent theme throughout the report was the need to adapt education to the needs of the individual and of the community. The Commission suggested a curriculum which should emphasise:

³⁸ Henry Carr. Lectures and Speeches. Collected by J.C. Gwan and edited by O.O. Taiwo. (London: Oxford Pafunwa University Press, 1969) pp. 44-45; cited in A Babs Pafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria. (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1974), p. 121.

³⁹ David G. Scanlon (ed.). Traditions of African Education. (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964), p. 51.

1. The Development of character
2. Health
3. Agriculture and industrial skills
4. The improvement of family life
5. The encouragement of healthy recreation

The curriculum suggested was wholly practical and offered little academic education. It reveals the influence of the Hampton philosophy of education applied to Negro education in the United States of America. The Hampton Institute in the United States was "dedicated to the principles of vocationalism for recently liberated slaves."⁴⁰ It is evident that the Phelps-Stokes Commission contemplated the introduction of the same type of education offered to the Negroes in the United States. As Berman states:

There was a fallacious but widely shared belief that the situation of the American Negroes was approximated by the African masses. If the vocational approach to education had proved successful with the former making them independent and economically self-sufficient Christian citizens, many missionaries believed that a similar course of action would prove successful in Africa.⁴¹

More relevant, however, was the age-old imperialist prejudice that the African was "lazy, and manual labor advocated as the panacea for this malaise" and because of

⁴⁰Edward H. Berman, op. cit., p. 11.

⁴¹Ibid.

their "inferiority and depravity" and "intellectual informity", they and "their American descendants could not benefit from literary education."⁴² All told, the curriculum was a return to indigenous education before the advent of Western education.⁴³

In all schools visited, the Commission lamented the absence of organisation and supervision; it concluded that "the greatest losses in mission work are the direct result of the failure to organise and supervise activities" and that the Government and Missions have not applied to their educational work the sound principles of administration which are increasingly recognised in other undertakings of importance."⁴⁴

Recommendations made included the formation of an advisory board having well-defined functions with representations from government, mission, and natives conversant with educational matters, in addition to representatives from agricultural, industrial and commercial forces in the colony and the keeping of accurate financial and other records on teachers, pupils and their activities, school buildings and other equipment, as well as planning of playgrounds.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³See Chapter Three.

⁴⁴L.J. Lewis (ed.). Phelps-Stokes Report on Education in Africa. (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 107.

The publication of the Phelps-Stokes Commission's report in 1922 galvanised the British Government to effectuate changes in its colonial policy in so far as education was concerned. As a well-known Nigerian educator eloquently and laconically puts it: "The Commission's major findings jolted the British colonial government from its serene and lackadaisical position into positive action."⁴⁵

The response of the British Government was immediate. Within a year of the publication of the Phelps-Stokes report, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies appointed an Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical Dependencies. Its terms of reference were:

To advise the Secretary of State on any matters of Native Education in the British Colonies and Protectorates in Tropical Africa, which he may from time to time refer to it; and to assist him in advancing the progress of Education in these Colonies and Protectorates.⁴⁶

The result of the deliberations of the Advisory Committee was the publication of Education Policy in British Tropical Africa, in 1925. The document was virtually a re-statement of the findings of the Phelps-Stokes Commission's report and consequently greatly influenced by Hampton's

⁴⁵ A. Babs Fafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria. (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1974), p. 121.

⁴⁶ Cited in F.H. Hilliard, A Short History of Education in British West Africa. (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1957), p. 168.

philosophy of education specially designed for Negroes. The relationship between the governments of the colonies and the voluntary agencies in the control of education was clearly spelt out:

Government welcomes and will encourage voluntary educational effort which conforms to the general policy. But it reserves to itself the general direction of educational policy and the supervision of all educational institutions, by inspection and other means.⁴⁷

The Education Policy called for the setting up of Advisory Boards of Education with advisory functions. It also requested colonial administrators to introduce a system of school inspection by government officials and laid particular emphasis on the need to engage qualified teachers, preferably selected and trained, from their tribes or districts of origin. The need to adapt education to the community made it necessary to engage teachers from among the people, for their knowledge of the local language, traditions and customs.

Referring to schools, the Advisory Committee recommended the establishment of all levels -- primary, secondary and university; technical and vocational training in schools with qualified instructors or in workshops for

⁴⁷Cited in David G. Scanlon (ed.), op. cit., p. 93.

those with basic literacy. The curriculum was to be, as much as possible, related to the local culture, and also aim at training for leadership and for public service. Religion occupied an important place in school life for its role in character formation and loyal citizenship. Very important was the emphasis on the use of vernacular as a medium of instruction in both Mission and Government schools and the production of vernacular textbooks.

An important part of the policy statement was the invitation to colonial governments to give equal recognition to Mission Schools as was accorded government schools. In view of the valuable work of the Missionary Societies and their great financial burden occasioned by their educational activities, a grants-in-aid system was recommended for Voluntary Agencies meeting the required standard of efficiency. An important aspect of this recommendation was the fact that such grants were not to be based on examination results.⁴⁸

Other measures evolved to improve the quality of education in the British dependencies included the establishment of a Colonial Education Service at the Colonial Office in London, special courses at the London Institute of

⁴⁸Grants-in-aid based on results had been introduced in Nigeria as early as 1872, two years after the system was criticised and abolished in England itself. The system had the effect of degenerating the quality of education in general and teaching methods in particular.

Education to prepare Government Education Officers and educationists of Voluntary Agencies, preparatory to their taking up appointments in Africa, were also instituted.

It was this first British education policy which guided the development of education in Nigeria and the British Cameroons.⁴⁹ Together with the Phelps-Stokes report, it became the most authoritative source of reference on colonial education. However plausible the suggestions contained in these documents might have been at the time, they had far reaching implications on the personality and aspirations of the natives under a colonial situation.

First, the emphasis on adaptation of education to the economic circumstances of the natives meant that a majority of educated natives would be tied to the land while only a handful will be channelled into professional and sub-professional positions. This policy, therefore, had the effect of creating an elite society, where the educated few would be placed in a more privileged position over the majority of the people and identify themselves with the colonisers. After so many years of contact with Europeans, the education that the native African wanted was not that which tied him to the land. Since the coloniser

⁴⁹ Policies dealing with specific aspects of education followed in subsequent years. For instance, a sub-committee of the Advisory Committee was constituted in 1941 to consider the specific question of mass education and a report, Mass Education in African Society published in 1944.

enjoyed a superior position, the African wanted an education which brought him to a position of equality with the coloniser. Therefore: "Given the nature of the colonial situation, there was little likelihood that the proposals of the Phelps-Stokes commissions or the Advisory Committee would have ever been translated into reality."⁵⁰ A perusal of the curriculum prescribed by the 1926 Nigerian Education Code for primary, secondary, technical and teacher training institutions shows that as far as educational content was concerned, the Phelps-Stokes commission's recommendations and that of the Advisory Committee were not adopted in their entirety.

C. Education Code for Southern Nigeria and Cameroon, 1926

The Education Code prepared in 1926 for the Southern Provinces of Nigeria and the Cameroon by the Nigerian Government was inspired by the 1925 Education Policy for British Tropical Dependencies. It was "specifically made to curb the mushroom development of unassisted schools⁵¹ both by the missions and private individuals," the number of which had grown so rapidly

⁵⁰ Philip Foster, Education and Social Change in Ghana. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 165.

⁵¹ See Chapter V.

that "even the missions which were responsible for most of them were unable to exercise any control over them"⁵² and the Department of Education itself could not cope with the amount of inspection necessary.

Henceforth, certain conditions had to be met before a new school was opened.⁵³ Three month's notice to the Director of Education was required for a new school to be opened. A British educator commended the education ordinance for being "ahead of British practice at home, in that government approval had to be obtained for ... the establishment of a new school, and the continuation of old ones."⁵⁴ The operation of a school was contingent upon its being relevant to the interest of the pupil and the community.

The registration of teachers was made a pre-condition for teaching in any school, eligibility depending upon the possession of academic and professional qualifications, as well as character. Teachers' recruitment, examination, promotion and salary scales, appointment and dismissal were also regulated. Probationary teachers recruited from Standard Six (completion of eight-year primary course)

⁵² Fafunwa, op. cit., pp. 125-26.

⁵³ The most important were valid title to land, subjects to be taught, quality and number of teaching staff.

⁵⁴ R.J. Mason, British Education in Africa. (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 42.

certificate holders were to teach for a limited number of hours per week and to be given some professional training. In the Southern Cameroons, this practice ultimately led to the establishment of preliminary training centres for pupil teachers and in a number of cases they became attached to the four-year teacher training colleges.

An important provision of the 1926 code was the introduction of a more satisfactory grants-in-aid system. Previous grants-in-aid system had been based on pupils' results; grants under the new code were paid on the basis of teachers' salary bills. Generally, schools had to meet certain conditions and standards of efficiency, the criteria being "the amount of effective and progressive work which it carries out in a particular area, and the example set by the members of the staff and the pupils."⁵⁵

As the payments of grants made a demand on the public purse, it was necessary to introduce a system of school inspection and supervision. Refusal to allow the inspection of a school made the proprietor or head of the school liable to a fine. For this reason, the responsibility of the day to day running of a school had to be vested on a responsible officer. In the case of non-government schools, the ordinance made imperative the appointment

⁵⁵ Nigeria, Education Code: Colony and Southern Provinces. Lagos: Government Printer, 1927, p. 5. See also Appendix B for conditions of grants-in-aid.

of school managers on whom it was also incumbent to furnish annual returns to the Director of Education. Besides managers, non-government schools were also expected to appoint supervisors whose duty was "supervising and raising the standard of education and improving the methods of instruction employed in schools established by the proprietor."⁵⁶

To advise the Government on matters having to do with education, a board of education was instituted. Membership of the board was drawn from a wide public comprising government officials and missionary and other educational societies as well as selected members of the community including traditional rulers. Its main function was:

... to consider reports of the proceedings of school committees and advise the Governor thereon; to recommend to the Governor any changes in the regulations or any modifications thereof in particular districts ...⁵⁷

Few educators would deny the merit of the 1926 education code. A planned system of education was introduced. But several of its regulations were far ahead of time, and as we shall see in subsequent chapters, the missionary societies were the worst hit. The code did not

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 6.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 21.

take into consideration the difficulties of coming by qualified teachers, at the time. The requirement of registering teachers before they were qualified to teach in a school meant that many mission schools stood to be closed, since a good number of them engaged teachers who could not qualify for registration.

In this regard, the expansion of the school system was slow and consequently, educational facilities were unequally distributed. The grants-in-aid system divided Voluntary Agency Schools into assisted and unassisted. This division would seem arbitrary. It was assumed that assisted schools provided a better education than the unassisted, but there were cases where unassisted schools fulfilled a more useful educational purpose than some assisted ones. It can therefore be argued that the grants-in-aid system impeded rather than extended the school system. It was particularly disadvantageous to the Southern Cameroons whose educational development was still at an embryonic stage. As would be seen later, most of the primary schools belonging to Missionary Societies were unassisted, and throughout the period of British Administration, many schools remained so.

Although one of the conditions for grants-in-aid was the non-refusal of admission to any pupils, "except upon reasonable grounds," the code did not define what constituted or did not constitute reasonable grounds.

Since mission schools were primarily founded to cater for the children of adherents, devices were usually employed to exclude pupils of other denominations. Simple refusal on grounds of religion could be "reasonable" and was common. But more often, to evade official regulations, the school was declared full, even when places were still available.

CHAPTER V

THE EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, 1926 - 1960

A. Primary Education

1. Extension and Expansion, 1926 - 1938

Educational institutions in the Southern Cameroons at the beginning of 1926 were all at the primary level with the exception of a pseudo-secondary school attached to the Government primary school at the Atlantic coastal town of Victoria. By this date, educational activities were being carried on by the Government, the Native Administrations, the Basel and Catholic Missionary Societies. As already stated elsewhere, the direct involvement by the Government in the setting up of schools was motivated by the desire to institute models to be followed by the Missionary Societies. Consequently, a government school was provided in each of the four divisions and a fifth at the administrative capital of the territory. Excepting the practising primary schools usually attached to teacher training colleges (one of which was Government), the number of Government primary schools remained static, throughout the period of British rule. Again, the distinction between a government school and schools operated by the Native

Administrations and the Missionary Societies was made on the grounds that, while the former were directly financed by public funds, the latter were funded by local rates, fees, and contributions from the home boards of the Missionary Societies, as well as to some extent by the Government.

Native Administration Schools were designed to:

Serve one particular tribe so that their pupils have a homogeneity ... (are) able to maintain much closer touch with local customs and institutions ... have a local vernacular, a local folklore and a local authority in common.⁵⁸

Their spread depended on the needs and demands of the tribes or groups of tribes which they were intended to serve. Their survival, on the other hand, rested on the support of the local people and the traditional ruler of the tribe. Many chiefs showed great interest in maintaining these schools; their zeal sometimes reached such proportions that they "hit on the expedient of seizing the parents' livestock to encourage regular attendance of pupils."⁵⁹

⁵⁸ United Kingdom, Colonial Office, Report by His Britannic Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of the British Cameroons for the Year, 1927. London: H.M.S.O. (Col. No. 42), 1928, p. 61. Hereafter this report would be cited as H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons with year.

⁵⁹ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1935, p. 87.

Until 1931, Native Administration schools were confined to infant classes. Pupils who proved by their performances that they could benefit from further education were taken into Government Schools after completing the infant's stage. In other words, N.A. Schools were designed to be feeder schools to Government schools. But in 1931, the Director of Education, Nigeria, Mr. Hussey, recommended the introduction of elementary classes in the Native Administration Schools as soon as teachers became available. The first N.A. schools to implement the decision were those in the coastal areas (Bimbia and Muyuka).

It is hardly necessary to state that the policy of establishing Native Administration Schools under local authorities reflected British practice at home. But it can be argued that the policy was also designed by the Administering Authority to transfer some of its responsibilities to the local authorities in order to reduce the cost of education which the Government was prepared to shoulder. The objective of the organisation: to keep the pupils in touch with traditional institutions, cannot be said to have been achieved. The scarcity of native teachers necessarily warranted the engagement of teachers from Nigeria and other cultures outside the territory. All told, the system ensured an equal distribution of educational facilities, on the basis of demand by the people themselves,

without charges of unequal provision of schools being made against the Administering Authority. Many Native Administrations showed keen interest in the educational development of their respective areas, as evidenced by their expenditures. One of the Native Administrations (Mamfe) spent about 20 per cent of its budget on education.

The frequency with which the number of Native Administration schools fluctuated would tend to suggest that entrusting of part of the educational development of the territory to the natives was inopportune. Before 1938, a total of 29 Native Administration Schools had been established but about one-third had ceased to operate,⁶⁰ usually because there was a lack of interest by the local population or the chiefs. Native Administration schools became more stable with the reorganization of Native Administration areas. This enabled wider areas to come under one Native Administration and consequently more funds made available to operate one school, more efficiently. While the number of Government schools remained static and that of the Native Administrations fluctuated, it is easy to appreciate the role of Missionary Societies in the educational development of the British Southern Cameroons.

Missionary Societies had been conducting schools since 1922. By 1926, two Missionary Societies were operating

⁶⁰ See Appendix D.

schools of varying qualities; namely, the Basel and Catholic Missions. In 1927, the German Baptist Missionary Society completed the number of Missionary Societies which were to operate schools during and after British Administration of the territory. The establishment of a Mission School in an area began by the establishment of a church and sometimes a vernacular school. Judged from the number of vernacular schools, of which one at least was established in the over 1,000 villages in the territory, the Southern Cameroons could be said to have reached a period of maximum expansion in educational development. But the quality of education provided in them was mediocre. Many of these passed as schools, with few pupils irregularly attending. Some rose to the status of elementary schools but the enrolment, attendance and the curriculum did not justify their existence. But it must be accepted that through vernacular schools, literacy spread to the remotest areas. In the opinion of the Administering Authority, these schools were not providing education in the real sense of the term and their growth was frowned upon.

By the Nigerian Education Code of 1926, a school was defined as:

... an institution in which not less than ten pupils receive regular instruction and includes any assembly of not less than ten pupils for the purpose of receiving regular instruction and any institution for the training of teachers, but does not include any such institution or assembly where the instruction

is solely of a religious character.⁶¹

One of the obvious causes of the proliferation of these "unwanted" schools was the laissez-faire policy of the Administering Authority in the earlier period. Missionary Societies indiscriminately opened schools in order to cover more ground in the race for adherents, particularly the Basel Mission, about which more will be said later. About 75 per cent of these schools were owned and operated by this Missionary Society. In an attempt to control the opening of schools, the Education Code required a formal application to be made to the Director of Education. As officially reported in 1927, to the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission:

Official sanction is necessary before opening a school. Three months in writing must be made to the Director of Education; the school must conform to the regulations of the Code and be open for inspection unless the school is of a purely religious character.⁶²

The effect of the code was minimal, even though a penalty of £100 was imposed on defaulters. Missionary Societies devised means of opening schools without penalty, by breaking up a school into two parts, one part operating

⁶¹ Nigeria, Education Code: Colony and Southern Provinces. (Lagos: Government Printer, 1927), p. 12.

⁶² H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons for 1927, p. 65.

in a different village or town or the name of the school being changed. The Basel Mission was particularly reputed for juggling with its schools which were "constantly being moved from place to place, school buildings being moved to another part of the same town and being called by different names,"⁶³ flouting the Education Ordinance in the process. The Catholic Mission was more conforming to the requirements of the Code. But this conformity may be understood from the fact that only Catholic priests or ordained clergy were allowed to teach in Catholic schools. Nevertheless, the Basel Mission operated schools (at Besongabang and Bali) described as "well-housed and all under European principals" and making satisfactory progress" with the possibility of being able to "supply the outstation schools with teachers of higher qualifications than those at present."⁶⁴

As far as the history of educational development in the territory is concerned, Missionary Societies played and continue to play a more significant role, even though a majority of their schools were not assisted by public funds. Between 1928 and 1931, only three Mission schools -- all Catholic -- were assisted from public funds. Meanwhile, out of a total of 299 primary schools in the territory in 1928, 279 were operated by Missionary

⁶³ H.M.G., 1930, p. 86.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Societies and only two were assisted. By 1938, out of a total of 253 primary schools, 228 were operated by Missionary Societies, 16 of which were on the assisted list. Unassisted schools which did not conform to the requirements of the Education Code received no assistance from public funds. A comparison of the number of schools owned and operated by the Missionary Societies and those for which public funds were available, gives a clearer picture of their burden. Surprisingly enough, the opening of new schools proceeded with calculated zeal, the absence of financial aid from the Government notwithstanding. But as the unassisted schools became qualified, in accordance with the requirements of the Code, they were included in the assisted list. Thus, in 1957, of the 394 primary schools in the territory, 363 were Mission operated, out of which 222 were placed on the list of assisted schools.

To some extent, the geographical extension of schools was fairly equitable. Generally, the development of education was determined by two significant factors: communication and population. As discussed in an earlier chapter, the communication impediments were almost unsurmountable. The four divisions were not well-linked to one another, let alone to the remoter areas. The provision of infrastructure was being carried out side by side with education. The most populated areas were the divisional, headquarters and a few large villages. Table 4

shows the distribution of schools throughout the territory at the end of the Second World War.

Table 4

Distribution of Schools at the end of Second World War, (1947)

Division	Population	Density of Population Per Square Mile	No. of Schools		No. of Pupils
			A	B	
Victoria	46.300	40	19	18	4,524
Kumba	62.300	15	17	47	8,070
Mamfe	70.000	16	9	28	3,810
Bamenda	287.000	41	25	66	9.110

Source: H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1947.

- A. Government, Native Administration and Assisted Voluntary Agency Schools.
- B. Unassisted Voluntary Agency (Mission) Schools.

With the exception of Victoria where there were two Government Schools, each of the other Divisions had one government school. The majority were Mission Schools,

assisted and unassisted, with a few Native Administration Schools. But in proportion to population, there were many more schools in the southern areas near the coast (Kumba, Mamfe, Victor~~ia~~) than in the northern region of the mandated territory. The growing plantations of the south are likely to have provided the incentive for schooling.

But the extension of the school system did not proceed without economic problems of far reaching consequences. The world economic crisis of 1930, even hit Nigeria and Cameroon hardest. A few Native Administration schools ceased operation and some teachers retrenched. It was, however, in the same year that one of the Native Administrations (Mamfe) awarded two scholarships for teacher training in Umuahia, Nigeria and the German Baptist Missionary Society opened thirteen vernacular schools. The crisis also led to the reorganisation of the existing system of primary education, with its English type and classical curriculum, which tended to make pupils more inclined to clerical jobs to the detriment of agricultural life. A four-year primary course was recommended to replace the previous eight-year course, and a further four years for pupils who proved capable of benefitting from further education. By this reorganisation, it was believed a large residue would revert to the villages to take up agriculture, since the four-year primary course would no longer provide qualifications for clerical jobs. The second four-year primary

school course introduced what passed for a time, as Middle Schools with a Secondary School bias. But, admission to the Middle Schools was rigorously selective. Far from eliminating rural exodus, as it had been intended, the reorganisation aggravated it. The vicious cycle could not disappear until the eight-year course was re-introduced after 1955, as a result of disapproval by the Southern Cameroons Government, formed in that year after the territory had gained a quasi-autonomy from Nigeria. In its first Policy for Education, the Government of Southern Cameroons stated:

Government (of Southern Cameroons) feels that the existing junior primary course of four years duration makes little more than adequate provision for continued literacy and does not give the necessary background which will enable pupils to increase their knowledge in later years by their own efforts ... We wish to ensure that all children attending school receive a six years instruction (after two years in the infant classes).⁶⁵

Evidently, a new problem for education during the approach of the Second World War was that of rural exodus. Education was gradually being regarded as an instrument for securing jobs which were available in larger villages and in the towns. On completing the former eight-year course, the successful pupil received a First

⁶⁵ Southern Cameroons, House of Assembly. Policy for Education. (Sessional Paper No. 6), Buea: Government Printer, 1955, p. 1.

School Leaving Certificate. Thus armed, he finds himself in the growing towns, mostly in the south, to seek a job. It is doubtful whether the new organisation of the school system could have effected the desired objective. What was actually done by the reorganisation was to create a bottle-neck system which channelled a few pupils to the job-market, while the rest returned to the villages to undertake agriculture and crafts. Invariably the Administering Authority underestimated the growing aspirations among primary school leavers. The policy of the local British Administration was to equip the pupil with Western education to prepare him for an African job. In its official report for 1932, the British Cameroons Administering Authority stated this fact:

... the people are nevertheless anxious to have schools in their villages. The scholars object is ... to qualify for ... clerical employment ... but there are necessarily many who pass through the schools and do not reach the standard of education demanded for clerical employment. Many of these seem to prefer unemployment to returning to agriculture and using the benefits of education in their natural pursuits. The present educational policy seeks to remedy by making the elementary and elementary one only ...⁶⁶ (Italics mine).

Judging from the number of Nigerians in the clerical, teaching and administrative positions in the territory at the time, it may be concluded that the Southern Cameroonians

⁶⁶ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1932, p. 57.

were deliberately offered an inferior education to that of Nigeria or the territory was all but a pawn to Nigeria. However, the system of education in the Southern Cameroons was a wholesale transfer of that of Nigeria, which reflected the British system. Although the expansion of educational institutions within the territory proceeded appreciably, Cameroonians attended similar institutions in Nigeria.

However plausible the geographical organisation of the primary school system might have been, it was not realised that the concentration of schools in towns and larger villages contributed to rural exodus. The practice was to set up Central Schools in towns and larger villages with a network of feeder schools of junior classes. Pupils from these schools went to complete their primary courses at a Central School. At the time of completion, they had become socialised in urban life and consequently resisted any encouragement to return to rural life.

2. Indigenous Attitude and Educational Expansion

The enthusiasm of the indigenous Cameroonian for education has developed gradually in the course of years. In the early period of educational development, apathy against schooling was prevalent. This was because education did not provide immediate benefits. What an average Cameroonian understood to be education was different from what the local British administration thought. If

education was to send the child back to rural life, then it was not worth the while to send him to school. This view is not limited to Cameroonians alone; it is a world-wide conception. Thus, school enrolment in the early period of education in the Cameroons under the British hampered educational expansion. The teaching of skills which were provided under traditional educational systems, led the indigenous people to conclude that the school was not offering what they anticipated.

One of the earliest expedients introduced in the school system to ensure regular attendance was the establishment of boarding schools from the primary level. But boarding schools were also designed to inculcate into pupils the spirit of cooperation, community life and morals. The Missionary Societies particularly encouraged boarding schools. Enrolled pupils fended for themselves; they cultivated gardens and planted food crops for their own feeding in the boarding houses. This was, however, part of the school curriculum for the encouragement of agriculture. Boarding schools in later years became limited to secondary schools, and so they remain today. It should, however, not be assumed that boarding schools were regarded with any amount of favour by parents who had to miss their children from Monday to Friday. It may be argued that the idea of boarding schools at the primary level with pupils of very tender ages was not propitious, but they fitted

well with the colonial motive of producing docile citizens. The Administering Authority of the British Cameroons also viewed the practical work in agriculture undertaken by boarders and the fact that they have to feed themselves as a means of making pupils self-reliant and keeping them in touch with the realities of life.⁶⁷

Boarding schools at the primary level paradoxically impeded the expansion of the geographical distribution of schools. Since Central Schools were boarding, pupils from distant areas had to attend these schools. Consequently, the areas so depopulated of school-age children remained without full primary schools and, in some cases, without junior or infant classes. Generally, boarding schools found favour with the pupils themselves for schooling with friends was more exciting than farmwork at home; it was a relief from more exacting tasks at home, but parents frowned at boarding schools because they were deprived of the labour which the children provided and which was cheap and customary.⁶⁸

Boarding school incontestably helped to encourage enrolment and attendance. On the eve of the Second World War there was a significant increase in school attendance. In its 1938 report, the Administering Authority apparently

⁶⁷ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1934, p. 86.

⁶⁸ H.M.G., 1927, p. 65.

satisfied with the rising enthusiasm, stated:

The rise in attendance figures is gratifying, but much remains to be accomplished, for the Province (of Southern Cameroons) contains at least 100,000 children of school age, of whom less than 11 per cent are receiving literary education in any form, whether "English" or "Vernacular."⁶⁹

But a close examination of school statistics for the year 1926 - 1938 shows very low attendance for girls. The attitude of Cameroonian parents about the education of girls was unfortunately conservative. Girls were legitimate sources of wealth to parents; the domestic services provided by girls paralleled what the schools offered. Consequently, it was found unbeneficial to send girls to school. The official report for 1934 sums up the reasons:

Some fathers of families will say that if their girls go to school they will become too independent and will not be obedient wives; others say that as a woman is going to spend the whole of her time in just the domestic work she has been brought up to, school is a pure waste of time. Others again declare that girls who go to school will become Christians and insist on being married in the church which can be done without payment of dowry and the parent will therefore be the loser.⁷⁰

"Hedge" schools were schools which taught nothing more than religion; they were virtually classes for catechism

⁶⁹H.M.G., 1938, p. 81.

⁷⁰H.M.G., 1934, p. 86.

Table 5

Growth of Primary School Attendance, 1922 - 1938

Year	Government		Native Administration		Mission		"Hedge"	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1922		573						
1923		860		790		608		1276
1924	967	102	637	19	569	12	1216	82
1925	1093	122	651	19	3360	350	N/A	N/A
1926	1198	150	684	17	3902	537	"	"
1927	934	113	697	52	6724	863	"	"
1928	1008	146	842	97	5796	653	"	"
1929	1001	166	977	100	N/A	N/A	"	"
1930	1089	167	895	95	4636	699	"	"
1931	985	189	761	78	369	78	"	"
1932	865	179	768	50	1336	188	3181	493
1933	919	168	752	55	1416	242	2763	471
1934	915	182	877	70	1469	255	3253	534
1935	830	186	807	61	1537	296	3347	642
1936	871	187	1194	77	1549	289	3919	653
1937	857	171	1408	99	1645	304	5343	626
1938	945	191	-	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Compiled from H.M.G., Reports on the British Cameroons, 1922-1938.

and found in every village. They were intended by the Missionary Societies to serve their adherents. Most of these belonged to the Basel Mission which was keenest in the race for adherents.

The period between 1926 and 1938 saw increased activity in educational development of the territory, particularly by the Missionary Societies, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The enthusiasm of the indigenous people for education was gradually being built. Primary school attendance increased annually even though apathy against schooling among parents persisted. It was during this period too that Middle Schools on the English model were established, offering secondary school subjects. But this was more to discourage interest in clerical jobs than to improve the quality of education. Although much was accomplished during this period, the period of explosion in educational development belongs to the period after the Second World War.

C. Post Second World War Period, 1946 - 1960

Although no valid information is available about educational activities during the war, evidence of the number of schools opened during the period would tend to suggest that educational activities in the territory went on uninterrupted. Between 1940 and 1945, a total of 91 primary schools were opened, by the Native Administration and the three Missionary bodies -- Catholic, Basel and Baptist. Table 6 shows the schools opened by the various agencies.

Table 6

(a) Number of Existing Schools Opened During World War II by Year and Responsible Agency

Agency	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	Total
Native Administration	-	-	1	2	-	-	3
Basel Mission	1	5	2	16	1	12	37
Cameroon Baptist Mission	-	-	5	4	-	3	12
Roman Catholic Mission	2	3	18	7	5	4	39
Total	3	8	26	29	6	19	91

(b) Number of Existing Schools Opened During World War II by Year and Division

Division	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	Total
Victoria	1	2	3	5	-	-	11
Kumba	-	1	5	11	3	2	22
Mamfe	-	2	2	6	-	3	13
Bamenda	2	2	10	5	3	9	31
Wam	-	1	3	1	-	4	9
Nkambe	-	-	3	1	-	1	5
Total	3	8	26	29	6	19	91

Source: Stanford Research Institute. Economic Potential of West Cameroon (Menlo Park, California: Stanford Research Institute), V-VII.

The fact that the number of schools in the remote areas from the coast (Bamenda) was increasing is ample proof of the increased enthusiasm of the Cameroonians and the economic prosperity which marked these years. The Basel and the Catholic Missions were particularly unflagging in their efforts.

A series of developments occurred in the 1940's to give greater impetus to educational development in the territory. In 1940, the British Parliament passed its Colonial Development and Welfare Act which made funds available to the colonies for development purposes, education included. It made possible the implementation of the Ten-Year Development Plan, prepared for Nigeria, Southern Cameroon included.⁷¹ In 1947, the construction of roads and airfields (at Tiko and Mamfe) was completed. For the first time, the territory was accessible by air transport (West African Airways Corporation); a stretch of road from Kumba to Mamfe was completed. This facilitated the opening of more schools and their inspection by government inspectors.

In 1946, the ex-German plantations were bought over and converted into the Cameroons Development Corporation. One of the terms of operation was the

⁷¹ Of the £ 23 m. anticipated from the C.D. and W funds, £1.5 m was estimated to take care of development programme for the Southern Cameroon. See Chapter VIII.

provision of education for the children of its employees and the devotion of its profits for development of the territory, education included. In 1951, another agro-industrial company, Messrs. Elders and Fyffes Limited, was established. Among its social services were the provision of education. By 1955, the three agro-industrial concerns (CDC, E and F and Pamol Ltd.) operating in the territory were providing schools and offering scholarships to employees' children, as well as to other Cameroonians.

Cameroonians who participated in the Second World War in S.E. Asia for Britain were returning with new experiences of social development. Their travel to other lands had widened their horizons. This fact cannot be underestimated when considering influences on social change, including education.

Politically, in 1955, the Southern Cameroons gained a quasi-autonomy from Nigeria. With a government formed in the territory under a Commissioner, educational policy formerly formulated in Nigeria passed to the newly formed Southern Cameroons Government. The visits of two United Nations Visiting Missions in 1949 and 1952 respectively were evidently contributory factors. These series of factors hastened the development of the territory generally and education in particular.

The Administering Authority of the Southern Cameroons became more than ever before concerned with

educational development in the territory. In its 1946 report, it stated its intention to:

... continue and extend a general system of elementary education designed to abolish illiteracy and to facilitate the vocational and cultural advancement of the population ... and secondary and higher education including professional training.⁷²

Although increase in school enrolment was reported in 1948, the percentage of enrolment over total school-age children was still below 25 per cent. In 1948, of a population of 121,750 school-age children, only 26,453 (21.6 per cent) were attending school, and in 1954, out of 250,000 school-age children, only 38,700 (15 per cent) were attending school.

The Cameroon Development Corporation entered the field of education in 1950. It began by providing buildings in three of its plantations for schools to be conducted by three Missionary Societies. By 1960, the Corporation was conducting independently, thirteen primary schools in its plantations with about 3000 pupils. Messrs. Elders and Fyffes was conducting two schools (Esuke and Likomba) for the children of its employees, both labour and senior service grades, while Pamol was subsidising already established schools by Missionary Societies and Native Administration, near its plantations or providing

⁷²United Kingdom, Colonial Office, Trusteeship: Togoland and the Cameroons under United Kingdom Mandate. London: H.M.S.O. (Col. No. 6863), 1916, p. 5.

buildings for the purpose. A characteristic of agro-industrial corporation and companies was the provision of separate schools for the children of its white employees and senior service grades. The C.D.C. was the only agency in the territory providing meals for the pupils in its schools and free school textbooks. Again the school buildings provided were quite luxurious. They were the most beautifully constructed and competed fairly well and even surpassed buildings in some secondary schools and teacher training institutions.

There was rising enrolment and attendance but inability of parents in the payment of fees precluded the rise anticipated. In 1949, the U.N. Visiting Mission to the trust territory remarked that "Cameroon education was still backward and almost in the hands of private initiative, that it was not available free of charge and that fees payable were too high"⁷³; it suggested the introduction of free education. According to the local British administrators, efforts were being made to expand education but there was no genuine demand for education, judged from parents' inability to pay fees.

During this period, greater attention was paid to the dimensions of accommodation and school hours were

⁷³ United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa. Supplement No. 2 (T/798), New York: United Nations, 1951, p. 40.

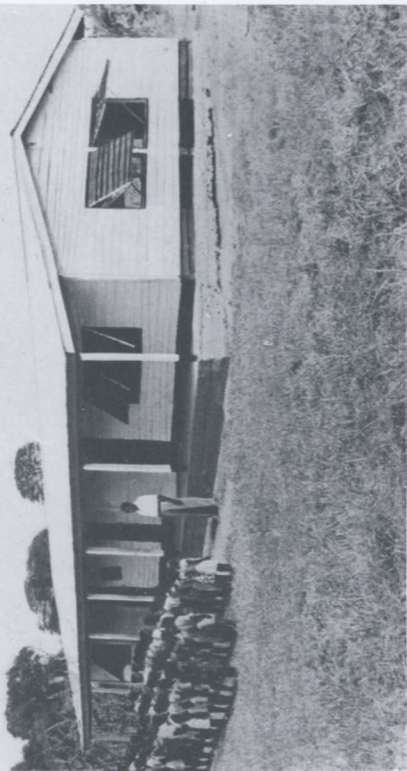


Figure 2. A Primary School in a Remote C.D.C. Plantation



standardized. A three and a half hour school day was suggested for infant classes and four and a half hours for succeeding classes and age groups. School buildings were generally poor in rural areas and overcrowding of pupils common. Local materials were used in building rural schools but in the urban areas buildings were generally more imposing and modern. Besides secondary schools, teacher training institutions and the C.D.C. Schools, except those in remoter plantations, school buildings were commonly of poor architectural display -- mostly half walls; in cold areas they were mostly an imitation of native houses but with adequate ventilation. In its policy statement in 1955, the Southern Cameroons Government referred to the quality of school buildings, stating:

We view with great concern the unsatisfactory buildings in which many of our schools are at present operating, and in the belief that this is one of the factors handicapping the development of primary education, it is our intention to provide adequate building grants for primary schools.⁷⁴

At the end of 1957, there was a total of 394 primary schools in the territory with a total enrolment of 50,618 pupils; 363 of the schools were operated by Missionary bodies, Native Administrations and the agro-industrial corporations and companies. Missionary Societies, however, ran more

⁷⁴ Southern Cameroons, House of Assembly, Policy for Education, (Buea: Government Printer, 1955), p. 2.

than 85 per cent of this number.

D. Secondary Grammar and Technical Schools

1. Secondary Grammar Schools

The development of Secondary grammar and technical schools in the territory under British mandate and trusteeship began only after the Second World War, and this, was on the initiative of Missionary Societies. But before this period, secondary schools existed in all but name. The first attempt at providing secondary education occurred in 1925 when a secondary department was created as an extension of a Government School in the Atlantic coastal town of Victoria. Low attendances at the primary school level in the early years, apathy towards education, insufficient resources, lack of teachers, and a general lack of development in the territory had led the Administering Authority to conclude in 1922 that "the need for secondary or higher education had not yet arisen."⁷⁵

A brief period of relative economic prosperity in the territory in 1925 had moved Father Campling, the pioneer Catholic Missionary of Saint Joseph's Missionary Society of Mill Hill, London, to propose the establishment

⁷⁵H.M.G., Report on the British Cameroons, 1922, p. 44.

of a high school. Fourteen years were to elapse before this proposal was translated into reality. In 1939, the first and still surviving secondary school in the territory was opened by the Catholic Mission: St. Joseph's Collège, Sasse,⁷⁶ near Buea, the capital of the Southern Cameroons. It remained the only Secondary School in the country for a decade, offering a six-year Secondary School programme leading to the Cambridge University Examinations -- preliminary, junior and higher school certificates -- or the London University Matriculation or Intermediate Arts examinations. But the opening of this Secondary School must also be credited to the vision of the Southern Cameroons Provincial Committee which declared in 1938 that the time was ripe for a secondary school.

Statistics of primary school enrolment and attendance during the same period would clearly show that one secondary school was inadequate: about 9000 pupils were attending primary schools in 1939, while the intake of first year students in the Catholic Secondary School, with a single-stream, was 30. The view of the local British Administrators was that pupils who proved capable

⁷⁶The college enjoyed a very high prestige until most recently. At the time the word "Sasse" was almost synonymous with Oxford, Cambridge or Eton. Even after two other colleges had been opened, "Sasse" remained on the lips of even the most illiterate Cameroonians. This prestige is waning today due to a proliferation of Government High Schools and the University.

of pursuing secondary education could avail themselves of the Secondary Schools in Nigeria. Consequently, throughout British Administration of the territory, most Cameroonians obtained secondary education in Nigeria. The most famous of these schools which frequently appear in secondary school days recollection by those who attended them, include Government College, Umuahia, Queen's College, Enugu and Lagos, King's College, Lagos, Ibadan and Yaba Colleges. It can be inferred that most of those attending secondary schools in Nigeria were of the Basel or Baptist Missionary Societies, for, besides the vigorous selection of pupils (by entrance examination), admission was reserved only to Catholics.

The organisation of primary education in 1930 led to the introduction of Middle Schools patterned on the model of Middle Schools in England. They had become the only other form of secondary education in the territory. These were virtually higher classes of elementary schools although offering secondary school subjects.

The second secondary school was opened by the Basel Mission in 1949, in Bali in the northern part of the territory. It may be stated here that religious differences hastened the founding of this second secondary school. The point has already been made that the Catholic St. Joseph's College took only Catholic pupils. It was to provide similar facilities for the Basel Mission adherents that

the Basel Missionary Society opened the Basel Mission College. The school became the Cameroons Protestant College in 1956, when, on the recommendation of the Southern Cameroons Government, it was jointly operated with the Baptist Mission. The partnership was aimed at facilitating the conversion of the school into a double-stream secondary school.

The development of secondary education was greatly aided by the general development of the territory in the post war period. The Ten-Year Development Plan of 1946, financed by the Colonial Development and Welfare Funds included plans for the:

... establishment of boarding schools to give selected boys and girls the general secondary education necessary for admission to the West African University Colleges, for recruitment to junior and intermediate grades of the public and commercial services in the Cameroons and for the replenishment of the primary teacher training centres. (Italics mine).⁷⁷

This plan did not indicate who was to establish the secondary schools. But as already stated, all secondary schools in the territory throughout British Administration were Mission-operated institutions. It was a continued policy of the British Administrators that the Missionary Societies should play a more active role in the provision

⁷⁷H.M.C. British Report on the British Cameroons, 1947, pp. 97-98.

of education for their emphasis on character development. Thus, the 1955 Southern Cameroons Government proposal for a girls' secondary school in 1956, contemplated that the school would be placed "under Voluntary Agency management to which all qualified girls in the territory may seek admission."⁷⁸

The secondary school -- Queen of the Rosary Secondary School -- was duly opened in 1956. This school offers the best example of cooperation among the Missionary Societies. Although directly operated by the Catholic Mission, it drew its students from all denominations. Like Sasse College, it offered a six-year secondary school course, but from 1957, all secondary schools offered a five-year secondary school course leading to the West African School Certificate, conducted by the West African Examination Council with headquarters in Ghana.

A characteristic of secondary schools in the Southern Cameroons was its selectivity. Admission to secondary schools was and has continued to be based on competitive entrance examinations -- written papers and oral interview. Thus, a great number of pupils were and are deprived of secondary education. But, in recent years, the increasing number of private secondary schools is able

⁷⁸ Southern Cameroons, House of Assembly, Policy for Education, (Sessional Paper No. 6), Buea: Government Printer, 1955, p. 3.

to absorb the residue. The establishment and expansion of secondary schools also depended on means rather than demand, and the Missionary Societies spared no effort in the provision of secondary education in the country.

2. Technical Education

"Technical" education in the country during the mandate and trusteeship period was the most neglected; but, as usual, Cameroonians received such education from Nigeria. Within the country itself, only one technical school (in fact, a trade school) existed throughout this period. Before 1952, when a formal trade school was not established, the Public Works Department, the Cameroons Development Corporation (C.D.C.), the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria (Cameroon) and other technical Government Departments, provided a modicum of technical and vocational training.

As part of the Ten-Year Development Plan, 1946, a trade school-Government Trade Centre, Ombe River (near Victoria) was opened in 1952. The technical need of the territory dictated the aim of the school: "to produce highly skilled tradesmen and artisans under as near as possible industrial conditions" and "to give a sound practical training with the allied theory," with emphasis on apprenticeship rather than studentship."⁷⁹

⁷⁹ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1955, pp. 171-172.

The school offered theoretical and practical courses of varying durations leading to the City and Guilds Examinations, London.

The school was a free boarding training institution; students also received a monthly allowance of 10 s. Like other secondary institutions, admission was rigorously selective but final admission was also contingent on passing a medical examination. In later years, qualified students from the school were offered admission into the Junior Technical School of the Higher Technical School in Yaba, Nigeria.

Table 7 shows the growth of secondary grammar and technical schools between 1947 and 1957.

The extension and expansion of educational institutions in the mandated and trust territory between 1926 and 1960 is to be credited to missionary drive. Secondary schools particularly were dictated by means rather than demand, and their selective admission procedures did much to keep out a majority of pupils from secondary education. Particularly unfortunate was the slow expansion of the secondary school system due to the reliance on secondary schools in Nigeria. In the opinion of Vernon-Jackson, this reliance on Nigeria impeded the development of secondary institutions in the territory and consequently led to the limited development in human resources.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Vernon-Jackson, op. cit., p. 332.

Table 7

Growth of Secondary Grammar and Technical Schools,
1947 - 57

Year	Government and N.A.		Voluntary Agencies (a)		Enrolment
	Grammar	Technical	Aided	Unaided	
1947	-	-	1	-	168
1948	-	-	1	-	182
1949	-	-	2	-	237
1950	-	-	2	-	262
1951	-	-	2	-	320
1952	-	1	2	-	330
1953	-	1	2	-	275
1954	-	1	2	-	446
1955	-	1	2	1	618
1956	-	1	3	1	651
1957	-	1	3	1	613 (b)

Source: Compiled from H.M.G., Report on the Cameroons,

(a) Only Secondary Grammar Schools

(b) The decrease of enrolment was due to the discontinuation of the preparatory year at St. Joseph's College, Sasse. From 1959, the secondary course lasted five years.

E. Control and Direction

In a discussion of the control and direction of education in the British Cameroons, it is necessary to state at the outset that, between 1922 and 1955, all decisions having to do with educational matters in the territory originated in Nigeria. It is here that was seated the Education Department. What existed in the territory as an "education department" was, in fact, an inspectorate administered by two inspectors of education of the Nigerian Education Department.

By the Nigerian Education Code of 1926, the overall control of the educational system, as a general rule, lay with the Governor. He had powers to make regulations on a wide range of matters concerning all aspects of the educational system on the recommendation of the Board of Education. Executive powers were exercised by the Director of Education for the colony and Southern Provinces of Nigeria. At the Education Department's headquarters in Lagos were Education Officers representing the various provinces, of which the Southern Cameroons was one.

In the Southern Cameroons, there were two inspectors of education responsible to the Director of Education in Lagos, Nigeria. The number increased in the course of years. In 1947, there were four, one of whom, for the first time, was a Cameroonian trained in Nigeria and the United Kingdom. Their duties followed a unique organisation

throughout this period. Two of these were charged with school inspection and administration, while the other two were traditionally in charge of the Government Teacher Training Centre. As a result of regionalisation of Nigeria in 1951, the Southern Cameroons Education Department fell under the Regional Deputy Director of Eastern Nigeria, with headquarters at Enugu, himself responsible to the Inspector-General of Education in Lagos, Nigeria.

On achieving a quasi-autonomous status in 1954, the post of Chief Education Officer was created and the "powers previously vested in the Inspector-General of Education and the Central Board Education for Nigeria devolved upon... the Chief Education Officer and the newly created Board of Education for the Southern Cameroons."⁸¹ It may be argued that the gradual creation of a separate educational administration set up for Cameroon, followed from the disapproval of the U.N. Visiting Missions of 1949 and 1945, of the continuous integration of the Southern Cameroons with Nigeria. It is suggestive in this disapproval that the World body had contemplated only a short period of joint administration of Cameroon with Nigeria when it permitted the British

⁸¹ H.M.C. Report on the British Cameroons, 1954, pp. 104-105.

Government to administer Cameroon jointly with Nigeria. The last development in educational control took place in 1959 when the post of Chief Education Officer was changed to that of Director of Education for Southern Cameroons.

In the matter of school inspection, we see the cooperation of Missionary bodies, Native Administration and the Government in ensuring the efficient operation of schools. The duties of a Government inspector of schools corresponded to those of supervisors in Mission Schools and Visiting Teachers in the Native Administration Schools. But the overall inspection of schools throughout the territory was incumbent on the Government inspector. Managers of schools, according to the 1926 Code, were subject to a fine if they refused the inspection of their schools by the Director of Education, his representative or an inspector. The Commissioner of the territory was empowered to close schools which were not properly conducted.

Besides these supervising and visiting officers and inspectors of schools, the control and direction of education was so organised as to ensure public participation. The Education Code of 1926 introduced Divisional School Committees which constituted the local education authority and a Central Board of Education with advisory functions. School committees were created in the Southern Cameroons as early as 1927, and usually chaired by a Divisional

Officer. It was not until 1954 that a separate Board of Education for the territory was created. Membership in the Committee and the Board was drawn from a wide public by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Board of Education⁸² and the Divisional Committee. Other Committees formed to advise the Government on educational matters of specific concern included the Advisory Committee on Technical Education and Industrial training created in 1956. At the secondary school level, the tradition grew of appointing a Board of Governors for each secondary school.

The policy statement of the newly formed Government of the Southern Cameroons expressed its satisfaction with the administrative set up of the education department and elected to continue "to take advantage of the services of the Federal Inspectorate (of Nigeria) and seek their advice and co-operation in the regular inspection of secondary schools and teacher training institutions."⁸³ With specific reference to the Education Department, the Policy for Education stated that, the department:

... need not undergo any major modification in the near future ... Government does however envisage the eventual creation of a separate Ministry of Education and the ultimate expansion of the Department to include

⁸² Appendix B provides the composition of the Board.

⁸³ Southern Cameroons. Policy for Education, 1955, p.7.

district Administrative and Inspectorate
Organisation.⁸⁴

The participation of the Southern Cameroon in the control of education in the early years was fortuitous. Political changes in 1955 finally entrusted the education of the citizens to Cameroonians themselves. But by this time, the system of inspection, supervision and administration developed while part of Nigeria became a traditional system for the Southern Cameroons until recently. With the advent of a unitary state, some of the features of this system were changed.

⁸⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

TEACHER TRAINING AND STATUS

One of the difficulties that precluded educational development in the British Southern Cameroons between the years 1922 and 1960, was that of procuring trained teachers. The first teachers were Missionaries; they were usually assisted by catechnists and pastors, as well as by primary school-leavers. Many of the Missionaries were usually well-read men and women with an English classical education. But they would hardly have passed for professional educators. Their methods of teaching might have consisted of nothing more than drill and memory exercises, for untrained teachers are wont to use methods which they can remember from their own school days.

It is not known what the status of the teacher was in the early days. A Baptist Missionary reported in 1923 that in the very early years of British Administration, school-teachers were remunerated in cash or kind by the few pence paid by enrolling pupils.⁸⁴ But public regard for the teaching "profession" and the image of the teacher at the time might have been higher than in later years, for at

⁸⁴Thomas Lewis, These Seventy Years, An Autobiography. (London: Carey Press, 1927), p. 279.

a time when White Missionaries taught in schools, the native who took up teaching and worked side by side with the Missionary enjoyed a special prestige among other Cameroonians.

The problem of the British administrator was how to find the required number of qualified teachers for the schools. From 1924 to 1960, efforts were made to establish teacher training institutions and to attach pupils from primary schools to the teaching profession. The pupil-teacher system developed; vacation courses to acquaint teachers with teaching methods became customary and attention was gradually paid to the status of the teacher. As would soon be made clear, in the area of teacher training as in other aspects of educational development, Missionary Societies bore the major burden.

A. Teacher Training and Teacher Qualification

1. 1924 - 1938

The lack of teaching staff in all the schools was, undeniably, responsible for the direct interest taken by the Administering Authority in the matter of teacher training. In 1922, it had officially reported to the League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission that not "even unqualified teachers possessed of character" were forthcoming. Before 1924, a few Cameroonians had been selected for training in the teacher training colleges in

Nigeria. In 1924, it became clear that the policy of making Cameroonians compete for places in Nigerian training colleges could not meet the local needs for primary teachers. A change of policy called for the establishment of a local institution for the training of teachers.

Consequently, a Normal Department was established as an extension of the Government primary school in Victoria on the Atlantic coast,⁸⁵ in 1925, but moved to the territory's headquarters (Buea) in 1926. The Normal course lasted two years and successful graduating students obtained a Third Class Teachers Certificate which qualified them to teach Standard VI (the final year of the eight-year primary school course). But subsequent developments in teacher training would clearly indicate that the Normal Class was nothing more than an emergency and temporary measure, because many Cameroonians continued to receive teacher training in Nigeria up to the 1950's. This point cannot be overlooked when accounting for the late development of formal teacher training colleges within the territory until the 1950's. Reliance on Nigeria was not only in the area of training. The shortage of teachers caused by the lack of teacher training colleges within the country, also

⁸⁵ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1922, p. 42.

⁸⁶ It was in the same primary school that the first "Secondary School" Department was also established.

warranted the engagement of teachers from Nigeria.

In spite of these early attempts to increase the quality of teaching by providing qualified teaching staff, the position of Missionary Societies which owned a majority of the schools with unqualified teachers was far from satisfactory. All that the Government had done had been to increase the number of trained teachers in Government schools. Although the Normal Class admitted teachers from all denominations and the Native Administrations, the total number of students admitted annually (8-12) reveals the inadequacy in teacher training to meet the demand for teachers in the territory. Mission schools were therefore in a much disadvantaged position since the Missionary Societies could not afford the funds required to send teachers to Nigeria for training. Thus, before the Second World War, of the 300 teachers in all Mission Schools, less than 10 per cent were certificated.

The picture which is presented during this early period with regard to teaching in schools reveals a lack of policy in the development of education, let alone a policy governing teacher recruitment, registration and status. Untrained teachers could and did teach classes they were ill-prepared to teach, and it was not uncommon for primary school leavers to be given charge of higher classes of a primary school, or for teachers qualified to teach in vernacular schools to teach in schools where English was the medium of instruction. These anomalies

persisted until 1926 when regulations having to do with teacher recruitment, registration, teachers' salaries and qualifications were incorporated in an Education Code; the Code was inspired by the 1925 Education Policy in British Tropical Africa.

In the specific question of teaching staff, the Advisory Committee had emphasised the need of training teachers, both men and women, under rural conditions. Teacher training institutions were to start as Normal Classes in intermediate and middle rural schools, but to be "supplemented by the establishment of separate institutions for the training of teachers and vacation courses and teachers' conferences."⁸⁷ Other important suggestions of the Advisory Committee included the selection of teachers for training from among pupils belonging to the tribe which they would return to serve, for their familiarity with the language, traditions and customs of the community. But the Nigerian Education Code of 1926 went further than the suggestions made by the Advisory Committee. The need to train teachers was not new, rather it was necessary to establish acceptable teaching qualifications.

Four classes of teachers were recognised: certificated, technical, provisional and probationary.

⁸⁷Cited in David A. Scanlon, (ed.) Traditions of African Education (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964), p. 98.

One of the most important innovations with regards to teaching qualifications was the fact that for the first time teachers were expected to be registered as a condition for teaching in any school in the country, provided they held any of the following qualifications acceptable by the Director of Education.

1. A British or any recognised University degree.
2. A Diploma of Education
3. A Teachers' Certificate (Third class to first class).
4. A Certificate issued by any other Education Authority.

The regulations also included requirements of age and character and outlined the general conditions of service. For teachers in primary schools and the lower classes of secondary departments, promotion to a higher grade of teacher was contingent on passing the prescribed examinations conducted for both candidates in Normal Classes and in the field by the Department of Education.

The stringency of the regulations with regards to the qualifications and registration of teachers placed the Missionary Societies in a dilemma. Bishop Shanahan of Nigeria (under whose prefecture fell the Catholic Schools in British Southern Cameroons) wrote to the home organisation in 1927 that: "The Code of 1926 hit the Catholic

Mission primary schools where it hurt most -- in the qualification of teachers." The Bishop reasoned with the Education Department because "too many teachers were really unfit to look after children by any academic standards ... pulled out of schools before they had reached the top primary classes and sent to bush-schools to fill teaching posts,"⁸⁸ but he protested the high qualifications set by the Education Department, qualifications which a majority of teachers could not possess. According to the Bishop, the measures "threatened to reduce drastically the number of teachers that would be turned out annually by the big Central Schools."⁸⁹ Implicit in the view of the Bishop is the fact that Missionary Societies relied heavily on pupil-teachers.

To alleviate the teacher problem in Catholic schools in both Nigeria and Cameroon, Bishop Shanahan became instrumental in the re-opening of St. Charles Teacher Training College at Onitsha (Nigeria),⁹⁰ closed at the end of the First World War. This was one of the first training institutions in which Cameroonians received teacher training, for the Teachers' Higher Elementary

⁸⁸ John Jordan, Bishop Shanahan of Southern Nigeria. (Dublin: Glenmore and Reynolds, Ltd., 1949), p. 246.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

⁹⁰ The first Premier of Southern Cameroons, Dr. John Foncha was one of the first Cameroonians to be trained there.

Certificate in order to teach in the higher classes (Standards V and VI) of the primary school.

The Basel Mission in Cameroon requested that their unqualified vernacular teachers be registered as teachers teaching in schools of a purely religious character, since the schools did not come within the definition of "school" in the Code. What the Basel Mission contemplated, it may be presumed, was that if such teachers were registered they could be posted to secular schools. Otherwise, there was no cause for protest if their vernacular teachers taught in schools of a religious character. By a 1928 amendment of the Code, vernacular teachers were subsequently registered but only if actually teaching in vernacular schools. They had in this connection to make the following undertaking:

I hereby undertake that except with the written sanction of the Director of Education or his representative, I will only teach in schools where⁹¹ the instruction is given solely in the vernacular.

The penalty for breach was removal from the register of teachers. However, special cases existed where by vernacular teachers could and did teach in schools where instruction was given in English, but even here, only the vernacular was to be used by such teachers.

⁹¹Cited in H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1929, p. 75.

Therefore, the initial difficulties of Missionary Societies to procure trained teachers must be borne in mind as a factor which drove them to play an ever increasing role in providing the majority of teacher training institutions in the British Cameroons. At the end of 1926, the only teacher training institution was the Government Normal Class (transferred from the Victoria Coastal town to the territory's headquarters at Buea in that year), training eleven students. The Normal Department trained Government, Native Administration and Mission teachers. N.A. and Mission teachers were usually under implied contracts to serve their agencies at the end of the course. This practice marks the beginning of the "bonding" system for teachers of the Voluntary Agencies. But the training of teachers in the institution was wholly at Government expense while students received maintenance allowances from their sponsoring agencies. The perennial shortage of trained teachers underwrote the pupil-teachers, whose recruitment was officially encouraged, throughout the mandate and trusteeship period.

A slight reversal of the policy of no longer sending Cameroonians to Nigeria for training occurred in 1930 as a result of the creation of Middle Schools. However, only teachers of Middle Schools were to be sponsored for training in Nigeria. A further revision of the positions of teacher training in Cameroon raised the duration of training at

the Normal School to three years in order to prepare teachers for the High Elementary Certificate, which in that year replaced the Third Class Teachers Certificate. The new grade qualified the teacher to teach in the higher classes of elementary school, hence its name. It may be noted here that the increase in the duration of the course, the limited admission at the only Normal Class and the refusal to send teachers for training in Nigeria were incompatible with the growing need for trained primary school teachers whose demand remained high.

The first formal teacher training institution in the territory was opened in 1932. It was virtually an outgrowth of the Normal Class which ceased to function from that year. According to the Administering Authority the institution was to provide teachers "with a less expensive education for the lower classes"⁹² of primary school. The Government Teacher Training Centre (G.T.T.C.) as the new institution came to be called, trained teachers from all denominations, the Native Administrations and, after 1952, the Cameroons Development Corporation. Students other than Government students were sponsored by their respective agencies, in terms of maintenance allowances; they were also bonded to serve their respective agencies on completing the course.

⁹²H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1932, p. 78.

The early years of the institution were ones of great effort on the part of the students. The pioneering students (at Kake Village on the outskirts of Kumba) contributed a great deal of labour to bring the institution to standard. As officially reported to the League of Nations in 1933, the students had to "assist in building their own quarters." This was viewed as a training in itself so that students would:

... learn to tackle the problem of rural sanitation; to face the difficulties they might expect to find in their own villages and to learn to be of real help in social services to the communities amongst which they would eventually work.⁹³

Work undertaken by the pioneers included the building of native houses for themselves, a house for the Superintendent of Education (in charge of teacher training) and other members of staff, classroom blocks; they dug out and burnt stumps of trees "many of them exceeding twenty feet in girth," filled the holes so created, levelled the ground and planted grass. This description reveals the method used by the Administering Authority to keep down capital expenditure on new institutions.

The activities of the student-teachers of this first Elementary Teacher Training Centre were very diverse with outdoor work featuring prominently. The official reports

⁹³Ibid., p. 77.

of the Administering Authority in 1934 cited such outdoor activities as "the building of a latrine and general repairs," on occasion "carpentry and joinery" and the "establishment of an oil palm."⁹⁴ These activities were, however, consistent with the aim of the institution:

... turning out a type of teacher who will find himself in congenial surroundings living as a schoolmaster in an African village. He will wear the same kind of clothes, speak the same language and engage with his pupils in many of the ordinary village occupations. His book-learning and his position of responsibility for the youth of the village will give him prestige without lifting him right above the society in which he lives.⁹⁵

This aim apparently implies that there was a different emphasis for teachers of urban areas, but no evidence exists.

The content of the three-year course emphasised theory and practice. Subjects taught reflected what the students were to teach; stress was placed on teaching practice in "practising schools," elementary schools usually forming part of a teacher training institution, as well as in other elementary schools within a walking-distance radius. Part of the practical teaching work included crafts and improvised teaching paraphernalia.

⁹⁴ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1934, p. 83.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 84.

Examinations consisted of academic subjects, practice teaching, physical education and rural science (agriculture). Unsuccessful students were "referred" in subjects failed for another year.

The position of the teacher in the community was highly valued by the Administering Authority. Consequently, various devices were introduced to widen their horizon and to give them insights into the working of society and its needs. For instance, the annual refresher courses formerly and primarily designed for untrained teachers became applicable to practising teachers from the Government Teacher Training Centre and from other institutions. Lectures, delivered by officers from all Government Departments, Missionary Societies and private individuals, dealt with a variety of topics -- law, agriculture, first aid, science, simple accounting, health, astronomy. The first magazine in the territory, the "Cameroon Chronicle", was started by the Education Department in 1938 with the cooperation of teachers.

The Government Teacher Training Centre suffered a temporary set back in 1944 when it was closed and the students transferred to a Government teacher training centre (Uyo) in Nigeria. In 1946, it reopened its doors, to remain the only Government Teacher Training Centre in the country up to 1955 when another Government training centre (Bambui) for rural science teachers was opened. But rising attendances

in all schools between 1924 and 1938 made an ever increasing demand for trained teachers, the supply of which could not be met by the only teacher training institution in the country, between 1924 and 1938.

2. The Post-Second World War Period

The post-war period represents a period of extensive missionary activity in the provision of teacher training institutions. Meanwhile, during the war in 1944, the Basel Mission opened its first teacher training centre at Nyasoso for a one-year training of Standard VI (Primary school) pupils and the Catholic Mission opened another (St. Peter's Training College, Njinikom) in the same year. Between 1947 and 1957, the Missionary Societies opened a total of ten teacher training institutions. The rising primary school attendance competition among Missionary Societies and the speed with which the training centres were established, necessitated the use of temporary sites. Table 8 shows some of the teacher training institutions opened between 1944 and 1958.

From the Table, it is clear that due to Missionary effort, training institutions were equally distributed throughout the country. Mission teacher training colleges began with one-year teacher training courses (PTO) and developed to three-year and four-year courses leading to the Elementary Teachers Certificates and the High Elementary

Table 8

Teacher Training Colleges Opened Between 1944 and 1957

Year Opened	Institution	Mission	Location	Year Moved	Permanent Site
1944	Nyasoso, T.T.C.	Basel	Nyasoso	?	Batibo
	St. Peter's T.T.C.	Catholic	Njinikom	1949	Bambui
1947	Bali T.T.C.	Basel	Bali	?	Batibo
1949	St. Francis T.T.C. (Girls only)	Catholic	Piango, Kumba	-	-
1950	Baptist T.T.C.	Baptist	Great Soppo, Buea	1954	Belo
1955	St. Paul's T.T.C.	Catholic	Muyuka	1956	Bonjongo
1957	St. Pius X T.T.C.	Catholic	Mankon, Bamenda	1958	Tatum

Teachers Certificates respectively, which qualified teachers to teach in lower and higher classes of primary schools respectively. The content and duration of courses differed slightly between male and female teachers. Specialised courses featured in the curricula of both with the curriculum for females emphasising domestic science -- needlework, cookery, child care and hygiene. External Examinations were conducted by the Education Department (Lagos and later Enugu) in Nigeria and the internal examination by the institutions concerned. The former comprised English language, Arithmetic, principles and method of education and practicals -- teaching, oral English, practical and theoretical rural science, physical education, teaching aids and classroom exposition, while the latter consisted of academic subjects and handwork.

Political, economic and social development in the territory during the postwar period gave impetus to educational development and made the establishment of teacher training institutions necessary in order to meet rising attendance. Colonial, Development and Welfare Funds facilitated the financing of many of these institutions. The Catholic Mission, St. Francis College for Girls, particularly benefited directly from the Fund, since it was designed to serve all denominations in the territory. The policy of making teachers appropriate agents of rural development, and to nurture the interests of pupils for

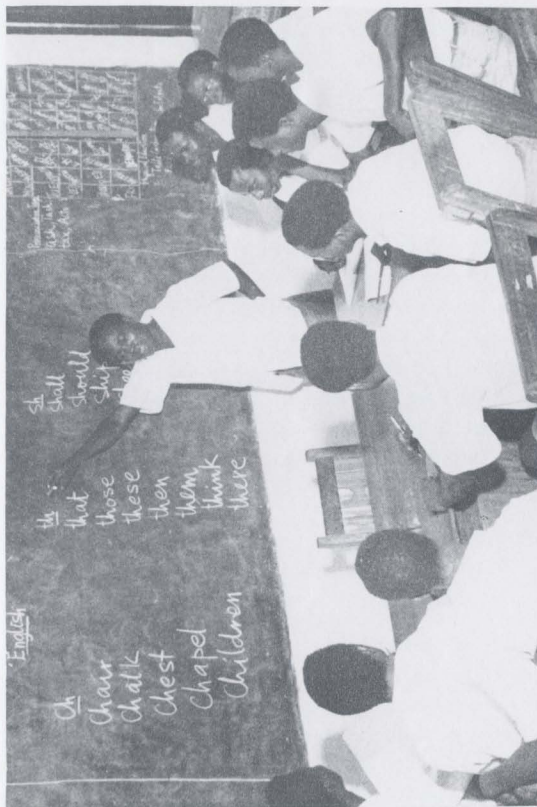


Figure 4. Learning to teach: Student-Teachers in an English Language Class

agriculture, led the Government in 1954 to establish the Rural Education Centre (Bambui) in the Northern part of the territory. A training section for specialist handicraft teachers was established in G.T.T.C., under an American Manual Training Advisor.

Although training institutions had increased in number within the country in the post-war period, higher schools of education constituted the main vacuum. For these, places were made available to Cameroonians in Nigeria, West Africa, and the London University Institute of Education. Within the territory itself, the Missionary Societies showed great zeal in providing teacher training institutions. Compared with the present system of teacher training in the country, teachers during the trusteeship period received an adequate professional training.

B. The Status of Teachers

1. Salaries

The teaching profession during British Administration of the Cameroons was far from attractive, but it was the easiest job to take the primary school leaver with a First School Leaving Certificate off the streets. Salaries were low and the prestige of the teacher was generally small. In the village, however, the teacher was virtually

Table 9

Growth of Teacher Training Institutions, 1947-57

Year	Government and Native Administration	Voluntary Agencies		Enrolment
		Aided	Unaided	
1947	1	3	-	160
1948	1	3	-	262
1949	1	4	-	208
1950	1	4	-	269
1951	1	4	1	310
1952	1	3	-	275
1953	1	3	-	112
1954	1	3	-	290
1955	2 ^(a)	4	-	299
1956	1 ^(b)	6	-	366
1957	2	10	-	705

Source: Compiled from H.M.G. Reports on the British Cameroons, 1947 - 1957.

- (a) Government Teacher Training Centre opened 1932 and Government Rural Education Centre for rural science teachers, opened 1954.
- (b) Rural Education Centre temporarily closed and re-opened after a year.

a "district Officer," the most learned and greatly respected in the whole locality; he was the last word in matters that spelt enlightenment. In the urban areas he was accorded respect, but his salary was a source of insult from his classmates who might have been fortunate to secure lucrative positions in commercial houses as clerks with high rates of remunerations often almost doubling that of the teacher. The teacher's role was greatly appreciated, but paradoxically his compensation was not commensurate to the important role he played in society.

Within the school system itself there was great disparity between salaries for teachers teaching in Government Schools and those teaching in Mission Schools, even though salary scales were fixed for teachers by the Education Department. Any attempt to provide an objective explanation does not usually lead to any plausible answer.

However, at the beginning of British Administration in 1922, no information about teachers' salaries is available but it can be presumed that teachers employed in the Government Schools earned a salary generally equivalent to salary scales in Nigeria. But for the remnants of Mission Schools abandoned by German Missionaries and which remained under the management of a few Cameroonian catechists, and pastors, the term "salaries" had not been introduced into their vocabulary, the teachers' "salaries" being

contributed by enrolling pupils,⁹⁶ in cash or kind.

With the issue of the Nigerian Education Code in 1926 which was by extension applicable to the Southern Cameroons, salary scales for teachers were laid down as follows:⁹⁷

Probationary or Pupil Teacher	£ 9 per annum
Provisional Teacher	£ 18 per annum
Part A Registered Teachers	£ 40 per annum
Second Class with B Certificate	£ 66 per annum
Second Class with A	£ 80 per annum
First Class Certificate	£ 110 per annum
Extra in respect of a special certificate for any subject, provided the teacher was teaching in that subject	£ 8 per annum

The probationary teachers were recruited from those who had completed the eight-year primary school course but sometimes even from those who had not completed the course. It is not clear what qualifications were required for other grades of teachers, but the grades might have been determined by promotion examinations conducted for teachers by the Education Department and other qualifications including teaching certificates from overseas or the few training institutions at the time in Nigeria. However, the 1926

⁹⁶ Lewis Thomas, op. cit., p. 279.

⁹⁷ Education Code, 1926, p. 30.

Nigerian Education Code required a Probationary Teacher holding a Standard V or Standard VI certificate to undergo a four-year training in a teacher training college to qualify for the award of a third class certificate. To obtain the second class certificate, three good annual reports and other considerations were the only determinants.

The status of the teacher in terms of salary remained virtually static until 1947, when, due to this degrading status, the Nigerian Union of Teachers (N.U.T.) organised a country-wide strike to improve it. Prior to this crisis, shortage of teachers was due no less to the fact that the low status did not attract people to the profession than to the fact that those who were already in the profession did not hesitate in abandoning it for other professions or careers whenever opportunities offered themselves.

After the N.U.T. strike of 1947, new salary scales for teachers were established, by the Nigerian Government, usually automatically becoming applicable by extension to the Southern Cameroons.

Table 10 requires some comment. From these salary scales, the disparity between Government and Voluntary Agency teachers is glaringly clear, plausible reasons for which are difficult to come by. But according to a personal communication from one of those who had taught under the system, the disparity stemmed from the fact that

Table 10
Salary Scales for Teachers, 1947

Agency	Grade of Teacher	Salary Per Annum £
Government	Supervising Teacher	360 - 450
	Teachers	72 - 250
Native Administration	Certificated Teachers	68 - 250
	Uncertificated Teachers	36 - 60
	Uncertificated (with Sec. Ed.)	68 - 72
	Probationary Teachers	28 and upwards
Voluntary Agencies	Graduates	240 - 480
	Other European Dip. and Yaba Dip.	170 - 300
	Certificated Teachers	68 - 250
	Uncertificated Teachers	36 - 72
	Probationary Teachers	21 -

Source: H.M.G. British Report on the British Cameroons, 1947.

Voluntary Agencies depended on Government grants-in-aid and school fees for their teachers' salaries. Thus, it paid more to be a Government teacher than to be a Voluntary Agency teacher, with consequences not only on the status of the latter, but even on his output. Secondly, it would appear from the above scales that, Government did not appoint graduate teachers. If the Governments supervising teachers were other than university graduates, it would stand to reason that, even those lower in qualifications in the Government Schools, enjoyed higher status than graduates in Mission Schools; most of whom, however, were missionaries, presumably enjoying other benefits from their home bodies.

Generally, the 1947 scales are not reliable for grades such as "Teachers" in Government Schools, "Certificated Teachers", "Uncertificated Teachers" in Native Administration and Voluntary Agencies are in no way informative as no specific grades are given.

In 1947, more attention was being directed to the status of the teacher. The Nigerian Legislature introduced a non-contributory scheme for pensions and gratuities for non-Government certificated teachers, cost being "borne by Government,"⁹⁸ as well as an extended scale "for certain grant-aided teachers" fixed at £450 - £900 per annum. From 1952 to 1957, teachers' salaries were subjected to frequent

⁹⁸ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1950, p. 140.

revisions which continued to enhance the status of the teacher. Table 11 is provided as a comparative analysis.

The 1952 salary revision created a new scale (£570 - £1290 per annum). Aspirants were those "chosen for specially responsible posts, approved by the Inspector-General of Education, in secondary education, teacher training, or the supervision and administration of primary education,"⁹⁹ from among the graduates; these had to possess the Yaba Diploma (Nigeria) and the Senior Certificated Teachers of the Voluntary Agencies.

The table below indicates that although there was a revision of salaries in 1956, this only affected the Grade II teachers of the Government Schools while in 1957, it favourably affected all grades of teachers in the Government schools, salaries of Voluntary Agency teachers remaining static. Meanwhile, either the grades of the Ministry of Education Certificated Teachers were abolished or their salaries also remained static.

2. Southern Cameroons Union of Teachers (S.C.U.T.)

It is necessary to state immediately that the Southern

⁹⁹ H.M.C. Report on the British Cameroons, 1952, p. 158.

Table 11

Revision of Teachers' Salaries, 1952 - 1957

Agency	Grade of Teacher	Salary Scales (per annum)			
		1952	1955	1956	1957
Government	Ungraded Teachers	55-155	66-192	66-192	90-192
	Teachers Grade III and IV	124-220	150-258	150-258	150-270
	Teachers Grade II	230-314	270-360	282-375	307-408
	Teachers Grade I	340-448	390-492	390-492	294-612
	Supervising Teachers	465-615	516-660	516-660	564-714
Voluntary Agency					
	Probationary Teachers (Std. VI)	40-	48-	48-	-
	Probationary Teachers (Sec. IV)	58-	70-	70-	-
	Uncertificated Teachers	56-114	66-138	66-138	-
	Uncertificated Teachers (Sec. IV)	42-60	-	-	-
		(+ 12%)	-	-	-
	Uncertificated Teachers (Sec. VI)	102-128	156-162	156-162	-
	Uncertificated Teachers (Special)	100-148	120-192	120-192	-
	Uncertificated Teachers (High School)	156-266	192-324	192-324	-
	Uncertificated Teachers (Intermediate)	156-266	192-324	192-324	-
	Elementary Teachers Certificate	100-180	120-228	120-228	-
	Higher Elementary Teachers Certificate	132-326	156-384	156-384	-
	Senior Certificated Teachers	230-470	276-576	276-576	-
	Min. of Ed. Cert. Teachers	210-470	-	-	-
	Lab. Diploma	254-470	306-660	306-660	-
	Graduates	420-700	530-800	530-800	-

Source: H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1952-57.

Cameroons Union of Teachers split from the Nigerian Union of Teachers towards the end of the trusteeship period. Whatever solidarity existed among teachers in the Southern Cameroons was local and unofficial; whatever decisions were reached by the government with regard to policies for educational development, including the status of teachers, the government had to reach them without representatives of the teachers.

It is very likely that the idea of a teachers' union would have been a novel one in the history of Nigeria, Cameroon included, but for the sudden turn of events in 1926 resulting from the Education Code. The Nigerian Union of Teachers did not develop naturally as a functional agency in educational development. Thus, before 1926, there was no official organ through which teachers could channel their grievances.

The dissatisfaction of the teachers with the provisions of the Education Code of 1926 "with its stringent conditions for teacher certification, the re-classification of teachers ... the reduction and retrenchment of teachers during depression years,"¹⁰⁰ gradually gave cause to the formation of the Nigerian Union of Teachers. With the coming into effect of the Education Code in 1927, coupled with the 1929-30 world economic crisis, the government had resorted to

¹⁰⁰ Fafunwa, op. cit., p. 158.

such unpopular expedients as the demotion of some teachers and the retrenchment of others. Furthermore, with the cut-back in grants-in-aid to Voluntary Agencies, in 1931, resulting in the cuts in teachers' salaries, some sort of organised action became necessary. Hilliard's description provides a better picture of the condition of the teachers at this time:

... teachers' salaries had in several instances to be reduced and increments withheld; some Missions imposed levies on the salaries of their teaching staff in order to keep their schools going in poorer areas.¹⁰¹

Under these circumstances, even headmasters in Native Administration schools in the Southern Cameroons lost their jobs. Not only was there a drift from the teaching profession but the required standards of efficiency dwindled and could not be officially insisted upon by the Government Inspectors.

In 1931, the Nigerian Union of Teachers was founded; branches were subsequently formed in the Southern Cameroons mandated territory. The aims of the Union concerned the improvement of the teaching profession, creating of a better understanding among teachers in Nigeria, Southern Cameroon included, and the creation of an organ through which the grievances of teachers could be

¹⁰¹ Hilliard, op. cit., p. 137.

channelled to the government, but also included was its willingness to cooperate with the education department.

The founding of the Nigerian Union of Teachers gave the teachers a voice in educational decision-making and "the right to deal directly with the government"¹⁰² especially when later it was officially represented in the board of education. But it must not be assumed that the powers obtained by the Union pleased the Voluntary Agencies which unsuccessfully tried to circumscribe them. Such powers constituted a threat to the Missions which had hitherto represented the teachers in the board of education. The eventual introduction of the then Director of Education into the Union as patron gave it even greater strength and if the Voluntary Agencies regarded the union as a threat, this threat consequently increased in magnitude. However, it was not until 1941, that the Nigerian Union of Teachers with its branches in the Southern Cameroons, secured its registration as a trade union.

It was not until 1950 that the Administering Authority of the Southern Cameroons mandated territory reported to the Permanent Mandate Commission of the League of Nations of the existence of branches of the Nigerian Union of Teachers (Buea, Kumba, Bamenda, Mbengus and Ejinkom) in the Southern Cameroons, with their official

¹⁰² Rafunwa, op. cit., p. 161.

publications, "The Nigerian Schoolmaster" and the "Nigerian Teacher." The branches in the Southern Cameroons took on a political complexion, becoming embryos of future political parties in the territory. This point helps to explain why politics has been dominated by teachers in the Anglophone provinces of the present United Republic of Cameroon, with leadership and ministerial positions held by ex-teachers of the British era.

As already stated, the Southern Cameroons Union of Teachers was a branch of the Nigerian Union of Teachers. Later, political changes led to the creation of a separate Southern Cameroons House of Legislature. The Southern Cameroons Union of Teachers was formed in 1958 with aims differing in no material details from those of the body from which it separated.

Membership in the union was reserved for teachers of character who paid their union fees, and was signified by the possession of a membership card. Besides the organised conferences and seminars and attempts to enhance teacher-pupil relationship, the Southern Cameroons Union of Teachers accomplished virtually nothing in the improvement of the teaching profession and teachers' status, for the simple reason that it became involved with party politics, causing division rather than unity and solidarity among the teachers.

The new political leaders of the Southern Cameroons,

a large majority of whom were teachers, paradoxically became impervious to the plight of their former teaching colleagues and the Education Department, and although on occasion entered into negotiations with teachers' representatives, maintained some qualms about the teachers union.

It was common to declare trade disputes but this was doomed to fail when some teachers were bought over by politicians who, on coming to power, regarded the rest of the teachers as the opposition party with the consequence that strikes were usually followed by severe consequences, such as loss of part salaries by victims. Thus, the Southern Cameroons Union of Teachers, unlike the Nigerian Union of Teachers, lacked direction, dynamism and seriousness of purpose, with the result that the status of the teacher, especially the "mission teacher", remained one of public insult, a situation which in its own way affected the standards and efficiency of the schools.

CHAPTER VII

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

A. Introduction

In Chapter V we examined the development, expansion and extension of the elementary, secondary grammar and technical institutions in the territory during the mandate and trusteeship period. This chapter is concerned with the content of education and the method by which knowledge was imparted in the various schools. But, before delving into the subject, it is necessary to explore and analyse some views prevalent at the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth centuries about the curriculum suited to the African. These ideas form the basis for understanding the origin of the curriculum proposed by the Phelps-Stokes Commission and the British education policy for her African dependencies.

B. The African and the Content of Education

Ideas about the curriculum most suited to Western education for the African were inextricably interwoven with cultural prejudice at the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Missionaries, colonial government officials and traders

held diverse views as to what should be taught in the Western Schools introduced in Africa. Missionary Societies which first introduced such schools offered religious instruction and the traditional three R's; some missions even offered Latin, Greek and Hebrew. But this curriculum was castigated by government officials and traders who insisted on a curriculum based on manual work.

Many reasons were behind this disapproval. First, it was the opinion of the Westerners that the African was lazy and only manual labour could free him from the malaise. Secondly, the African possessed an inferior intellectual capacity and could not be offered an education which involved abstractions. Thirdly, the immorality and degeneracy of African culture and traditions furnished the raison d'etre of conversion to Christianity. Consequently, to stamp out immorality, religious instruction featured prominently in the curriculum of mission schools, and to inculcate habits for manual labour and eliminate laziness, technical, or more correctly, vocational training was advocated.

It is evident that such a curriculum was designed to serve the interests of Missionaries, the government officials, and traders. This enabled Missionaries to alter the traditions of the Africans while the colonialists were able to procure "an African labor force working for British-managed agricultural plantations." But religious instruction did not only serve the Missionaries, it was a

deliberate instrument to produce a docile people easy to manage politically. Literary education, which in Europe was considered invaluable, was considered useless for the African. No small wonder, therefore, that secondary education was a late arrival and when it did arrive it was on the initiative of Missionary Societies, with later government subsidies.¹⁰³

This climate of opinion was still current when the Phelps-Stokes Commission studied the educational conditions in Africa in 1920-21 and 1923. Since the Missionaries, particularly the American Baptist Mission, had been instrumental to the study and also subscribed to the idea of vocational training for Africans, the recurrent theme in the Phelps-Stokes Commission report and the British education policy was that of adaptation of education to the African environment. American Missionaries drew their inspiration from the example of Negro education in the south of the United States, where vocationalism was highly emphasised at the Negro institutes at Hampton and Tuskegee. The Hampton-Tuskegee paradigm provided the basis for a philosophy of education for the Africans in the British dependencies.

But the vocational approach for the education of the African was categorically rejected by the Africans.

¹⁰³ Edward H. Berman, African Reactions to Missionary Education. (New York: Teachers College, University of Columbia, 1975), p. 9.

What the African wanted was not a narrow vocational education deliberately designed to tie him to the land, but a literary education. It is no wonder, therefore, that the proposed curriculum could not be wholly implemented. The demand for subordinate personnel in administration and the provision of an inferior education to the Africans placed the colonial administrators in an ambivalent situation and therefore they could not help introducing a modicum of literary education.

C. The Content of Education in the British Cameroons

1. Elementary Schools

The curriculum in the schools operated by Missionary Societies in the Cameroons was consistent with the aims of evangelical work. Religious instruction, reading, writing and arithmetic were the traditional subjects. But practical skills were included for the economic viability and self-sufficiency of Missionary Societies, since government assistance was not available or was insufficient and since there were no regulations prescribing a uniform curriculum, the decisions concerning what was to be taught rested with the agencies concerned. Government schools offered the secular curriculum which was offered in Nigerian schools.

When the Phelps-Stokes Commission undertook the

study of education in West Africa in 1920, it realised that while many countries of the world were adapting their curricula to "prepare the youth to deal wisely and effectively with problems of their country and their generation," this emphasis was lacking in African schools. An obvious source of criticism by the members of the Commission was the "wholesale transfer of the educational conventions of Europe and America," to Africa. The reaction of the Commission coincided with that of the Africans themselves who had "urged the importance of more science in the school curriculum,"¹⁰⁵ in the realisation that such a curriculum was more useful to economic and social development.

Generally, the Commission recommended a curriculum with emphasis on agriculture, crafts and health, according to the grades and ages of the pupils, using appropriate methods for different subjects of the curriculum. These recommendations were echoed in the Education Policy in British Tropical Africa. This placed particular emphasis on character training and suggested that religious instruction form part of the curriculum, and to "be accorded an equal

¹⁰⁴ Cited in David G. Scanlon, Traditions of African Education. (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1964), p. 53.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 54.

standing with secular subjects."¹⁰⁶ The emphasis on religious instruction for character formation can be seen as a very important element which improved the relations and the co-operation between Missionary Societies and the colonial governments.

Although the British policy emphasised technical and vocational training, this was envisaged to be offered in Government workshops and departments on the lines of apprenticeship, under bond, and not in formal schools. Whether the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission and those of the British Government were actually implemented is a matter which can be judged only after a close study of the curriculum as developed in the British Cameroons between 1926 and 1960.

The curriculum which the schools in the Cameroons adopted was prescribed by the Nigerian Education Code of 1926. This was the first official attempt to prescribe a common curriculum for schools operated by all educational agencies -- Government, Mission, Native Administration, and after 1952, the Cameroon Development Corporation. The curriculum prescribed for the infant classes included reading, handwriting, vernacular, arithmetic, various aspects of hand and eye training, nature study, religious

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 97.

knowledge, story-telling, games, singing and hygiene." The curriculum for the infant classes was designed to prepare infants for the next stage which was the junior primary school lasting four years; the junior primary school lay the foundation for the senior primary course.

At the junior and senior primary level, the curriculum included more advanced studies of local, Nigerian, Cameroonian, West African and British Empire history and geography. Agriculture was introduced in the last two years (Standards V and VI) of the primary school. At this stage, pupils were able to learn the elements of manuring the soil, planting distance, measuring and about the tools used for gardening. Pupils were made to take charge of definite plots of land of about 30 or 40 square yards and to record processes in notebooks for the girls domestic science featured prominently.

The snag in the primary school curriculum is that subjects such as agriculture and crafts, which did not feature in the examination for the First School Leaving Certificate, did not arouse much enthusiasm in the pupils. Absenteeism was high on the days which agriculture appeared on the time-table. Although craftwork counted for examination grades, pupils bought such articles from professional craftsmen. But teachers usually insisted that craftwork be done in school during handwork periods allocated on the time-table. Crafts and handwork articles

differed according to localities and were determined by the local craft of the natives.

The emphasis on handwork, crafts, and agriculture, transformed schools in the Southern Cameroons into virtual agencies for the propagation of new techniques in agriculture, crafts and the making of building materials. In 1936, for instance, a Native Administration School (Belo), introduced improved methods of pottery-making and as officially reported in that year, villagers visited it "to learn the new methods."¹⁰⁷ With the introduction of mud-blocks for school buildings in the northern part of the territory, this material has become the main building material in that region. In most of the schools in both the northern and southern region of the territory, schools owned farmland in the school premises and cultivated a variety of food and cash crops -- cocoa and banana. In the area of community services, schools, particularly Native Administration schools (Masaka, Kurume, Nfuni, Tali and Muea), played a very important role.

The policy of adapting school curriculum to native occupations and the emphasis on manual labour were more successful in the primary than in the secondary schools as would be seen shortly. It can therefore be stated here

¹⁰⁷H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1936, p.100.

that, at the primary school level, the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission and the Education Policy in British Tropical Africa were fully realised. But it would be erroneous to conclude that these recommendations were intended primarily for the elementary schools. The fact is that secondary education was rather more elitist in its activities and designed to provide qualifications "for entering the higher professions and for further training,"¹⁰⁸ being the "highest" educational institutions in the territory at the time.

A subject that was a source of contention between the schools and parents was religious instruction. Since mission schools emphasised it, pupils who did not belong to the denomination protested. Although it was a recognised subject of the curriculum, a conscience clause provided: "children whose parents or guardians do not wish them to receive religious instruction shall be given other tuition during the period assigned to that subject."¹⁰⁹ This conscience clause had the effect of turning religious instruction into an optional subject, its importance in character formation notwithstanding.

The content of the history and civics syllabus increased during the years. In the examination of

¹⁰⁸ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1953, p. 97.

¹⁰⁹ H.M.G., 1952, p. 148.

previous reports of the Administering Authority, the United Nations Trusteeship Council had requested the dissemination of information about the United Nations. Consequently, the history curriculum came to include the study of the United Nations, and pupils were specifically expected to answer questions on the United Nations in their final examinations for certification; the examination required answers to questions on the implications of trusteeship.¹¹⁰

Besides the neglect of practical subjects in the examination for the First School Leaving Certificate, the curriculum of the primary schools, especially the last two years, tended to emphasise those subjects offered for this examination and the entrance requirements to secondary schools -- English language and arithmetic.

2. Post-primary Institutions

From the time post-primary education began in the territory, the curriculum has traditionally been determined by the syllabus of the examining bodies in West Africa and the United Kingdom. Up to 1957, the main examining bodies were those in the United Kingdom: Cambridge University School Certificate, London University

¹¹⁰ H.M.C., 1953, p. 91.

Matriculation and Intermediate Arts Examinations. From 1957, Secondary Schools followed the syllabus of the West African Examination Council which had its headquarters in Ghana. But in the Cameroons, the University of London General Certificate of Education was introduced for secondary schools in 1964.

According to the Nigerian Education Code of 1926, the Secondary School course lasted six years. The Code prescribed the curriculum for the six forms of secondary schools as follows:

Table 12

Secondary School Curriculum

Form	Source of Curriculum
1	Cambridge University Preliminary Local Examination
2	Cambridge University Junior Local Examination
4	Cambridge University School Certificate or London Univ. Matric Exams.
6	Cambridge University H.S.C. or London University Inter-Arts Exams.

The curriculum for Forms III and V was determined by the same examining bodies but a pupil could only write the next examination after passing the previous one. The organisation meant that a student could abandon schooling at any stage depending on the requirements of the job-market and the aspirations of the pupil. But the system could and did encourage drop-outs with the consequence that the job-market was flooded and rural exodus was heightened. The subjects offered in the secondary schools included the arts, sciences, bookkeeping and secretarial skills. However, not much value was placed on the commercial subjects, hence they were taught outside school hours.


Taking into account the conditions of the time, the inclusion of science subjects -- chemistry, biology, and physics -- in the secondary school curriculum was nothing short of window-dressing. Teachers for these subjects were hard to come by; the equipment and laboratory facilities were non-existent. Consequently, less than 5 per cent of the secondary schools at the time offered science subjects. There was therefore an inclination towards the arts subjects. Again, secondary education was primarily designed to provide junior and intermediate personnel in the Government and private enterprises, and not to produce doctors or scientists. The secondary school curriculum introduced by the 1926 Code clearly reflected that of the English Secondary Grammar School.

Although the curriculum suggested by the Phelps-Stokes Commission in 1922 and the Education Policy in Tropical Africa emphasised agriculture, this tended to be limited to primary schools and teacher-training colleges. Secondary schools, until recently, have played a very little role in agricultural life. When agriculture was considered, it was taught theoretically under biology.

The introduction of Middle Schools in 1931 was a change in organisation of the elementary school system rather than a change in the content of the curriculum. The last two years of the elementary school were incorporated into the secondary school course. The Middle Schools courses lasted six years; the last two years of primary classes and four years of the secondary course. The curriculum emphasised English language study with mathematics, applied mathematics in workshop, physics, chemistry and elementary biology, history and geography forming the rest of the curriculum. The aim was to "offer pupils chances of qualifying for more responsible work" and eliminate the production of 'a large number of semi-educated young men ... unable to find clerical or similar employment and yet are unwilling to engage in manual work.'¹¹¹

The period of the development of secondary education

¹¹¹ Education Department, Nigeria, Memorandum on Educational Policy in Nigeria. Lagos: Government Printer, 1930, p. 23.



belongs to the post-Second World War period. But the curriculum was the same as in Nigerian Secondary Schools since there was a common examining body. According to the report of the Southern Cameroons Administering Authority in 1953, Secondary schools taught subjects providing opportunities for the higher professions and for further training and not occupational training.¹¹² This policy was reviewed in 1955 by the newly constituted Government of the Southern Cameroons.

In proposing a secondary school for girls (Q.R.S.S., Okoyong), the new Government, in its policy statement on education, envisaged a curriculum that was not only academic but occupational. This would operate for the boys secondary school as well. The policy statement therefore required secondary schools to:

... provide a full academic course leading to the school certificate examination, but in order to meet the growing demand for persons with commercial training afford wider opportunities of employment for girls and offer a greater selection of subjects to meet individual abilities and interests it is our intention to integrate with the academic work a commercial course including bookkeeping, shorthand and typing which would prepare girls for examinations of a recognised body and a subsequent commercial career.¹¹³

The policy statement was practically a return to the curriculum prescribed by the 1926 Education Code. There is

¹¹² H.M.G., 1953, p. 97.

¹¹³ Southern Cameroons House of Assembly, Policy for Education. (Buea: Government Printer, 1955), p. 3.

no evidence that the curriculum was effectively adopted in the schools, presumably due to the perennial problem of finding qualified teachers and equipment for the commercial subjects. But the curriculum suggests the shortage of Cameroonians in the civil service and private enterprises which were all filled by foreigners, particularly Nigerians. Besides the commercial subjects, the main curriculum consisted of subjects of the Cambridge University School Certificate -- the sciences and the arts -- with great emphasis on English Language.

In the Catholic Secondary School at Sasse and the Protestant College at Bali, French and Latin, officially prescribed in the curriculum for secondary schools, were supposed to be taught in each. French, however, was identified with Protestantism and Latin with Catholicism, for, as Vernon-Jackson revealed, a suggestion to include French in the curriculum of the Catholic Secondary School at Sasse led the staff to raise a storm of protest and thus French never became a subject in their curriculum.¹¹⁴ On the other hand, there is no indication that Latin ever became a subject on the syllabus of the Protestant College at Bali, whose graduates were placed in an advantageous position when the British Cameroons reunified with the French Cameroons, having already been used to the

¹¹⁴ Vernon-Jackson, op. cit., p. 478.

French language.

For the only vocational and technical school in the territory which was, in fact, a trade school, the courses offered included Fitting and Machining, Motor-Mechanics, Blacksmithing and Welding, Sheetmetalting, Electricity, Cabinet Making, Carpentry and Joinery, Wood Machining, Bricklaying, Painting and Decoration; the aim was to produce many needed artisans. The courses varied in duration, the shortest course being Painting and Decoration lasting 2½ years, while Fitting and Machining was the longest, lasting five years. Besides these, academic courses were also offered as relevant aids to the understanding of the various trades. Thus, elements of physics, chemistry and mathematics were offered, as well as English Language.

Although there was no institution of higher education within the territory, scholarships offered schemes designed to enable students to undertake such studies in Nigeria, West Africa and overseas, prescribed courses for which such scholarships could be offered, the scope of which indicates the acute need of some basic skills for the development of the territory. As laid down in the Policy for Scholarships, these included Medicine and Medical Technology, Dentistry and Dental Mechanics, Science, Arts, Law, Veterinary Science, Forestry, Surveying, Chartered Accountancy, Engineering in all its forms, Sociology, Anthropology,

Textile Technology, Nursing and Teaching courses.¹¹⁵

The nature of the territory's economic activities, which were and continue to be predominantly agricultural necessitated the inclusion of agriculture in the curriculum. This was greatly emphasised in the policy papers but was not sufficiently encouraged. As early as 1926, the Administering Authority continued to include in its reports the fact that increased importance was attached to agriculture and in 1952 had even begun to train specialist teachers in rural science at Bambui in Bamenda Division. The emphasis on agriculture was designed rather to forestall the gravitating of pupils to the urban areas in search of white-collar jobs than to arouse their interests in agriculture, which is the mainstay of the country's economy.

D. Teaching Methods

The methods of teaching employed in the schools are not documented. Although in official publications prescribing the curriculum, some allusions are sometimes made regarding methods to be adopted in various subjects, these are merely general guidelines. Trained teachers apply

¹¹⁵ Southern Cameroons Government, Policy for Scholarship (Sess. Paper No. 9) (Buea: Government Printer, 1955), p. 3.

methods studied while in training. But even with trained teachers, when not under the eye of an inspector, supervisor or visiting teacher, the use of professional methods is rare. The official report of the Southern Cameroons Administering Authority for 1937, reveals that teaching methods were practical; nature study, for instance, was studied from actual specimens and not only from textbooks and diagrams.¹¹⁶

The use of drill in arithmetic and English language, as well as memory exercise, constituted the popular method which turned the pupil into a virtual computer. The report of the West African Study Group sponsored by the Nuffield Foundation and the Colonial Office provides us with a vivid picture of the methods which were in popular use in the schools in West Africa:

They (teachers) drill their classes in the rules of Arithmetic and English grammar, in tables, and in definitions, and they instruct them in the facts of such subjects as history and geography. And their pupils listen and memorize and practise until their drill and their knowledge of the facts are well nigh perfect. But if they are asked to think for themselves, to apply their rules to some everyday situation, to reason from the facts -- in fact to make some connexion between the things they have been instructed in and reality -- they are lost.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ H.M.C. 1937, p. 71.

¹¹⁷ The Nuffield Foundation and the Colonial Office, Report of the West African Study Group, (Oxford: O.U.P., 1953) p. 22. A similar observation had been made thirty-five years earlier by the Phelps-Stokes report. See Chapter IV. It would appear that there was no improvement in methods even after teacher training had become important.

Such unscientific methods did not provide the pupil with usable knowledge. Again the report just cited discovered that:

The boy who has been working sums in yards and feet and inches for weeks, but who has no idea whether his desk is 4 inches or 4 feet wide or 4 yards wide; the girl who cannot speak or write a correct sentence of her own in English but who will gaily rattle off a definition of an intransitive verb or gerund; the boy who knows that Stockton and Darlington railway was opened in 1825 but has no idea what a railway is like ... are familiar figures to anyone who visits West African schools.¹¹⁸

Effective methods were, however, used in a few schools, especially those within reach of an inspector or those staffed with trained teachers, but the number was negligible. In Schools staffed with well-trained teachers, classrooms were usually adorned with the relevant teaching paraphernalia -- charts, globes, maps, planted flowers and other plants in tins. In nature study, pupils went out to nature in the company of the teacher to collect and study specimens of plants and insects, an exercise which was more often turned into a lesson of drawing of the collected specimens. In arithmetic some attempt was made in dramatising what takes place in a local shop, in terms of buying, selling, recording and giving correct change.

In the Secondary Schools, lecturing has always

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

been the method, with tutors for different disciplines coming in and going out, with weekly assignments featuring prominently. In the Sciences, the science laboratories were usually open to students for experiments in recognition of the fact that many students found laboratory work a happy pastime. At the trade centre at Ombe, the methods were much the same but theoretical lessons were daily supplemented by "practicals" which received more emphasis from the instructors. In the teacher training college, lecturing was the method used, with teaching practice regularly taking place under the supervision of senior tutors in the adjacent 'practising' schools.

E. Language of Instruction

The choice of a language of instruction was one of the dilemmas that confronted the British administrators in the Cameroons as elsewhere in Africa. The myriad of diversely spoken dialects makes polyglots of many Africans. Many countries have widely-spoken native languages. But the use of such a language often met with violent protests by minority language groups, whose languages have no orthography and had not been reduced to written form.

In the British Cameroons, two languages --

Douala and Bali -- had been reduced to written form by the early Missionaries, particularly the British Baptist Missionary Society as early as 1844. These two languages -- Bali used in the north and Douala in the south -- had sufficiently spread with itinerant traders who peddled their wares throughout the country. But due to lack of communication these two languages developed and spread in separate regions -- none spread to the region of the other in the early period. Besides the two dominant regional native languages, a little above 300 local dialects exist.

An important theme in the Phelps-Stokes Commission report of 1922 and the Education Policy in British Tropical Africa of 1925, was the need to use local dialects as language of instruction in African schools. Taking cognisance of the diversity of languages, it had been suggested that tribal languages be used in the lower classes of elementary schools and where an African lingua franca existed, it could be used in the middle classes; in the upper standards European languages, "as a means of access to the great accomplishments and aspirations of civilization"¹¹⁹ were recommended. This referred to the civilised nations, particularly those possessing territories in Africa.

¹¹⁹ Cited in David A. Scanlon (ed.) Traditions of African Education, (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964), p. 68.

The advantages accruing from the use of both native and European languages, ensured "that every people have an inherent right to their native tongue" and the avoidance of "misunderstandings and distrust among people who should be friendly and cooperative." The European languages were not only laden with civilization but it was also necessary to use them to enable all groups in the colonies "to communicate directly with those to whom the government is entrusted." Consequently, native languages chosen must have "powers of expression" and potentials of "translation of the great works of civilization."¹²⁰

In the Cameroons, ethnocentrism did not permit the wide use of the two languages -- Bali and Douala -- in all the schools, even at the lower classes of primary school. In one of the villages (Konye), for instance, a British Administration Officer in service in the Southern Cameroons in 1922 met a chief who expressed his dissatisfaction over the use of Douala language in the schools. The chief reported that "teachers taught in Douala language" and "not in the vernacular of the locality (Konye)."¹²¹ But there also existed chiefs who preferred English.

Among the Missionary Societies, religious differences

¹²⁰ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

¹²¹ Frederick William Hugh Migeod, Through British Cameroons, (London: Heath Cranton, 1925), p. 115.

seem to have bedevilled the use of vernacular in all the schools. But this should also be seen as the result of the permissive character of British policies. The Basel Mission, which had actually translated the Bali and Douala languages, used them in schools, but the Catholic Mission apparently "finding English so well established,"¹²² preferred to use it since it presented no problems of translation. But the religious factor is more likely to have been the reason, for the translated Douala and Bali texts by the Basel Mission were interspersed with their religious tenets. Secondly, since there were Bible translations included, many more pupils and the communities were likely to be more easily indoctrinated by the Basel Mission.

Officially, however, vernacular was to be used "for the first three years of school life."¹²³ The Native Administration and Basel Mission schools used the vernacular. Although the vernacular was to be that of the locality, Douala or Bali dominated. English language was gradually introduced, so that: "By the end of the full primary course most pupils should have a reasonable vocabulary and be able to write and speak grammatical English."¹²⁴

¹²²Ibid., p. 121.

¹²³H.M.G., 1926, p. 65.

¹²⁴H.M.G., 1949, p. 150.

The objective picture towards the end of British Administration, however, is that the use of English language as a subject and as a medium of instruction prevailed over the vernaculars, which petered out; English language was used from the infant classes upwards. In many schools, teachers rebuked pupils who were heard speaking in the vernacular in the school premises.

English language itself became increasingly emphasised to the extent that passes at the West African School Certificate Examination or the London University General Certificate of Education Examinations without English language were not regarded as complete passes. Advertisements for jobs or high school admission often require passes in a certain number of subjects "including English language." For instance, a pupil recording a pass in nine subjects at the General Certificate of Education Examination without English language, was less qualified than a pupil with five subjects, including English language. This also affected salaries where the former earned less than the latter.

F. Library Resources, Textbooks and Examinations

Information regarding libraries and textbooks is relatively scanty. It cannot be doubted that library

facilities were poor and the textbooks were inadequate. The limited wealth of the country, the poverty of the individuals, the virtual absence of reading habits and the lack of textbook writers did not encourage the development of good school libraries.

According to the official reports of 1954, it was the responsibility of school managers to ensure that textbooks were available. The manager or the pupils bought the books from local bookshops or ordered them from Nigeria or the United Kingdom. At the time, only the Basel Mission operated a bookshop, with branches fairly distributed throughout the territory. The only other bookshops were those in mission houses in the northern part of the territory. Since pupils had to provide their own books, some poorer pupils could not afford them. In a class of 40 pupils, it was common to find less than 10 per cent possessing the prescribed textbooks. Teachers with vision found it pedagogically expedient to break the class into groups to share a copy of a particular textbook, say, in a reading lesson; but ruthless ones did not hesitate to turn out pupils who did not possess them, ending up teaching less than half or a quarter of the class.

Inevitably the absence of textbooks had an effect on the performance of the pupils. A pupil did reading only in the classroom where he had to share books with others in the group, straining his neck to "peep" through a dense

group in order to read the passage. The West African Study Group in 1953 had put forward the suggestion that the Education Department could undertake to order the necessary textbooks through the Crown Agents to be sold to pupils at subsidised prices. It is clear that what was provided in an English school had to be bought and brought to school by the Cameroonian pupils.¹²⁵ These problems were even more acute in Mission than in the Government schools, some of which lent books to pupils.

Library facilities of some sort existed in Government Schools in the 1950's; some reading materials for school libraries began to be supplied to Government and later to all schools. These came from Nigeria and the United Kingdom and included the Nigerian "Children's Own Paper." Government schools in addition received "Today," "Child Education," and "Pictorial Education" from Britain. For the girls, the Woman Education Officer arranged for the supply of knitting and illustrated sewing booklets. For the teachers, "Nigeria" and the "Nigerian Teacher" were popular. But even with teachers, as remarked in the 1954 report, the reading habit was absent. When they could scan through papers, it was to extract lessons for current events (civics) which was part of the curriculum.

¹²⁵ From personal experience, in some areas infants brought their own stools, or benches from their homes.

Textbooks were mainly in English, the emphasis on vernacular notwithstanding; except for the readers in Douala and Bali, prepared by the Basel Mission, sold at its bookshops, and enforced in its schools, vernacular textbooks did not exist in say, history, geography, and so on. The use of textbooks in English had one glaring shortcoming; written by Europeans and Americans, they assumed knowledge that was common to an English than to an African child. The provision of libraries was regarded necessary only to post-primary institutions; for the primary schools other than a few Government schools, it was a luxury.

Examinations constituted the traditional measurement of intelligence and the criteria for promotion to the next class or stage in education, as well as for the awards of certificates. Consequently, failures in and repetition of classes was common and frustrating to pupils already handicapped by the lack of reading material. Examinations did much to cause delinquency, especially the competitive examinations to secondary schools. The completion of the eight-year primary school course was marked by the examinations conducted by the Education Department for the award of the First School Leaving Certificate; three subjects were written -- English language, Arithmetic and a General Paper concerning some of the other subjects of the primary school curriculum. At the secondary school level, pupils

wrote the West African School Certificate Examination conducted by the West African Examination Council, in subjects chosen by the candidate.

It is clear from the survey of curriculum and instruction during British Administration that, to a certain extent, it was influenced by the American philosophy on education for the Africans. But this influence is more evident at the primary than at the secondary school level, where the curriculum was largely academic and more arts than science included. Where science entered the curriculum, it more often than not degenerated into studies in domestic science, hygiene and nature study. The absence of laboratory facilities made the study of the sciences more theoretical than experimental. The methods of teaching were pervaded with pedantry and did not ensure the acquisition of knowledge applicable to the practical and the daily life of the people. Through British examinations, the whole curriculum of the English grammar schools was transferred to the territory, a curriculum which did not meet the needs of the Cameroonian society and which assumed knowledge which was not possessed by the African child.

CHAPTER VIII

FINANCING EDUCATION

A. Introduction

The previous chapters have dealt with schools and the activities that took place in them. The present chapter intends to examine how funds were raised and expended in the development of education in the present English-speaking Cameroon during British Administration, 1922 - 1960. Specifically, the chapter will explore the development of the grants-in-aid system to Voluntary Agencies and other sources of funds, particularly school fees and local rates. Since institutions of higher studies beyond secondary school were not available in the territory, it was the policy of the Administering Authority to grant scholarships to deserving students in the secondary schools to pursue higher studies in Nigeria, West Africa and the United Kingdom; scholarship schemes will also be examined.

B. The Period 1922 - 1928

We discussed in Chapter II that the mandate and later trusteeship agreements between the United Kingdom

and the League of Nations and the United Nations made the educational development of the Southern Cameroons a responsibility of the United Kingdom. Implied in this responsibility was the fact that the necessary finances for educational purposes had to be raised by the Administering Authority.

At the beginning of British Administration, the existing schools abandoned by the fleeing German Missionaries had degenerated into schools for teaching catechism; they were financed largely from fees paid by enrolling pupils. When government schools were established by the Administering Authority, they were directly financed from public funds from a joint budget with Nigeria. Between 1922 and 1927, the Catholic, Basel and Baptist Missionary Societies of English and German nationalities returned to reorganise their schools. During this period, finances for operating their schools were derived from school fees, contributions from their home boards and grants made by some Native Administrations, which also operated schools from their inception in 1922.

The Southern Cameroons was administered as part of Nigeria whose laws, ordinances and regulations became applicable to the mandated territory from 1924. Although a system of grants-in-aid was already in operation in Nigeria, this was not extended to the Southern Cameroons, presumably, because no mission schools had sufficiently

developed to qualify for grants under the Nigerian regulations. Consequently, between 1922 and 1926, no grant-in-aid system was in operation in the territory for schools operated by Voluntary Agencies. It was not until 1926 when the Education Code for Southern Nigeria, including the Southern Cameroons, was prepared, that a grant-in-aid system was introduced. The Code emerged as a response to the Education Policy in Tropical Africa published in 1925 by the Colonial Office in London. With specific reference to grants-in-aid, to Voluntary Agencies, the Policy recommended:

... the establishment of a system of grants-in-aid to schools which conform to the prescribed regulations and attain the necessary standard. Provided that the required standard of educational efficiency is reached, aided schools should be regarded as filling a place in the scheme of education as important as the schools conducted by Government itself ... The conditions under which grants-in-aid are given should not be dependent on examination results.¹²⁶

The 1926 Education Code laid down conditions for the award of grants-in-aid to Voluntary Agencies.¹²⁷ The conditions suggested by the British Education Policy in Tropical Africa, were recast in the Code. To attract

¹²⁶ Cited in David G. Scanlon, Traditions of African Education, (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, University, Columbia University, 1964), pp. 96-97. The grant-in-aid system in Nigeria had been based on examination results.

¹²⁷ See Appendix A.

grants; schools had to meet with the required standard of efficiency. Schools were classified as A, B, C, or D, in order of efficiency and grants payable on the basis of salaries of native teachers. Schools about which adverse reports have been made in two successive years were relegated and grants reduced; if already a class D school it lost its grants. Other grants were available to Voluntary Agencies in respect of buildings, equipment, allowances to principals and quarters.

As a result of the introduction of a system of grants-in-aid, schools were classified as "assisted" or "unassisted". According to the 1926 Code, an "assisted" school was "a school other than a Government school to which ... a grant is made from the public revenue."¹²⁸

C. Grants-in-Aid 1926 - 1960

In 1928, a year after the coming into effect of the regulations of the Code, the Native Administrations "ceased paying grants of their own to mission schools in their areas,"¹²⁹ at the request of the Administering Authority.

¹²⁸ Nigeria, Laws, Statutes, etc., Education Code. (Lagos: Government Printer, 1927), p. 12.

¹²⁹ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1929, p.75.

In 1929, there were 201 Voluntary Agency schools out of which only three -- all Catholic -- were placed on the list of assisted schools, and the total amount paid as grants was £359. Although the calculation of grants followed a fixed formula, actual grants depended on economic circumstances. They increased in good years and fell in years of economic crisis. For instance, in 1930, the anticipated grants could not be completely paid due to the World economic crisis. The Missionary Societies were the hardest hit, warranting requests for funds from their home boards. In 1931, Monseigneur Peter Rogan reported to the St. Joseph's Missionary Society headquarters from his Cameroon headquarters (Soppo, Buea): "There is no need to tell your Lord-ship that the lingering financial illness, that has penetrated the World has affected the Mission very seriously both as to spiritual and financial results."¹³⁰

In 1930, it was realised by the authors of the Nigerian Code that the grants-in-aid system contained obvious flaws. The Code, not having accurately estimated Government liability with regard to grants-in-aid, the financial commitment of the Government had increased. No limit had been placed on the number of schools to be included

¹³⁰ Monseigneur Peter Rogan, Letter to Father General, St. Joseph's Mill Hill, London, from Regina Pacis, Soppo, 9th July, 1931, cited in Vernon-Jackson, Schools and School Systems in Cameroon, 1968, p. 371.

in the assisted list; rather, grants had been made dependent on whatever number of schools qualified for inclusion in the assisted list, on the basis of teachers' salaries. As the number of trained teachers from training was increasing, it became common between 1927 and 1929 to provide supplementary grants. The grants-in-aid regulations were amended in 1930. Grants were henceforth payable only up to the limit in the budget; proportionate reductions were made where the budget did not allow full payment. Nevertheless, grants-in-aid between 1926 and 1938 increased annually with the rise in the number of assisted schools, as revealed by the table on page 185.

In 1938, a block amount of £14,965 was paid to all Voluntary Agencies. The payment of grants-in-aid on the basis of the salary bills of teachers plunged the government into a period of financial crisis, and a vicious cycle was created. Teachers were either retrenched or salaries reduced and increments withheld. In 1940, the Government of Nigeria was impelled to apply for a grant from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund instituted by a British Act of Parliament in the same year. The grants from the Fund helped greatly in the development of education in Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons throughout British Administration. In the Cameroons it made increased grants available for the development of all educational institutions in the territory,

Table 13

Grants-in-Aid Voluntary Agencies, 1926 - 1938

Year	Basel Mission		Catholic Mission		German Baptist		Native Baptist	
	No. of Asst. Schools	Amount of Grants	No. of Asst. Schools	Grant	No. of Asst. Schools	Grant	No. of Asst. Schools	Grant
1926	1	£32 (a)	4	£152 (a)	-	-	-	-
1927	1	£24 (a)	4	£145(a)	-	-	-	-
1928	-	-	2	£471	-	-	-	-
1929	-	-	3	£359	-	-	-	-
1930	-	-	3	£853	-	-	-	-
1931	-	£50	3	£650	-	-	-	-
1932	6	£750	6	£850	-	-	-	-
1933	6	£453	6	£661	2	£110	-	-
1934	6	£426	6	£621	2	£103	-	-
1935	N/A	£448	N/A	£703	N/A	£103	-	£30
1936	6	£750	6	£865	2	£160	1	£60
1937	6	£900	6	£1150	2	£210	1	£60

Source: Compiled from H.M.G., Report on the British Cameroons, 1926 - 1938.

(a) Grants made by Native Administrations up to 1927.

from 1940 - 1960. However, the current grants-in-aid system called for a review. The new grants-in-aid system introduced in 1948 as a result of the Phillipson report regulated the payments of grants-in-aid in the Southern Cameroons until the end of British Administration.

The Phillipson report criticised the existing grants-in-aid policy for its "definite and deliberate departure from the traditional principle that grants were in aid of the expenses of efficient schools."¹³¹ To alleviate the burden on the education budget, the new grants-in-aid policy recommended the classification of schools on the basis of efficiency and that grants-in-aid to assisted schools be paid on the basis of the salary bill of the previous year, less a percentage for fees. An additional grant for half of the certificated teachers was made to proprietors. To control the indiscriminate opening of schools and to make schools available in unserved areas, a further grant of 2½ per cent was introduced.

The conditions necessary for a Voluntary Agency to attract public funds under the new grants-in-aid policy differed in some material detail from their predecessors.¹³²

¹³¹ Sydney Phillipson, Grants-in-aid of Education in Nigeria: A Review with Recommendations. (Lagos: Government Printer, 1948), Part IV, p. 37.

¹³² For the full list of conditions of the new grants-in-aid policy, see Appendix A (2). The conditions also constitute a definition of "Voluntary Agencies."

For the first time, Voluntary Agencies had to give an undertaking to extend their educational activities only in consultation with central and local authorities. Grants-in-aid were to be made specifically on the ground of efficiency, social usefulness and educational necessity. An important condition omitted in the previous conditions: evidence of adequate facilities for teacher training was included.

The new grants-in-aid policy also called for a new system of computation, according to the type of educational institution. At the primary school level, the grants payable consisted of "the recognised expenses, namely, the amount of the teachers' salaries, together with a contribution towards other expenses, less an assumed local contribution."¹³³ The amount of local contribution (50-60 per cent of fees and rates) was calculated, taking into consideration the stage of development of the area concerned. Less developed areas, under which fell the Southern Cameroons, contributed less. To ascertain the grants for teachers salaries, the total amount of the assumed local contribution was multiplied by 35 (according to teacher-pupil ratio) in the case of the junior primary schools and by 30 in senior primary departments.

In the secondary schools, grants were assessed on

¹³³ H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1949, p.146.

the net expenditure of the school; in the teacher training colleges, virtually all expenses, including a capitation sum per student for training and books, were paid. The Southern Cameroons Administering Authority's report to the United Nations Trusteeship Council in 1948, stated in connection with the grants-in-aid system that: "Under the new system of grants-in-aid, the Voluntary Agencies will know their exact financial commitments over defined periods and will be able to plan their contribution to the development of educational services."¹³⁴ Implied in the new system also is the introduction of local rates, which will be discussed shortly.

The general economic prosperity during the post-second World War period facilitated the implementation of the grants-in-aid system. The Colonial Development and Welfare Funds, the existence of a number of agro-industrial corporations and companies engendering a burgeoning economy made funds available. For instance, the Administering Authority reported 1950 to have been "a good year" due to a "great improvement in the financial situation of the territory" which had produced a "surplus of revenue over expenditure." Total allocation to education was £108,259 as against £86,942 in 1949. But the United Nations Visiting Mission to the territory in 1952 found that education there

¹³⁴ H.M.G., 1948, p. x.

was still backward and recommended an "increased government allocation to education."¹³⁵

Up to 1955, the Southern Cameroons budget formed part of the Nigerian budget, and, thus, allocations for educational purposes came from there. After this date, there was a transfer of powers to make budgetary allocations to the Southern Cameroons Government. The first Five-Year Development Plan for the territory was prepared in 1955, to end in 1959, the virtual end of British responsibility for the Southern Cameroons. The table on page 190 shows the growth of grants-in-aid to Missionary Societies for the period 1948 to 1957.

The Table reveals annual growth in grants-in-aid. In his budget speech in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly in 1960, the Financial Secretary, Mr. Patterson predicted continuous increases in grants-in-aid; he said that:

With the growth of Primary and Secondary Schools and Teacher Training Colleges in the Southern Cameroons, all which attract grants, the steady increase under these sub-heads (grants-in-aid were) ... inevitable.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Official Records, (13th Session), 28th January - 25th March, 1954, p. 30.

¹³⁶ Government of Southern Cameroons, Estimates of Southern Cameroons, 1960-61, (Buea: Government Printer, 1960), p. 49.

Table 14.

Grants-in-Aid to Missionary Societies, 1948-57

Year	Catholic Mission £	Basel Mission £	Baptist Mission £	Total £
1948	15.343	9.310	1.623	26.275
1949	25.723	17.111	3.013	45.847
1950	24.681	27.319	3.652	55.652
1951	30.000	22.500	3.800	56.300
1952	32.200	25.700	5.400	63.300
1953	40.300	28.400	4.300	73.000
1954	?	?	?	99.800 (a)
1955	?	?	?	66.869 (a)
1956	?	?	?	67.000 (a)
1957	?	?	?	203.000 (a)
1958	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1959	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1948-1957.

(a) Block amounts only given.

D. Local Rates

Local rates were levied made on parents to help finance educational effort. In the last section, allusion was made to attempts to introduce education rates. This sprang from the financial difficulties confronting the government in the post-war period; many other development projects were making competing claims on the limited funds. It is sometimes difficult to understand the real objective of local rates as conceived by the Nigerian Authorities. In various reports of the Southern Cameroons Administering Authority, at one time the policy was to have the people served by the educational system bear the cost; at another it was to gradually introduce measures which should eventually lead to free universal education.

But the Cameroonian of 1940 was not to be counted upon to pay a double tax -- the poll tax and an education tax. Not only was the importance of education at this time not realised, as evidenced by various reports, but a people dependent entirely on a subsistence economy could not afford to bear extra burdens, however light. The payment of fees had not been abolished. When poll tax, rates and fees are put together, the weight on a people, in a subsistence economy, becomes unbearable. In reality, however, the problem was more a lack of genuine demand for education than of inability to pay, for a few areas in the Southern Cameroons accepted to pay rates right from their

inception. Such places were exactly those which later produced many intellectuals and consequently controlled many jobs and key places in government, commerce and teaching.

In 1950, the local education authorities in the Southern Cameroons were empowered to raise and administer an education rate. As officially reported in 1952, it was the "policy of the Government to encourage the raising of local rates,"¹³⁷ as a means of meeting the rising cost of education and the eventual abolition of fees. But permissive as the policy was, it was left to various Native Authority areas to decide whether or not to levy such rates, as well as the amounts. It is specifically for this reason that the system was not widely adopted. The first example of the implementation of the policy was the Eastern Native Authority of Bamenda Province which in 1952, "agreed to levy a 2s. 7d. education rate in order to further the educational advancement of its area."¹³⁸ Other groups in Bamenda and one village in Mamfe Division were also considering similar undertakings. However, some communities accepted in principle, but never paid anything.

In 1954, the Administering Authority expressed concern over the great financial burden of the government.

¹³⁷H.M.G., 1952, p. 146.

¹³⁸H.M.G., 1952, p. 146.

which continued to bear much of the cost as rates were not forthcoming. The only expedient was for the Government "to revise the rates of Assumed Local Contribution which remained static ... and to continue with the policy of raising local education rates."¹³⁹ It was realised in 1954, that to make it effective, "the policy must be understood and accepted by the community contributing (the rates)," and therefore "a great deal of preliminary propaganda"¹⁴⁰ was required. By that year, the system appeared to be assuming a wider popularity. Some communities in Nkambe, Mamfe and Kumba Divisions were already raising education rates, thanks to the "preliminary propaganda." What the Administering Authority actually envisaged was "to expand the system as rapidly as may be until ultimately funds from education rates bridge the gap between expenditure and grants-in-aid income."¹⁴¹ This was never fully realised. Government expenditure continued to rise.

A recurrent item of expenditure responsible for the rise was that of teachers' salaries. A characteristic feature during this period was the almost annual revision of the assumed local contribution, "designed to narrow the

¹³⁹ H.M.G., 1954, p. 103.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 106.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

gap between Government and local expenditure."¹⁴² But the situation could not improve because the "advantage which was anticipated would be gained was offset by the upward revision of teachers' salaries."¹⁴³

As already stated, rates were not imposed by legislation; the matter was left to local initiative. But it continued to be Government's declared policy to encourage the local financing of primary education by the levying of education rates. How this encouragement was actually given was not stated. Increased financial burden on the government led to the introduction of measures calculated to ensure the payment of education rates.

In 1957, an administrative procedure was adopted. The Native Authorities were advised to increase direct taxes by the amount of the education rate. By this means, the Native Administration on whom the collection of direct taxes devolved, were expected to include the rates in their "normal Native Administration budget of revenue and expenditure" and thus "dispense with the idea of a rate."¹⁴⁴ It would appear that the Administering Authority thought the very terms "education rate" were sufficient to arouse

¹⁴²H.M.G. 1956, p. 104.

¹⁴³H.M.G. 1956, p. 104.

¹⁴⁴H.M.G. 1957, p. 105.

unwillingness to pay it and so it was necessary to hoodwink the people by abolishing education rate in all but name. But the new scheme was not adopted by all the Native Administrations in the territory.

In Wum Division, the Native Administration abandoned the rates but "agreed to replace it by a subsidy to Voluntary Agency schools calculated on the same basis as before and underwritten from the general revenue of the Native Administration."¹⁴⁵ This was basically an implementation of the suggestion already noted above. On the other hand, the Native Administration in Mamfe preferred to continue with the old system of levying education rates per head of the local population rather than smothering it in direct taxes.

It is clear from the above that the system of rates scored no significant success throughout British Administration of the Southern Cameroons. After the British, the rate system assumed a new impetus, to the extent that it became legal to deduct such amounts directly from the salaries of workers. For farmers, traders, and business houses, the system used is not clear, but it is likely that rates were assessed and paid together with direct taxes.

¹⁴⁵ H.M.G. 1959, p. 85.

E. School Fees

School fees were an important means of financing education, especially in the schools conducted by Missionary Societies. Although today, in the United Republic of Cameroon, education is in principle free, school fees survive; it is rooted in our historical past. Even when grants-in-aid were paid to Missionary Societies, they met only part of the total expenditure of the schools. The rest was defrayed from fees paid by pupils. In later years, when the concept of "assumed local contribution" was introduced, this was partly determined by fees as mentioned in an earlier section. But, this is not to suggest that only Mission schools charged fees. School fees was the norm in the educational system. In the teacher training institutions, full grants were made to meet all expenses. The heaviest financial burden to parents came from secondary grammar schools. When the subsistence economic activities of the people are taken into account, the burden was overwhelming.

The economic activities of the people of the Southern Cameroons were carried out mainly to provide a means of sustenance. An exchange economy had not become well entrenched. In the urban areas, many families did try their hands in petty trading, by peddling cooked food, European wares bought from wholesale stores, and locally made liquors. In the rural areas, the few villagers interested

in their children's education were forced to sell some of their produce to pay school fees. Livestock formed an important source of income; on market days, chickens, pigs, goats and cows are sold. Some parents sold at give-away prices. If questioned why they were offered so cheaply, the common answer was "I am only selling it to you at this price because my child has just been turned out from school for fees"; sometimes it could also be for uniform or for books.

The acceptance of these commitments only occurred, however, at a time when people were beginning to place a premium on education. Some cases of indebtedness to friends and neighbours were traceable from financial pressures to meet school requirements. A poor parent in the 1950's could, and some did, pledge valuable articles redeemable at short term for precisely such obligations. But that was as far as the particular parent had something to provide in the bargain. For those who could not, enthusiastic pupils fended for themselves.

Children from poor parents had themselves to undertake some gainful activities such as raising a few chickens for sale. In one of the tribes (Mamfe Division), children stitched thatches used for roofing and carried them to distant or neighbouring villages to sell or took kola nuts, oranges, plums, coconuts and other farm produce to market, after which books, pencils, uniforms and so on were bought

and fees paid. Thus, it was a common feature of educational effort on the part of children to provide their own school requirements and pay school fees.

Many pupils lost the opportunity of receiving an education in this way. Some pupils actually enrolled in the schools, but withdrew as soon as there was mention of fees. The oft-noted lack of "genuine education," and interest, as well as the frequent wastage at certain classes, levels, and so on in the British reports to the League of Nations, and later the United Nations, had their roots in school fees. Although the amounts charged were low by modern standards, they were considerable amounts at the time. The Phillipson report of 1948 gave school fee figures in the infant and primary departments in Government schools as 6d. and 1s. per month respectively in 1927. Wastage in the first two or three years of schooling sprang from the fact that "young children were apparently sent to school to suit the convenience of their parents, being withdrawn when they were able to be economically useful."¹⁴⁶

Native Administration schools were originally not intended to be fee-paying. But these were introduced in 1931, ranging from 2s. 6d. to 3s. a year, and in many cases were paid by the children themselves. The situation had not changed much from what had been observed by Bishop

¹⁴⁶Phillipson, op. cit., p. 22.

Shanahan of Onitsha, Nigeria. The Bishop who was also in charge of Catholic Schools in the Southern Cameroons in 1922, personally met during a tour in the territory in 1923, pupils who found it difficult to pay their monthly fees which ranged from 2 s. to 1 s. a month. He came across pupils who kept chickens which they bought young, raised and resold for about 6 d. each. The profit on half a dozen chickens represented approximately school fees for a quarter.¹⁴⁷

School fees began to have a telling effect on enrolments after 1932, especially in the Native Administration schools. One Native Administration (Mamfe) was compelled for a time to abolish them. The increase of government expenditure on education underwrote their survival. Between 1932 and 1948, fees in the junior primary schools and senior primary departments of government schools increased from 6 d. to a staggering amount of 10 s. in the former and 1 s. to 20 s. in the latter, even though the Administering Authority was aware that, "pupils earn their own fees."¹⁴⁸

For the secondary schools, fees were considerably higher. But of the only two secondary schools in the territory by 1949, the Catholic secondary school at Sasse charged higher fees: £ 10 per annum was paid as tuition fees

¹⁴⁷ Jordan, op. cit., p. 248.

¹⁴⁸ H.M.C., 1948, p. 139.

and £16 per annum for boarding. At the Basel Mission college at Bali in Bamenda, the tuition and boarding were fixed at £6 per annum. The almost annual increase in fees, both at the primary and secondary school levels, continued unabated.

Thus, in 1951, fees in the junior and senior departments of primary schools were increased to 12 s. 6d. and 25 s. per annum, respectively. At the secondary level, £18 was paid per annum for tuition and board, with a further £3 for books and uniforms at Sasse College and at Bali college £12 for board and tuition, newly-enrolled pupils paying £4 extra for books.

In 1952, it was beginning to be realised that school fees, which were frequently increasing, were an inhibiting factor in the development and expansion of education in the territory. Not only did the Administering Authority take note of the "inability" to pay fees, but also interpreted the situation as "unwillingness" to pay.¹⁴⁹ It was in this year that Phyllis Kabery, sent out by the Colonial Office in 1945 to study the economic conditions of the people, published his findings.

The study originated from the consideration that, "despite considerable natural resources, there was underpopulation," and that "social obstacles to opportunities

¹⁴⁹ H.M.G. 1952, p. 146.

for economic development and educational advance were apparent."¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, the Governor of Nigeria, in a despatch which included two reports by the Lady Education Officer and the Cameroon President, to the Colonial Secretary, put forward the point that "educational workers could not hope for even a moderate degree of success without the assistance of a social anthropologist to provide information which would enable them to guide and assist the people aright."¹⁵¹

Although Kabery's study covered only the northern area of Southern Cameroons, the conditions observed by her were similar to those obtainable in other parts of the territory. In her study, which included household budgets, Kabery discovered that a considerable amount went for expenses for school books, fees, and clothes, which made it impossible to keep a child in school.¹⁵² When the family structure of the people of the Southern Cameroons, with its extended family system, is taken into account, the inability to meet with school requirements for two or three relatives becomes clear. More often, a Cameroonian may undertake to pay fees, buy books and uniforms for a son,

¹⁵⁰ Phyllis Kabery, Women of the Grassfields: A Study of the Position of Women in Bamenda, British Cameroons, London: H.M.S.O. (Colonial Research Publication, No. 14), 1952, p. v.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Particularly relevant to this subject are pp. 157-213 of Phyllis M. Kabery's Women of the Grassfields.

a daughter, nephews and cousins. Thus, the charging of fees, especially when they were very high, relative to ability to pay, was often condemned.

The United Nations Visiting Missions to the Southern Cameroons in 1949 and 1952, were very caustic in their criticism of the policy of the Administering Authority to institute school fees which were "too high". The United Nations Visiting Mission members expressed the view that the Administering Authority, by charging high fees, was ignoring the importance of education in the development of the territory. The Chinese Ambassador, member of the United Nations Trusteeship Council, opined that free primary education was more likely to bring about increased schooling.¹⁵³ For Voluntary Agencies fees, the Visiting Mission was tolerant for it enabled them to run their schools, but here fees were often remitted in extreme cases. The view of the Trusteeship Council in favour of free primary education was never adopted as a policy by the Southern Cameroons Administering Authority. Whatever free primary education there was in the territory was provided in the schools operated by the Cameroons Development Corporation and Messrs. Elders and Ryffes, for children of their employees.

¹⁵³ United Nations, Trusteeship Council, Official Records, 15th Session (25th January - 28th March, 1955), N.Y. U.N. 1955, p. 247.

The Missionary Societies in 1956 decided to standardise fees, with due consideration of the stage of development of a particular area. From that year, school fees were standardised in the whole territory involving Government, Mission, Native Administration and the Cameroon Development Corporation which introduced fees. The table on page 204 shows fees paid in all primary schools according to areas from 1956.

The reasons for this standardisation are not very clear. Presumably, there had been a movement of pupils from schools charging higher to those charging lower fees. It also helped the equal spread of educational facilities. The introduction of fees by the Cameroons Development Corporation might have been designed to extend the services to children of non-employees. Standardisation also facilitated the payment of education rates. As reported by the Administering Authority in 1956, "the decision of the Missions to standardise fees in separate areas ... is particularly valuable in the planning of rating schemes."¹⁵⁴ For the secondary schools, a further increase in fees was effected in 1956 and 1959: Sasse College, a composite annual fee of £42 per annum was charged, Bali £25 and the new Queen of the Rosary Secondary School for Girls, £30.

¹⁵⁴ H.M.G. 1956, p. 106.

Table 15
Scales of Standardised Fees, 1956

Area	Class	Fees
Bamenda	Infants I and II	18s. Od.
	Standards I and II	25s. Od.
	Standards III and IV	35s. Od.
	Standards V and VI	45s. Od.
Mamfe	Infants I and II	20s. Od.
	Standards I and II	25s. Od.
	Standards III and IV	35s. Od.
	Standards V and VI	45s. Od.
Kumba	Infants I and II	22s. 6d.
	Standards I and II	27s. 6d.
	Standards III and IV	38s. Od.
	Standards V and VI	50s. Od.
Victoria	Infants I and II	24s. Od.
	Standards I and II	30s. Od.
	Standards III and IV	42s. Od.
	Standards V and VI	60s. Od.

Source: H.M.G. Report on the British Cameroons, 1956.

F. Scholarships

Traditionally scholarships are awards, usually of money or free tuition, to a deserving student to encourage him to undertake some sort of studies. In the Southern Cameroons, they were, in addition, a compensation for the absence of post-primary institutions within the territory. Up to 1938, there was no secondary school in the territory let alone a post-secondary institution. Cameroonians were, however, granted scholarships to enable them to undertake secondary and post-secondary studies in Nigeria, West Africa and the United Kingdom.

Scholarship schemes before 1955 were administered on a provincial basis. The Southern Cameroonians benefited little from the scholarships for which they had to compete on equal basis with the Nigerians. A few Cameroonians, the number never reaching or exceeding five in any one year, were sponsored at various institutions in Nigeria, notably at Enugu, Umuahia, Lagos and Ibadan, and at other institutions of higher studies in West Africa, Fourah Bay University College in Sierra-Leone, and that of the Gold Coast (present day Ghana), as well as the UK.

Within the territory itself, with the opening of St. Joseph's College, Sasse, in 1939, and Basel Mission College Bali in 1949, Government and Native Administration scholarships were awarded. In 1949, nine Government scholarships, to the value of £130, and fifty-six; to the

value of £560, by the Native Administration were awarded. But scholarships tenable at Nigerian secondary schools and teacher training colleges were more lucrative.

The fortunate Southern Cameroon scholarship holders at Government secondary schools and training centres in Nigeria did not only have their tuition, board and books paid, but were "allowed free transport to and from their homes in the Cameroons once a year."¹⁵⁵ At the Government College Umuahia, it became a policy to reserve two closed scholarships for Southern Cameroonians. Before 1947, the main donors of secondary and higher education scholarships were the Federal Government of Nigeria, the various Native Administrations and, in a number of cases, Missionary bodies in the Southern Cameroons. But, in 1947, the Cameroons Development Corporation entered the field and more ambitious scholarship schemes were attempted, especially for advanced studies at degree levels.

Scholarship schemes formed part of the Corporation's education policy, almost from its inception. Secondary school leavers and those with higher education, from which the Corporation could recruit its intermediate and senior staff of Cameroonian origin, were few. It was out of this deficiency that the Corporation decided, as early as 1947, to institute a scholarship scheme in 1948,

¹⁵⁵H.M.C. 1953, p. 92.

for the benefit of Cameroonians; in that year, £1500 was allotted for university scholarships. By 1949, five Cameroonians at the University College at Ibandan, Nigeria were beneficiaries of the Corporation's scholarships. In 1952, there was a significant increase in the number of beneficiaries and the amount of the scholarship scheme. According to an official communication to the writer, from the Public Relations Officer of the Corporation, "£5,250 was granted for higher education scholarships making a total of 24 beneficiaries of the scholarship scheme for advanced studies."¹⁵⁶ The scholarship scheme was made up of two types.

The Cameroon Development Corporation provided open scholarships competed for by all Cameroonians and a closed scholarship for deserving children of its employees. The scholarship scheme begun in 1960, was to enable them to obtain better educational and technical qualifications, involving those relevant to the Corporation's activities such as medicine, engineering, and especially agriculture at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad. These awards were generally the highest in the territory. The grant covered board and lodging, clothing, local travelling, laundry, books and instruments, examinations,

¹⁵⁶Public Relations Officer, C.D.C., Summary of C.D.C. Education Policy. Official communication to the writer, dated 29 July, 1979.

tuition fees and pocket allowance. It was the practice to pay these expenses direct to the institution concerned or through the Corporation's agents. The cost of transport to and from the institution also formed part of the award. Candidates were expected to be unmarried; but a maintenance allowance was paid to the dependents of married students. In 1954, the open scholarship scheme was transferred to the newly constituted Government of Southern Cameroons.

When the Southern Cameroons was granted autonomy in 1954, a Southern Cameroons Scholarship Board was immediately constituted to administer both its own funds and those formerly under the control of the Cameroons Development Corporation. The urgency in the constitution of the Southern Cameroon Scholarship Board is an indication that, the Cameroonians were dissatisfied with the previous arrangements with Nigeria. In its position of virtual subservience to Nigeria, the Cameroonians had slim chances of gaining sufficient awards. In 1949, for instance, out of 14 candidates who competed for scholarships to the University College, Ibadan, Nigeria with Nigerians, only two were successful. The Southern Cameroons Scholarship Board made awards to the tune of an unprecedented figure of fifty in 1954.

It was also in 1954 that the Government of the Southern Cameroons issued a formal policy statement

regarding scholarships to Cameroonians. A common theme underlying the policy statement was that of equal development. The relevant portion of the document defined the purpose of the scholarship as being, "to encourage as far as possible an even development throughout the Southern Cameroons."¹⁵⁷ The policy contemplated a sort of equalisation of educational opportunities, but "in the interest of the territory as a whole the overriding consideration must be the maintenance of the highest possible standards, and ... awards ... made on merit alone."¹⁵⁸ This was ensured by the procedure for selection. After a preliminary screening of qualifications by a Standing Committee of the Board, selected candidates were called for interview, after which recommendations were made to the Commissioner of the Cameroons.

The Southern Cameroons House of Assembly decided, in July 1955, to establish a separate scholarship fund. As stated above, contributions to the fund were made by the C.D.C. and the Government. From 1954, the C.D.C. contributed the modest amount of £5,000 to the funds of the Southern Cameroons Scholarship Board, for secondary school and university studies, in Cameroon, Nigeria, West

¹⁵⁷ Southern Cameroons, Federation of Nigeria, Sessional Paper No. 91 of 1955. (Buea: Government Press, 1955), p. 1.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

Africa, the U.K. and North America.

The last British reports to the United Nations, in 1959, reveal that in that year the Southern Cameroons Scholarship Board awarded 70 secondary school scholarships (20 girls and 50 boys). For higher education, by that year 45 students were reported studying at various universities; out of this number, 19 were on Federal Government Scholarship, the rest awarded by the Governments of India (8) and the United Nations (4). The cost of scholarships to Cameroonians in various institutions, in 1959, was £41,000, £36,000 provided by the Southern Cameroons Government and £5000 from the Cameroons Development Corporation annual allocations. As already alluded to above, foreign scholarships were becoming available to Southern Cameroonians.

By the 1950's, Southern Cameroons, like other trust territories, came to be included in the matrix of international relations through the United Kingdom and the United Nations member states. Consequently, these years saw increased concern with education in these territories. Such early foreign scholarships came from India, United States, the British Council and the United Nations itself.

Within the territory, itself, besides Government and C.D.C. scholarships, the Native Administrations also awarded scholarships to deserving pupils from their areas,

while Missionary bodies awarded a few to the children of adherents. The circle of scholarships grew wider in various ways; individual missionaries undertook to sponsor needy students, otherwise they recommended them to rich individuals and organisations abroad.

The study of the financing of education in the Southern Cameroons offers an example to the effect that educational development is contingent on economic development. In the early period of British Administration, the economy of the country was still at a subsistence level and Cameroonians found it impossible to meet with school requirements. In the post-war period, the development of a cash economy enabled parents to meet with their obligations. Gradually the local rates were implemented, although with difficulties. With the aid of Government and international scholarships, many more Cameroonians came to receive higher education.

CHAPTER IX

"MASS EDUCATION" AND CULTURE

A. Introduction

The previous chapters of this study explored formal education in the Southern Cameroons under British Administration between 1922 and 1960. However, another aspect of educational development during this period is worth our study; otherwise the picture of educational effort would be incomplete. Although mass education came relatively late, it had a tremendous impact on the improvement of the standard of living of the natives by spreading literacy and imparting the knowledge of some practical skills and accomplishments.

B. The Introduction of the Concept of Mass Education

When education for the African was being considered during the second decade of the twentieth century, the exponents had in mind formal education which began with children and which was given in the school. Informal education for the rest of the people was not given attention. However, the British Government had been quick to realise the importance of adult education. Allusion was made to this

by the Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical African Dependencies, in the Education Policy in British Tropical Africa, published in 1925. The Advisory Committee stated that:

Education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations and traditions of the various peoples ... Its aim should be to render the individual more efficient in his or her condition of life ... to promote the advancement of the community ... and the inculcation of true ideals of citizenship and service. It must include the raising up of capable, trustworthy, public spirited leaders of the people...¹⁵⁹

It was, however, another decade before greater attention was given to mass education for adults. But the actual take-off of mass education in Africa was a response to the Advisory Committee's Mass Education in African Society, published in 1944. Besides the gradual introduction of universal education, the objective of mass education was stated by the Advisory Committee as being:

1. The spread of literacy among adults, together with a widespread development in the provision of literature and libraries, without which there is little hope of making literacy permanent.
2. The planning of Mass Education of the community as a movement of the community itself, involving the active support of the community from the start.

¹⁵⁹ L. Gray Cowan, James O'Connell and David G. Scanlon (eds.), Education and Nation-Building in Africa. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 46.

3. The effective co-ordination of welfare plans and Mass Education plans so that they form a comprehensive and balanced whole.¹⁶⁰

The first Adult Education Officers were appointed in 1947 to organise adult education in Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons. They were assisted by Adult Education Organisers. The work of mass education in the Southern Cameroons was a responsibility of the Administering Authority. But, as would be seen later, the Cameroons Development Corporation (C.D.C.), whose contribution to the development of formal education has already been examined, deserves a special place in the history of mass education in the territory during British Administration. The Corporation's camps (in Kumba and Victoria) were the centres for illiterate Cameroonians from all over the territory engaged in plantation labour. Adult education programmes included literacy campaigns, community development and leadership and citizenship training, conducted by the C.D.C. and by the Government throughout the territory.

C. Adult Literacy

Literacy connotes the ability to read and write.

¹⁶⁰ Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical African Dependencies, Mass Education in African Society (Colonial No. 186) (London: H.M.S.O. 1944) pp. 10-11.

In the Southern Cameroons, during the period under consideration, the number of natives who could boast of reading and writing skills was negligible. But since formal education had been introduced many years before the British period, a few parents might have learned to scribble at least their names. They might have done this in order to fill in tax tickets or read them, read the figure of their wages, or keep accounts of their savings in local societies and unions.

Before the publication of Mass Education in African Society, some teachers had started to organise classes aimed at introducing literacy. In 1938, the first attempt to organise adult classes was made by the teachers at the Government school in the headquarters of the territory as a "valuable means of promoting contact between the school and the community."¹⁶¹ But this was ephemeral. No evidence of their continuation exists. Presumably, efforts in this direction were ended by the war.

The beginnings of adult literacy can be dated to 1947, when the Director of Education in Lagos, Nigeria launched an adult literacy campaign. In that year, it was officially reported by the Administering Authority that an Adult Education Organiser was already carrying out pioneer work in adult education for the illiterate labourers of the

¹⁶¹ H.M.G. 1938, p. 80

Cameroons Development Corporation at their Tiko plantations;¹⁶² 350 pupils enrolled and two-hour classes were held twice weekly. The few meeting-days were arranged to avoid a clash with the activities and working hours of the Corporation. Again, this was only a year of experimentation.

The rate of illiteracy was about 95 per cent in the northern part of the territory and about 75 per cent in the southern. Much of the educational development from the Missionary period, as we have seen, took place in the coastal areas. By the period of British Administration, although this imbalance was being corrected particularly through missionary activities, not much had yet occurred to equalise the literacy rates between the north and the south. The rate of illiteracy drew the attention of the government whose policy was "to remove illiteracy by a modified Laubach method."¹⁶³ This appears to have been a method of teaching literacy using the vernacular, but which had to be modified in areas of numerous languages. Since adult literacy campaigns were carried out by both the Government and the Cameroons Development Corporation, these will be discussed separately.

¹⁶² H.M.G. 1947, p. 104.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

1. Plantation Literacy Classes

Adult literacy in the Cameroons Development Corporation plantations was the responsibility of the Welfare Department of the Corporation, at their headquarters in Bota on the Atlantic coast. The Corporation's Education Officer was also responsible for adult literacy and under him were adult education organisers and instructors, mainly trained primary school teachers of the Corporation's primary schools. In plantations where there were no primary schools, time-keepers and office workers with some secondary school education were engaged as instructors.

The pattern of organisation, staffing, accommodation, equipment and discipline followed closely that obtainable in the primary schools. Organisation-wise, the pupils were grouped into three classes, A, B and C; A was the highest; advancement was determined by a reading test. The three R's formed the curriculum but emphasis was placed on reading and writing. Pupils who successfully completed the "A" class were awarded literacy certificates and a book, often the simplified edition of The Travels of Mungo Park, the standard reached being roughly equivalent to Standard II, the fourth and last year of the junior primary school. In order to reduce absenteeism, classes were arranged not to coincide with such plantation activities as pay days, welfare cinema shows, workers union

meetings and banana shipments.

Literacy classes were intended primarily for illiterates to provide them with "permanent literacy, sufficient for simple everyday needs."¹⁶⁴ But after 1952, those who had completed the literacy classes and those who had failed to obtain the First School Leaving Certificates of the primary schools began to demand continuation classes. Consequently, the literacy classes developed and assumed a new purpose; they prepared pupils for the First School Leaving Certificate and the London Royal Society of Arts Examinations. The hopes of advancement and higher salaries underlay this development.

The corporations primary schools which were the best in the country, in terms of buildings, offered adequate accommodation and equipment for the literacy classes. But in plantations without primary schools, it was common to hold the classes in a labourer's room. The report by the Corporation's Education Officer, Colin Wise, provides a graphic description of the inconveniences in literacy classes in such plantations:

In such centres, one was liable to find classes held on rainy nights with the pupils under dripping verandahs, fully exposed to the cold, damp air. There was not enough room for tables, so the pupils squeezed together on benches, writing as best they could with their books on their knees, often with

¹⁶⁴ Colin G. Wise, "Plantation Literacy Classes," Overseas Education, Vol. 31, No. 2 (July 1959), p. 83.

a blackboard in an unsuitable position and one or two hurricane lamps providing the only lighting.¹⁶⁵

The fact that the pupils accepted the unpleasant conditions is evidence of the enthusiasm the workers had for literacy. Tuition was free and pupils used textbooks supplied by the Corporation during classes only.

Supervision of adult literacy was locally assured by a senior service officer, as one of his official responsibilities. But due to the scattered nature of the camps, it became necessary to entrust the supervision to full-time adult education supervisors and later, with the establishment of the Corporation's primary schools, to certificated teachers. But instructors were not full-time since they were recruited from amongst the Corporation's employees. Thus, their remunerations were small -- 10 s. to 15 s. a month. For their part in the "war against literacy," they were also awarded a certificate after two years of continuous service. The emphasis was on the missionary aspect of the work and the need to help their unfortunate fellows.

By 1955, the Cameroon Development Corporation was conducting adult literacy classes in 89 centres, 188 classes with 1400 enrolled pupils.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 82.

2. Non-Plantation Literacy

Adult literacy in the rest of the country was ill-organised; it relied greatly on private initiative, and to some extent on some Native Administrations. In the case of private individuals and students in some teacher training colleges, the pecuniary motive was in the background. Consequently, fees were charged in the literacy classes in towns and villages as against free tuition in the C.D.C. literacy classes.

Literacy classes conducted by the Government were also fee-paying, even though the concept of "campaign" in adult literacy would have ordinarily made it free. Pupils paid 5 s. a month for tuition and a "normal" charge for the use of readers. According to the Administering Authority the charges were designed to raise money to pay teachers "the small honorarium without which ... instructors will rarely stick to the task."¹⁶⁶ But other expenses of the campaign were borne by the Government.

In 1949, student-teachers from some mission training colleges began to undertake voluntarily the teaching of adults in the evenings. For instance, the Basel Mission Training College at Batibo, in the north of the territory, was reported in 1950 to be giving evening literacy classes.

¹⁶⁶ H.M.G. 1949, p. 154.

Difficulties of communication made it impossible for government to extend the campaign to remote areas, especially villages. Some literate private individuals, more out of a desire to make money than to promote the campaign, seized the opportunity and started literacy classes. In 1951, civil servants whose duties warranted prolonged stay in villages were becoming involved in the campaign as part of their duties. The 1951 official report to the U.N. Trusteeship Council, revealed that literacy classes were being organised in four villages in Mamfe Division by the local Co-operative Inspector "as part of his co-operative development."¹⁶⁷

Primary school headmasters in certain areas were, by 1950, becoming aware of their role in adult literacy campaigns. The first example occurred in the grassland region north of the territory, where the headmaster of the Native Administration school organised adult literacy classes after school hours, 90 pupils enrolling in four classes; the Native Administration of the area provided the necessary financial assistance.

Actual Government participation in the campaign principally took the form of providing supervisory personnel. But even here, remote areas remained neglected due to their inaccessibility. In later years, the Native

¹⁶⁷ E.M.C., 1951, p. 162.

Administrations began to subsidise the efforts of school teachers and private individuals provided "at least 10 students are attending class regularly,"¹⁶⁸ and in 1954 began to engage their own organisers. This actually marks the beginning of direct involvement of the Native Administrations in the organisation of literary classes. These developments were a response to the advice of the Adult Education Organiser from Nigeria.

Although progress in the campaign was reported, it was realised that the campaign had not affected women. The economic role of the Cameroonian woman and her domestic chores left her no time for what, at the time, offered no immediate benefits. To enlist the full participation of women in literacy, measures were introduced to relieve women "from their time-consuming activities:

15 hand corn mills were purchased by the Education Department and Corn Mill Societies were formed in certain villages. The members of these societies ... use the mill on payment of one penny. When money received from the payments equal the cost of the mill (£15) it becomes the property of the society and another mill bought for another village.¹⁶⁹

The facility enabled the women to grind their corn

¹⁶⁸ E. O'Kelly, "Adult Literacy Classes in the Cameroons" under United Kingdom Administration." Fundamental and Adult Education, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Jan. 1957), p. 30.

¹⁶⁹ H.M.G. 1954, p. 119.

usually done laboriously and to provide leisure for literacy classes; it also inspired collective activity. The progress in adult literacy enrolment reached a stage where the number of classes was restricted only by the number of teachers available.¹⁷⁰ The scarcity of teachers in the territory had become proverbial. As a result of pressure of enrolment in the schools, teachers assisting in organising and instructing in literacy classes had to be withdrawn with a consequent decline in enrolment in literacy classes. By 1954, literacy classes in the territory (outside the C.D.C. plantation) were being organised in 95 centres and 106 classes in various villages.

Difficulties in the organisation of adult literacy in the territory led to a request to UNESCO in 1956 "for an expert to visit the territory and to give assistance in drawing up overall plans for an adult literacy campaign."¹⁷¹ It was the first time the problem of adult education in the territory was referred to UNESCO. In 1959, a UNESCO expert visited the territory and reported the same difficulties on adult education as had been observed by professional officers. It is not known what action was taken by UNESCO in solving the problem which was "being studied." But it would appear that the problems of the Administering

¹⁷⁰Ibid., p. 118.

¹⁷¹H.M.G. 1956, p. 116.

Authority in adult education campaigns were more of a financial type than of organisations. For in 1956, it was reported to the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations that the development of adult literacy depended on the availability of funds.

The last report of the United Kingdom to the U.N. Trusteeship Council in 1959 gave statistics which revealed that 2410 men and 1777 women were receiving instruction in 218 classes in 170 centres in the northern part of the territory; although no figures were available in respect of the south, they might have been higher because the literacy campaign there was more active. The South had been exposed to education for a longer period as revealed by formal education.

Textbooks and methods adopted to eliminate illiteracy in the territory were based on the Laubach system. The syllabus was approved by the Director of Eastern Nigeria and the guides for adult education teachers were contained in the Instructor's Handbook. The recommended textbooks included, Reading and Writing for All, by A.J. Carpenter; I Will Speak English, all published by Longmans; English Through Pictures and the New African Arithmetic.

The main objective was functional literacy. Thus, while the three R's were taught, emphasis was placed on reading and writing. The organisation was similar to that already described in the section on plantation literacy.

The language problem which was discussed in connection with formal schooling also confronted adult literacy.

For the organisation and method of teaching, Miss O'Kelly, who was the Adult Education Officer in the territory in the last days of British Administration, speaks here for herself:

The course is divided into three grades. The beginners start with the letters of the alphabet, not in order, but grouped according to their shapes, the round letters first and then those consisting of simple up and down strokes such as "b" and "d", which learners often confuse. They next learn 26 key words, each starting with one of the letters they have learned. They then go on to the primer ... The intermediate grade reads Book I and the Advanced grade, Book II. No Arithmetic textbook is used in the beginners classes. They learn merely to write the numerals and to do simple addition and subtraction. ¹⁷²

The effort of the Administering Authority to eliminate illiteracy in the Southern Cameroons, while commendable, had obvious limitations. Adult literacy could not be made permanent without follow-up literature, the lack of which usually led to a relapse into illiteracy. Other difficulties stemmed from the various activities of the people and the reliance on instructors who were subject to transfers by their permanent employers, with classes stopping automatically under the circumstance. O'Kelly summarises the difficulties as follows:

¹⁷² O'Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

Women are busy planting. Men go away for long trading journeys lasting several weeks. Instructors are transferred by their employers ... Students able to read a few simple words cease to attend the classes, confident that they now 'savvy book'. Worst of all is the difficulty of obtaining 'follow-up' literature.¹⁷³

The illiterate adults in the territory wanted literacy for its functional value and not for its own sake or for the pleasure of it. Most important of all was the desire to know how to write a letter and record an account. Undoubtedly, many benefited from the classes. In this connection, it is necessary to quote here an expression of gratitude for the campaign by a product of literacy classes, reminiscent of the great reward of literacy:

In 1953, I was an illiterate, always surprised when someone is reading or writing. Sometimes I may think he is what is called an angel, sometimes when I think over and over again but could not discover what he is doing I simply say he may be looking at the black dots on the paper. And now I can read and write which is what I believe I couldn't do, I should thank God for my knowledge.¹⁷⁴

D. Community Education

A study of the development of community education

¹⁷³Ibid.

¹⁷⁴Cited in O'Kelly, Adult Literacy Classes in the Cameroons, p. 31.

in the Southern Cameroons reveals that this aspect of education was pursued in a very limited sense. Nevertheless, it was an important aspect of mass education. Again, community education incidentally and predominantly emphasised the role of the Cameroonian woman in community development. In the Cameroonian society, as elsewhere in Africa, much of the household work, such as child care and farming, are "feminine" tasks; men were usually engaged in trading, crafts, and other "masculine" enterprises. This reflects the period when men went to war, while women remained at home to take care of the children.

It is sometimes difficult to understand whether it was by accident or design that the history of community education in the Southern Cameroons is the history of the role of women in the community. However, when "community" education is defined, it will be discovered that the Cameroonian man was also active in community education. In 1944, the Colonial Office Mass Education in African Society, suggested the change of what was called "Mass Education" to "Community Development" since it must be carried out on the initiative and active participation of the community.

Although it was in the post-Second World War period that community education in the territory started, some attempts had already been made in 1938 to teach illiterate women some household skills. In that year, we

have the first evidence regarding the teaching of domestic science to teachers' wives at the Government school in Buea. It is not known why priority was given to teachers' wives; the reasons can only be presumed.

The position of the teacher in the community in these early periods was extremely prestigious. If he did not claim the status of a learned man himself, society regarded him as such. The teacher's wife may be expected to be equally enlightened to match the status of the husband. Again, the early teachers taught in the same schools with the white men and women. Since the white women trained in Europe and America were likely to have acquired household skills as well, the request might have arisen from the native teachers to teach their wives these skills. Yet, at a time when female teachers in these skills for the schools were scarce, domestic science for teachers' wives might have been considered a short cut to provide them. Since, after 1938, no British reports were sent to the League of Nations due to the outbreak of the Second World War and no publications exist describing the progress of this first effort, we have no other source of knowing what happened, until 1949.

By 1949, it was officially reported that a Woman Education Officer was already undertaking pioneer work in community education at Bansa in Bamenda Division, in the northern part of the territory. The campaign for community

education was more intense in the rural areas where primitive natives lived in poor hygienic and economic conditions and not within reach of Domestic Science Centres which were located in the bigger towns and villages, and originally intended for schooling girls. By 1950, each of the divisional headquarters of Bamenda, in the grasslands area north of the territory, and Mamfe, Kumba and Victoria in the forest zone, south of the territory, had a domestic science centre, serving both schooling girls and adult women, who attended in alternate days with the schools.

The success of the campaign was reported in 1950, by the Administering Authority, which stated that there was "popularity among women of the domestic science centres."¹⁷⁵ Encouraged by this success, a women's institute on the United Kingdom lines was formed in Bamenda, and the campaign further intensified by the posting of a second Woman Education Officer, to Bamenda. But as already noted elsewhere, a development occurred in 1954, to further encourage women to take an active part in community education.

In 1954, it was realised that the campaign in community education was not attended by much success, due to the laborious daily activities of the women. The Cameroonian woman, especially in the grassland region of the north, is a classic example of industry and resource-

¹⁷⁵H.M.G. 1950, p. 138.

fulness. Foreigners are often amazed at their "horse-power." From the crow of the cock to sunset, she passes from farm work to domestic chores. Thus, the introduction of community education in the rural areas needed special methods of campaign for its success. To solve the problem, Miss O'Kelly, the Woman Education Officer for Bamenda explains here:

With money provided by the Education Department, some corn grinding machines were therefore obtained as an experiment and the women in one or two pilot villages were encouraged to form a Society, which was open to all the women there ... to pay for the machine co-operatively. The idea quickly became popular and there are now 91 societies with a membership of more than 6,000 women and new Societies are being formed as quickly as the machines can be obtained.¹⁷⁶

This facility enabled the principal time-consuming domestic chores of the women in the grassland to be done quicker than previously, with the result that much time became available for participation in community education. But it should be observed here that, what was originally intended to be instrumental to the participation of women in community education, was in itself an aspect of community education.

The Societies originally intended for grinding corn extended their activities to other forms of community

¹⁷⁶O'Kelly, op. cit., p. 26.

improvement such as water points. The enthusiasm generated through Societies, led to requests from the women village societies for lessons in child welfare, cookery and related subjects. During the 1950's, short courses for selected women became a regular feature, the women returning to their villages to disseminate the new ideas in domestic science and community education. Better methods of agriculture -- shifting cultivation, control of erosion, and the enclosure of farms -- featured prominently in women's community education programmes. The new farming ideas acquired from community education were very useful in facilitating the economic symbiosis between cattle rearers and farmers. In 1955, money from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds enabled women societies in some villages to undertake the enclosure of farms to avoid destruction of food crops by domestic animals.

Community education in the southern part of the territory was basically concerned with domestic science -- sewing, knitting, washing, cookery and housewifery -- given in domestic science centres. Besides the Government domestic science courses in the southern part of the territory, the Cameroon Development Corporation also offered sewing courses for the wives of its employees in the various camps of the plantations.

Community education was an education for women. However, community education in the case of men was not

officially organised but was given as the necessity of building a bridge or clearing or constructing a road arose. Building schools or community halls in rural areas was also an aspect of community education programmes for men.

B. Cultural and Intellectual Activities

All education is concerned with the transmission of culture. Cultural education "emphasizes the classical and human values of history, science, literature and art"¹⁷⁷ of a people or a nation. In the Southern Cameroons, under British Administration, little attention was given to cultural education in the western-oriented schools. Such education was envisaged as part of community education. In 1947, the Administering Authority officially reported to the U.N. Trusteeship Council that cultural and intellectual activities could not be developed "until basic education has spread more widely."¹⁷⁸ But there must be a minimum of basic literacy before movies and cinemas can be introduced as a means of educating native people in art, craft, agriculture and widening their

¹⁷⁷ Carter V. Good (ed.) Dictionary of Education. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959), p. 147.

¹⁷⁸ H.M.G. 1947, p. 105.

horizon.

By 1947, outside the schools, there was only one library in the whole territory of about 700,000 inhabitants. This was located at Victoria where the people were "encouraged to read the limited stocks of literature available."¹⁷⁹ The people knew about cinemas and theatres through "a mobile cinema unit controlled by the Public Relations Department (Nigeria)" which visited the territory "from time to time" to give "free performances of an educative nature."¹⁸⁰

The Cameroon was rich in culture -- art, crafts and folklore -- which form part of native education. But some encouragement was necessary to improve on it. It was long before Cameroonians learnt to form cultural societies. In the northern part of the territory (Bamenda), there was proven decoration highly prized by Europeans and Americans. There was high quality craftwork, cloth weaving, raffia bags, calabashes, and native utensils. Culture is highly emphasised in the north. Story-telling constitutes a very important intellectual activity; it was carried on in the evenings after all household chores, within the family group or among age groups. There were professional story-tellers who attracted large groups in the evenings; their

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

main limitation was lack of literary education to enable them to write indigenous fiction and poetry. Cultural activities and animation were limited to villages; in the towns such education was supposed to be given through movies and libraries which, at the time, were not available.

The second library for adult education literature was opened in 1949 at Tiko, twenty-four kilometres from the Atlantic coastal town of Victoria, where a reading room had earlier been established. In the north, strongly tied to traditional life, libraries were only to be found in the few schools. Vernacular literature in the territory was mostly in Bali and Douala and obtainable at the Basel Mission Bookshops. In 1950, an ambitious attempt was made to reduce a third vernacular to writing; this was the Ekeka language spoken by the people of Western Mamfe in the forest region, 200 miles from the Atlantic Coast. It did not lead to the development of orthography, neither did the language become widely spoken.

The general lack of literacy did not lead to the development of reading habits as found in Europe and America. Consequently, the only bookshop was not patronised.

The first attempts at encouraging and animating the cultural life of the natives came from the Cameroons Development Corporation Welfare Department. As officially reported by the Administering Authority in 1951, the C.D.C.

encouraged cultural life by the "organisation of competitive festivals of tribal dancing."¹⁸¹ The fact that such competitions "attracted crowds of over 5000"¹⁸² would appear to suggest the interest of the people in cultural education if official encouragement could be given ..

From 1951, a gradual increase in the number of libraries and cinema shows, mainly by the Cameroon Development Corporation began to be experienced. The C.D.C. began circulating libraries in its camps in this year; in Mamfe and Victoria Division in the forest region, the first reading rooms were reported nearing completion. The first "public" cinema by a private individual was in this year established in Victoria but closed in 1957 "because it was unable to fulfill the minimum safety conditions."¹⁸³ In Tiko, near Victoria, a C.D.C. officer owned a cinema used exclusively for private performances. The Cameroons Development Corporation and Pamol Limited were very instrumental in the cultural and intellectual development of the territory. A typical C.D.C. or Pamol estate would be provided with a community hall, sports fields and facilities, as well as clubs for "senior service," "junior service;" the community hall usually was reserved for the flotsam and

¹⁸¹ H.M.G. 1951, p. 163.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ H.M.G. 1957, p. 120.

jetsam of the plantations all with "entertainment organisers." Besides the "senior service" clubs, there existed "European Clubs".

The Government followed a similar pattern at Buea, the headquarters, and in the administrative divisions. No one group was admissible in a higher one except by promotion in the service. A junior service officer promoted to senior service rank transferred to the senior service club almost the day after the official communication was issued or received. Education had a little role to play in admissions to a higher service club. An illiterate plantation overseer in the plantation enjoyed a higher status than a time-keeper with a primary school certificate. These clubs, besides their segregation, were breeding places of political ideas, gossip, and some diabolical activities. But they were also equipped with libraries, indoor games, tennis courts, and football fields.

Cinema shows became monthly features in the C.D.C. and Pamol plantations, each of which had a cinematographic unit under the Welfare Department. Dances for plantation workers were organised, using the "brass band", the first type of orchestras in the territory. Thus, in the period under study, the plantations were the "hot spots", especially at month end when salaries had been paid.

Tribal unions were formed "to promote the welfare

of the Union's particular tribe.¹⁸⁴ These unions were particularly important for economic and social reasons. The unions met weekly or monthly to contribute monies towards a particular aspect of development of the tribe and many acted as "savings banks" for its members, with interest paid or received on loans. Native dancing and music featured prominently and in later years, they entered for public competitions organised on public festivals such as Empire Day or by the C.D.C. These tribal unions have been instrumental in the development of rural areas. The sons and daughters "abroad" either in the big towns of the country or actually overseas, contributed through the unions towards projects such as the supply of pipe borne water, electric plants, construction of a stretch of road in their particular areas. The cultural heritage was also kept alive in the towns by these tribal unions.

Dramatic societies made their appearances in 1952. Some divisional education committees were working hard towards encouraging a reading habit. In 1951, that at Victoria began short story competitions. In 1952, it held its second "short story competition" receiving over 80 entries. It is not known what progress was made in this direction. It is probable that it went no further than 1952, for no further information is available. The

¹⁸⁴ H.M.G. 1952, p. 153.

first amateur dramatic society was formed in Victoria in 1957.

By 1956, there were Community Centres in the country (Mamfe, Bamenda, Kumba, and Victoria), with that of Bamenda being the first to be installed with an electric light plant to provide light in the main hall of the centre "for social functions and meetings" and in its reading room. Meanwhile, the Community Hall at Victoria was reported in 1956 to have "become a popular rendez-vous for the pursuit of intellectual and cultural activities."¹⁸⁵

The absence of a print culture was a further impediment to the development of cultural and intellectual activities. For printing and publication, Cameroon had to look, as in other matters, to Nigeria. It was not until 1956 that the Government installed its own printing press at Buea, the headquarters, for official publications only, while the C.D.C. owned theirs. Commercial printing was assured by the Basel Mission, Man O'War Bay and a private firm in Victoria.

F. Training for Citizenship and Leadership

The last ten years of British Administration of

¹⁸⁵H.M.C. 1956, p. 116.

the Southern Cameroons saw increased interest in the development of the territory. The years were marked by attempts to involve Cameroonians of all creeds, tribes, occupations and educational levels in the development of their communities. These imperatives gave rise to the introduction of leadership and citizenship training. It is during this period that a few youth movements were formed in the territory. The aims of these movements emphasised citizenship and leadership and have actually played an important role in leadership and public life. The need for these qualities in the development of the Territory led to the setting up of a specialised institution in the Southern Cameroons in 1950: the Man O'War Bay Training Centre.

Man O'War Bay is four miles from the sea port of Victoria on the Atlantic Ocean. This Bay had offered the British frigates a very strategic point to check slave traders in the 1840's and 1850's. And the frigate Man O'War, which had used it for this purpose, gave the bay its name. The headquarters of the first German plantation, handed to C.D.C. in 1946, was on the Bay. The site, already containing buildings, was turned over to the Government by the C.D.C. to become the Man O'War Bay Training Centre, when it was decided in 1950 to establish an institution for training youths in citizenship and leadership.

The idea of such training was introduced by the

Commissioner of the Cameroons, who was the head of the territory; he had become convinced that "the key to future development (of the Southern Cameroons) lay in engendering a more constructive attitude amongst the educated youth, and felt the time had come to formulate a new approach to this problem of training in citizenship."¹⁸⁶

The Centre opened in March, 1951, on an experimental basis under its first principal, Mr. A. G. Dickson, M.B.E., a British Administrative Officer, succeeded in January, 1955, by Mr. R. E. Snowsell, an Education Officer who had been released in 1952 to assist in conducting two courses at the Centre.

From its inception, the cost of running the Centre was borne by the Government of Eastern Nigeria. After 1952, the institution was financially supported by the Federation of Nigeria. Government financial contribution of £3000 came from each of Eastern (including Cameroon), Western and Northern Nigeria. But the management of the Centre was entrusted to a Management Committee represented by all regions, commercial houses and the Education Department; Southern Cameroons was represented by Mr. E. K. Martin, an Education Officer, and Dr. Carl Wilson of the Cameroons Development Corporation. The Committee was responsible for

¹⁸⁶ Management Committee, Man O'War Bay Training Centre, (London: Edgar A. Dunstan and Co., 1958), p. II.

policy, programmes, estimates and the general welfare of the Centre.

The Man O'War Bay Training Centre was modelled on the Outward Bound Trust of the United Kingdom, on whose training programme the method and approach of the Centre was based and from which came much cooperation and assistance. The courses at the centre lasted six months -- from January to June -- and participants were drawn from villages, secondary and teacher training institutions (both students and staff), commercial houses and Government in the territory, Nigeria, and the Gold Coast (present Ghana). Although it was not fee paying, participants had to be sponsored by their employers; but commercial houses paid £25 per sponsored student, not as fees but as an assistance to the Centre.

The programmes of the Centre emphasised techniques in community development and a spirit of adventure, initiative and courage. It can be inferred here that the nature of training required physical fitness. Thus, students were properly examined by a government medical officer before admission. It was the opinion of Mr. Chadwick, the Community Development Secretary, Eastern Nigeria that, such training would create in the individual an awareness of his country, his potentiality and opportunity to render service. It was not until 1959 that women began to attend the courses which, in their case,

did not emphasise physical endeavour; rather they were designed "to enable young women to come together and get to know each other."¹⁸⁷

The courses were divided into five main groups -- Seamanship, Expeditions, Community Development, Technical Subjects and Lectures. Seamanship included swimming, paddling, sailing, "culminating in a two-day visit to an uninhabited island for exploring and excavating, and collecting seaweeds, shells and corals;"¹⁸⁸ expeditions, economic surveys of villages or the fishing industry along the coast, visits to crater lakes and mountain climbing (the Cameroon Mountain 13350 ft.) formed an important part of the training.

Community Development courses were the most important courses. Students stayed in villages for days and helped in village projects such as building bridges, roads, schools, teachers' houses, crater points, culverts and related activities "only in places where the local people come out to work as well."¹⁸⁹ Technical courses included First Aid, Fire Fighting, Artificial Respiration, Use of Compass and Knotting. In addition, participants were lectured in subjects such as "Bribery and Corruption"

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁸⁸ R. E. Snowsell, "Character and Leadership," West African Journal of Education, Vol. 1, No. 2 (June, 1957), p. 48.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

"Police and Public," "My Place in the Community," "What is Character?" "Youth Today" "History in Africa" "The Need for an Informed Public Opinion,"¹⁹⁰ and the like.

Graduates of the centre returned to their respective districts and formed societies based on programmes covered at the centre and community work undertaken. An ex-student of the centre commended joyfully: "At Man O'War Bay, the impossible is made possible."¹⁹¹

It is not known how youth movements originated in the territory; presumably they were contemporary with the Man O'War Bay Centre whose objective they shared. By 1959, there were already 2000 Scouts and Cubs, 325 Girl Guides and Brownies, and two Red Cross Societies at Bota and Kumba. These various youth movements played very important roles in public activities such as the Empire Day Celebrations, in keeping peace and order, as well as assisting the wounded and the blind. In 1959, the Red Cross Society "sponsored the training of a blind man at the Nigerian Farm Craft Centre for the Blind" and helped in the "settlement of a further blind man who completed this training."¹⁹² It is likely that this aspect of the Red Cross activity was a forerunner of the Centre for the Blind in the territory.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² H.M.C. 1959, p. 88.

The growing interest in youth movements during this period led to their participation in World Conferences which brought the Southern Cameroons to the notice of other members of the Commonwealth and introduced it internationally. For instance, in 1957 three Scouts represented the territory at the World Jamboree held in Sutton Coldfield, England. The Southern Cameroons' representative from St. Joseph's College, Sasse, led the Nigerian Scout Troop and "had the honour of conducting the Queen round the Nigerian Camp."¹⁹³ A girl also represented the Southern Cameroons, in the same year, at the World Assembly of Girl Guides at Windsor, England. These opportunities helped to give them a travelling education and to widen their horizon.

The exploration of the development of mass and cultural education during the mandate and trusteeship period of the Southern Cameroons reveals that it was not given the attention which was given to formal education. It is precisely the area which the Missionary Societies overlooked. Except in the C.D.C. plantations, literacy campaigns in the villages and towns were virtually private enterprises. It would seem that campaigns for the elimination of illiteracy, in which Missionary Societies had played no part, were unable to establish themselves in any permanent fashion.

¹⁹³ H.M.G. 1957, p. 111.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

It will be recalled that the purpose of this study was to survey the development of education in the Anglophone Provinces during the mandate and trusteeship period under the United Kingdom, from 1919 to 1960. Underlying this purpose was the intention to investigate the extent to which the United Kingdom fulfilled its obligations under the League of Nations and the United Nations agreements, with regard to the educational development of the territory. Of particular interest also, was the need to document the origin of our present system of education, a system which almost parallels that of Great Britain in terms of organisation and curriculum.

The study reveals that political, economic, social and cultural factors combined to dictate the pattern of educational development in the territory and its present system of education. Specifically, these factors include the concepts of "mandate" and "trusteeship", the administration of the territory jointly with Nigeria, the stage of its development, and the response of the indigenous people to education. The concepts of mandate and trusteeship were introduced by the League of Nations

and the United Nations as a barrier to colonialism in the territories forfeited by Germany at the end of the First World War. As revealed in the study of educational development in the territory, the fact that the United Kingdom was permitted to administer it as part of Nigeria which was already a British Colony, makes it difficult to see how colonialism could have been avoided. Insofar as the territory was integrated into an existing colonial framework, it became virtually a British colony and subjected to the same colonial domination and abuses as elsewhere. From this perspective, therefore, education in the Southern Cameroons had a tincture of colonialism.

As a corollary, the joint administration with Nigeria placed the Southern Cameroons in a position of complete subservience. This integration had an adverse effect on the development of the mandated territory generally and education in particular. From 1924, all the laws, ordinances and regulations of Nigeria became applicable to the Southern Cameroons. Throughout the mandate and trusteeship period, educational policy was formulated in Lagos, Nigeria and by extension applied to the territory. The control and direction of education was exercised by the Nigerian Legislative Assembly, in which, in the early years, the Southern Cameroons had no representation.

Within the territory itself, economic and cultural

factors contributed to the determination of the rhythm of educational expansion and extension. The economy was still at the subsistence level, infrastructure was inadequately developed, and although western education had been introduced since the days of German Administration, it had not been well entrenched at the beginning of British Administration. The value of education was not realised as it did not provide immediate benefits. The enthusiasm of the Cameroonian for education was built gradually in the course of years. Poverty and traditional beliefs engendered apathy against and repugnance towards western education. Classic examples are provided, particularly in the education of girls who were regarded as a source of wealth by parents. Rather than send the girls to school, it was necessary to prepare them at home for marriage. Even with the boys, the situation was analogous to what existed in England in the early years of the industrial revolution. The subsistence economy required the co-operation of the whole family. Thus, child labour in the farm inhibited educational expansion, as evidenced in the enrolment and attendance of pupils in the early years of educational development.

The general trend of educational development was implicit in the British colonial policy of indirect rule. Education was ultimately to be the responsibility of the people themselves. The Administering Authority saw its

responsibility, purely and simply, as that of guiding the people to civilization and rescuing them from immorality and those cultural manifestations which inhibit development. The emphasis in this particular aspect of education impelled the colonial government to rely heavily on Missionary Societies. The partnership between the Administering Authority and the church provided a contractual nexus by which each party had something to gain from the bargain. The former wielded political power which enabled it to offer security to the latter, while on the other hand, the church was free to evangelise and to offer an education which, through its tenets, produced docile, obedient and law-abiding subjects.

The establishment of schools at all levels was contingent on the interest of the people to have them. At the beginning of the mandate period, the schools established since the days of the Germans had degenerated into schools for teaching catechism. In 1922, the Administering Authority proceeded to open government schools. This direct involvement in the establishment of schools was consistent with the government's definite policy to set up schools which should be models for Missionary Societies and other agencies to follow. Hence, the number of government schools was small and remained static throughout the period under study. In 1960, out of a total of about 600 primary schools, about 75 per cent

belonged to Missionary Societies and the rest to the Government, Native Administrations and the Cameroon Development Corporation. The equitable distribution of primary schools, on a geographical basis, was ensured by Missionary Societies and to a certain extent, by the Native Administrations.

Secondary education was introduced in 1939 by the Catholic Mission. Prior to this date, the Administering Authority had envisaged such education to be given in the secondary schools in Nigeria. The first attempt to provide secondary education in the territory was made in 1924, when a secondary department was opened at the government primary school in the Atlantic coastal town of Victoria. But, after 1926, no evidence exists of its continued operation. Through the initiative of the Provincial Education Committee of the Southern Cameroons, the first formal secondary school was established by the Catholic St. Joseph's Missionary Society of the Mill Hill Fathers in London, in 1939. St. Joseph's College, Sasse, offered a six-year course leading to the Cambridge University School Certificate Examinations. A decade later, the Basel Mission opened a secondary school in the northern part of the territory; in 1957, it became a joint venture with the Baptist Mission. In 1956, the only girls' secondary school was established, admitting both Catholics and Protestants, since it was established with financial

assistance from the government. The only government secondary school was opened by the Government in 1952; this was a trade centre for training artisans. The full circle of the British Administration left the territory with four secondary schools -- three secondary grammar schools belonging to Missionary Societies and the Government Trade Centre.

The organisation of the school system followed closely that of Nigeria, itself modelled on that of England and Wales. The primary and secondary schools were organised in stages, one stage following the other. In the early years of educational development, primary schools took children between six and ten. By the regulations of the 1926 Education Code, the entry age was fixed at five and six. As a result of apathy among the people, entry ages continued to vary until after the Second World War. Secondary education began at 13 or 14. But the variation of ages at the primary school level was reflected in the secondary schools. Up to 1930, the duration of the primary school course was eight years; a reorganisation of primary education in the same year reduced it to four, after two years in the infant classes. The reorganisation introduced Middle Schools of six years duration -- the last two years of the former eight-year primary school course during which secondary school subjects were introduced, plus a further four years. After 1957, the secondary school

course lasted five years, while the primary school course was again raised to eight years by the newly constituted Southern Cameroons Government of 1955. Entry into secondary institutions was by a competitive entrance examination and personal interview for the few places available.

One of the problems the Administering Authority had to grapple with was that of procuring trained teachers. This led to the development of the pupil-teacher system. Between 1922 and 1929, this meant the engagement even of those who had not completed the full primary school course lasting eight years; in its later development, pupil teachers were recruited only from those who had completed the course and possessed the First School Leaving Certificate. Formal teacher training made its humble beginnings in 1925, when a Normal Class was opened at the same Government primary school at Victoria in which a secondary department had been established a year earlier. The Normal Class developed into the Government Teacher Training College which came to be sited at Kumba, sixty miles inland from the Atlantic coastal town of Victoria. But this lone institution could not satisfy the increasing demand for trained teachers.

The expansion of teacher training institutions was given attention and gathered momentum during and after the Second World War. The main effort came from the

Missionary Societies. By 1960, the Missionary Societies were operating ten teacher training institutions out of a total of twelve, in the country. The increased development of teacher training institutions by Missionary Societies stemmed from the fact that they maintained a majority of the primary schools which were badly in need of trained teachers. As far as the Administering Authority of the Southern Cameroons was concerned, teacher training institutions were envisaged as already existing in Nigeria. Like secondary education, Cameroonians received teacher training in Nigeria until after the Second World War; the most famous of these teacher training institutions were at Uyo, Yaba and Umuahia.

Teacher training began with the preliminary training centres for primary school leavers and pupil-teachers followed by elementary and higher elementary training centres. Each stage qualified a teacher to teach designated classes of the primary school. But the regulations were permissive, due to the lack of sufficient teachers. The training received by teachers prepared them to teach primary school subjects. Consequently, the curriculum of teacher training institutions largely reflected the primary school curriculum. But included in the curriculum were educational theory and practice, especially teaching methods. Teachers for post-primary institutions were recruited from among university graduates with or without

professional qualifications, and from among higher elementary teachers with additional qualifications and some British teaching qualifications. The highest institutions for teacher training were the institution at Yaba and the London University Institute of Education.

The status of the teacher improved only after the Second World War, but even then it did not compare favourably with that of his counterparts in the public and private sectors. The salaries of teachers, except for those employed by the government, were at subsistence level. It was not until 1930 that a teachers' union -- the Nigerian Teachers' Union, with branches in the Southern Cameroons -- was formed, when the teachers had an official organ for channelling their grievances. In 1958, a separate Southern Cameroon Union of Teachers came into existence. However, its activities were bedevilled by politics that its effectiveness was considerably reduced.

The curricula in the primary and in the secondary schools were influenced by both the Hampton-Tuskegee philosophy and by the exigencies of British examinations. It was the intention of the Phelps-Stokes Commission, which studied education in 1920-21, to model education in Africa on the pattern of that given to Negroes in the Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes in the southern part of the United States. Vocationalism was emphasised; to a certain extent this philosophy was applied only to primary education.

Secondary education was rather elitist, preparing pupils for professional and administrative positions in the public and the private sectors. This explains the reasons for the selective nature of admissions to secondary schools. It was the erroneous view of the Administering Authority that the remnants from primary schools would revert to agriculture. The expectations of the pupils regarding white-collar jobs led to rural exodus.

At the primary school level, the curriculum included the three R's, religious instruction, local history and geography, rural science, craft and agriculture, which was very unpopular with primary school pupils. The secondary schools offered a curriculum determined by the Cambridge University Examinations, and after 1957, the West African Examination Council Examination which was modelled on the British system. Arts and sciences enjoyed equality of place in the curriculum but due to the absence of qualified teachers and the lack of laboratory facilities, emphasis tended to be placed on the arts than on the sciences. Where science was taught, it was more theoretical than experimental. Science subjects tended to emphasise studies in domestic science and hygiene taught in the primary school. The obvious snag with regard to the secondary school curriculum was that, agriculture was neglected, although it represented an aspect of adaptation to African culture. Agriculture was taught in the classroom as

part of biology; history and geography dealt more with English and European than with local studies. The trade centre offered courses in electricity, machine fitting, woodwork and decoration.


Studies undertaken by the Phelps-Stokes Commission in 1920, by the Nuffield Foundations in 1953 showed that, teaching methods stressed memory exercises and drill. The popular method of teaching in the secondary school was the lecture method. These methods did not train a pupil to think and experiment in order to produce more knowledge.

The multiplicity of native languages made it absolutely impossible to adopt the vernacular as a medium of instruction. In the Southern Cameroons, the widely-spoken languages -- Bali and Douala -- were used in the Basel Mission primary schools but its use was limited to the infant classes. Although the 1926 Education Code recommended the use of vernacular in the infant classes, English language became dominant as a language of instruction.

The absence of textbooks and library resources were factors which hampered educational development. The available textbooks had to be ordered from Nigeria or from the United Kingdom, and were written by English and American authors; they assumed knowledge which the African child did not possess. Thus, the whole concept of adapt-

ation of education to the environment was fallacious. Libraries were only to be found in the secondary schools and even there the library holdings were grossly inadequate.

The funds for financing education came from four main sources: public funds, school fees, contributions from the home boards of Missionary Societies and after the Second World War, education rates. The oldest of these was school fees which constituted one of the earliest burdens on the people of the Southern Cameroons. Before 1928, every educational agency financed its own system; some Native Administrations, however, paid grants to Missionary Societies operating schools in their areas of jurisdiction. After 1928, government grants became available to Missionary Societies, on the condition that their schools were properly and efficiently conducted and were socially useful. Voluntary Agency schools came to be classified as "assisted" and "unassisted," the assisted schools being those receiving grants from public funds. Government schools were directly financed by the Government.



With increased government expenditure on education after the Second World War, the Administering Authority was impelled to introduce education rates. The education rates did not result from Legislative enactment, therefore reliance could not be placed on the people to pay, until it became administratively expedient to deduct from the

payroll or to include in direct taxation. Inevitably, the institution of education rates without the abolition of school fees rendered school requirements unbearable. School fees increased from 3 s. in 1922 a month, to 60 s. a month in 1957. The increase in school fees was deliberate: the increases were designed to enable the people to accept education rates as the lesser of the two evils, so that universal primary education might ultimately be introduced. Although education rates were paid directly or indirectly, universal education did not become a reality.

Scholarships and bursaries were introduced early enough. But this was a compensation for the absence of post-primary and post-secondary institutions rather than a deliberate scheme to assist deserving pupils from the territory to undertake these studies elsewhere. Cameroonians competed on equal basis with Nigerians, but with very few chances of success. Many more scholarships became available to Cameroonians only after 1955, when the Southern Cameroons Scholarship Board was constituted after the achievement of a quasi-autonomy from Nigeria. The necessary funds were contributed by the government and the yearly allocation by the Cameroon Development Corporation. Besides the yearly contributions made to the Government by the C.D.C., the Corporation operated a scholarship scheme for its employees and other Cameroonians. Other scholarship awards

were made by the Native Administrations to pupils of their areas and by the Missionary Societies to the children of adherents. Foreign scholarships to Cameroonians during the 1950's helped many to undertake studies abroad; among the earliest foreign scholarships were those from India, the United States, as well as from the United Kingdom and the United Nations. Some Missionaries did sponsor or recommended students to individuals and organisations abroad.

Mass and cultural education also had its advocates. Adult literacy received attention from 1947 but cultural education, a relatively late-comer, did not go beyond native dancing. Literacy outside the C.D.C. plantations was in a state of virtual neglect. Literacy campaigns in the C.D.C. plantations were very well organised and more enthusiasm was shown by attending pupils. But outside the plantations, it was left to private initiative due to lack of teachers and adequate organisation. Student-teachers in some training colleges and some private individuals, more because of pecuniary motive than a deliberate desire to promote literacy, helped to spread literacy. In later years, the duties of certain itinerant civil servants, such as co-operative inspectors, came to include the organisation of literacy classes. But their frequent transfers usually led to a relapse to illiteracy. Conspicuous in mass education was the training of women in

community development, in which spectacular progress was made. From 1951, leadership and citizenship training at Mah O'War Bay became famous. Cultural education lagged behind other aspects of mass education. The only exception was the C.D.C., which encouraged native dancing, provided cinema and mobile libraries and organised month-end ball-room dances in its plantations. Youth movements became important in the 50's. They played very important roles in public life. By representations in international conferences, the Cameroonian youths received a travelling education and helped to present the territory to the outside world.

Education in the Southern Cameroons at the close of British Administration was still backward. Judged from the caustic remarks of the two U.N. Visiting Missions to the territory in 1949, and again in 1952, it becomes clear that the British administrators carried out their responsibility with complacency. During their visits, the Visiting Missions inveighed against the prolonged connection of the territory with Nigeria, and observed that education in the territory was still backward. The Mission did not hesitate to criticise the Administering Authority for charging fees in the government schools, fees which in addition were very high. The provision of secondary schools according to demand, and the privatisation of education, were among the critical observations of the Visiting Missions.

Although the Administering Authority had as a definite policy the provision of an education that should provide the people with the necessary knowledge for material progress, the curriculum introduced in the schools was more inclined to train colonial subjects than to produce thinkers. It is unlikely that such a curriculum could provide knowledge relevant to economic social and political development. Education in the territory was a partnership between the government and the church, the former controlling policy and providing some financial assistance, while the latter bore the burden of establishing schools, since schools were established before grants became available. The 1950's represented the period of educational expansion and extension. It was a period of relative economic prosperity and funds from the Colonial Development and Welfare Funds.

It was also during the second half of this century that the Cameroonians' enthusiasm for education soared. Many more Cameroonians became educated to provide political leadership at a time when the wind of nationalism was sweeping across Africa. Through United Kingdom and United Nations connections, the territory drew the attention and sympathy of the international communities, many of which offered scholarships to Cameroonians to receive more education abroad.

The system of education in the Southern Cameroons

was a replica of the British system. It now survives side by side with the French system in a Unitary State. The problem which faces the State at present, at a time when it is struggling to establish strategies for adapting education to national realities, is that of harmonising the two systems without the domination of one by the other. These remain problems which constitute virgin areas for further enquiry.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 'A'

Conditions for Grants-in-Aid to Voluntary
Agencies

Conditions for Grants-in-Aid to Voluntary Agencies

1. 1926

- (a) Approval by the Director of Education of title to land on which the school is located.
- (b) The control and management of the school must be vested in a manager or where the school is conducted by one proprietor, in a proprietor.
- (c) There must be sufficient accommodation with adequate sanitary conditions and recreational facilities.
- (d) The annual attendance of pupils must be at least 350.
- (e) The school must not be operated with a profit motive. No pupil must be refused admission except on reasonable grounds.
- (f) Religious instruction must be given only on approval of parents.
- (g) The school must be necessary for the educational needs of the community.
- (h) The school must attain the required standard of efficiency.
- (i) The regulations must have been complied with.

2. Reviewed Conditions of Grants-in-aid, 1948

For a Voluntary Agency to qualify for grants, it must have been recognised as a Voluntary Agency under the following conditions:

- a) It must be registered under the Land (Perpetual Succession) Ordinance, 1924, and must be a body corporate.
- b) It must own one or more schools deserving of grants-in-aid on the grounds of efficiency, social usefulness and educational necessity.
- c) It must supply to the Director of Education proof of non-profit motive.
- d) It must give an undertaking not to open a school without consultation with local and central authorities.
- e) It must follow a policy of education acceptable to the Director of Education.
- f) It must maintain a satisfactory system of supervision.
- g) There must be proof of adequate facilities for the training of teachers.

APPENDIX 'B'

Composition of the Southern Cameroons Board of Education,
1959

Director of Education (formerly Chief Education Officer)
for Southern Cameroons

Chief Federal Adviser on Education or his representative

Woman Education Officer nominated by Director of Education

Principal Government Trade Centre, Onbe

Principal Institute of Agriculture, Bamui

One representative appointed by the Roman Catholic Mission

One representative appointed by the Basel Mission

One representative appointed by the Cameroon Baptist Mission

One representative appointed by the Roman Catholic Mission
to represent interest of secondary schools

One representative appointed by the Basel and Baptist
Mission to represent interest of Teacher Training Colleges

One representative of the recognised Union of Teachers in
Cameroon.

One representative of Native Administration appointed by
the Division

Education Committee in each Division of Southern Cameroons

Function

- a) To consider reports of the proceedings of school committees and advise the Government.
- b) To suggest to the Government any changes in regulations.
- c) To recommend to Government the appointment of persons to a Committee.
- d) To report to Government from time to time any matters affecting education.
- e) To perform any other duties as Government may direct.

APPENDIX 'C'

Composition of Advisory Committee on Technical Education
and Industrial Training

Principal, Government Trade Centre, Ombé

Federal Adviser on Technical Education

Chief Engineer, Public Works Department

Labour Officer.

One representative, Southern Cameroons Trade Unions

One representative of the Cameroon Development Corporation

One representative of Messrs Elders and Puffes

One representative of Electricity Corporation of Nigeria
(S. Cameroon)

Function:

- a) To advise the Southern Cameroons Government on the development and training required to meet industrial and commercial needs.

APPENDIX 'D'

Native Administration Schools Opened Before the First World War

School	Year Opened	Division	Remarks
Bimbila	1922	Victoria	
Muyuka	1928	Victoria	
Batoke	1922	Victoria	Closed 1926
Muea	1936	Victoria	
Tiko	1937	Victoria	
Babundu	1922	Victoria	Closed 1930
Lobe	1937	Kumba	
Kurume	1927	Kumba	
Lipenja	1929	Kumba	
Massaka	1922	Kumba	
Nyasoso	1934	Kumba	Taken over from Govt.
Ndian Estate	1938	Kumba	
Elung	1922	Kumba	Closed 1929
Assam	1933	Mamfe	
Assumbo	1936	Mamfe	
Mfuni	1922	Mamfe	
Tali	1922	Mamfe	
Menka	1928	Mamfe	Closed 1936
Fontem	1922	Mamfe	Closed 1930
Bajo	1922	Mamfe	Closed 1926
Nguti	1922	Mamfe	Closed 1926
Ndebaya	1926	Mamfe	Closed 1928
Bali	1922	Bamenda	
Fungom (We)	1936	Bamenda	
Kaka Nsungli	1936	Bamenda	
Meta Mogamo	1936	Bamenda	
Ndop	1927	Bamenda	
Bikom	1922	Bamenda	
Banso	1931	Bamenda	Handed to Baptist Mission

APPENDIX 'E'

Missionaries Engaged in Education Work in the Territory, 1948-1957

Year	Denomination	Canadian	Australian	Italian	British	Dutch	Irish	Swiss	USA	New Zealand	Total
1948	Basel Mission	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	-	-	-
	Catholic Mission	-	4	-	10	17	2	-	-	-	-
	Baptist Mission	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
1949	Basel Mission	-	-	-	-	-	1	15	-	-	-
	Baptist Mission	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
	Catholic Mission	-	1	-	3	21	4	-	-	-	-
1950	Basel Mission	-	-	-	-	-	1	9	-	-	-
	Baptist Mission	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
	Catholic Mission	-	1	4	11	24	3	-	-	-	-
1951	Baptist Mission	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-
	Catholic Mission	-	1	3	11	23	4	-	-	-	-
	Basel Mission	-	-	-	1	-	-	14	7	-	-
1952	Basel Mission	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	-	-	-
	Baptist Mission	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
	Catholic Mission	1	-	5	10	31	4	-	-	-	-
1953	Basel Mission	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	-	-	-
	Baptist Mission	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
	Catholic Mission	-	-	5	12	32	4	-	-	-	-
1954	Basel Mission	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	-	-	-
	Baptist Mission	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
	Catholic Mission	-	-	2	12	38	6	-	-	-	-
1955	Basel Mission	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-
	Baptist Mission	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
	Catholic Mission	-	-	2	10	15	4	-	-	-	-

Year	Denomination	Canadian	Australian	Italian	British	Dutch	Irish	Swiss	USA	New Zealand	Total
1956	Basel Mission	-	-	-	2	-	-	12	-	1	
	Baptist Mission	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	
	Catholic Mission	-	-	2	15	27	3	-	-	-	
1957	Basel Mission	-	-	-	2	-	-	20	-	1	
	Baptist Mission	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	8	-	
	Catholic Mission	-	-	2	16	27	4	-	-	-	

APPENDIX 'F'

Growth of Primary Education, 1922 - 1957

Year	Government and Native Administration	Voluntary Agencies	
		Assisted.	Unassisted
1922	17	-	N/A
1923	18	-	N/A
1924	18	-	38
1925	18	-	120
1926	16	-	136
1927	18	-	N/A
1928	20	2(a)	275
1929	20	3(a)	198
1930	18	3(a)	178
1931	19	3(a)	N/A
1932	19	15	161
1933	19	14	124
1934	19	14	134
1935	19	15	132
1936	24	15	151
1937	23	15	195
1938	25	16	212
1947	33	26	150
1948	34	35	176
1949	32	141	86
1950	32	148	43
1951	30	152	34
1952	31	161	93
1953	37	170	112
1954	30	173	116
1955	28	196	133
1956	31	205	149
1957	31	222	141

N.B. No Statistics available during the war (1939 - 1947).

(a) Only the Catholic schools qualified under the education code as assisted schools.

Source: H.M.G. Reports on the British Cameroons, 1922-1957.

