

THE PROBLEMS OF POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION AND THEIR  
EFFECTS ON THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
SOUTHERN CAMEROONS UNDER BRITISH  
ADMINISTRATION, 1922-1961

by

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ABSTRACT

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EDUCATION

THE PROBLEMS OF POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION AND THEIR  
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SOUTHERN CAMEROONS UNDER BRITISH  
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This study examined the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons from 1922 to 1961. The study discovered that formal education was introduced in the Cameroons by the London Baptist missionaries who carried out their work under very difficult conditions which gave rise to the problems of post-primary education. During the period from 1884-1914, the German administration in the Cameroons neglected the provision of post-primary education in spite of the efforts made to organise the educational system. Britain inherited these problems in 1922 and intensified them. The de facto annexation of the Southern Cameroons to Nigeria removed the need to give Cameroonians post-primary education because it became easy to transfer Nigerians to work in the Cameroons. Consequently, on the eve of Independence in 1961, there was no class of educated elite and the Southern Cameroons was led to Independence by people with insufficient post-primary education.

EXTRAIT.

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EDUCATION

LES PROBLEMES DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT POST-PRIMAIRES ET LEURS CONSEQUENCES  
SUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT POLITIQUE DU CAMEROUN DU SUD SOUS L'ADMINISTRATION  
BRITANNIQUE DE 1922 A 1961.

Cette étude traite des problèmes de l'enseignement post-primaire au Cameroun du Sud de 1922 à 1961. L'étude a dévoilé que l'enseignement officiel a été introduit au Cameroun par les missionnaires "London Baptist" qui ont accompli leur travail dans des conditions très difficiles qui ont donné naissance aux problèmes de l'enseignement post-primaires. Au cours de la période de 1894 à 1914, l'administration a demandé au Cameroun à négligé de dispenser l'enseignement post-primaire malgré les travaux qui avaient été accomplis pour instituer le système d'enseignement. La Grande-Bretagne a hérité de ces problèmes en 1922 et les a accentués. L'annexion de facto du Cameroun du Sud au Nigéria a supprimé le besoin de dispenser l'enseignement secondaire aux Camerounais, vu qu'il était dorénavant facile d'envoyer les fonctionnaires Nigériens au Cameroun pour travailler. Par conséquent, au moment de l'Indépendance en 1961, il n'existait pas d'élite instruite et le Cameroun du Sud a été conduit à l'Indépendance par un peuple pour qui l'enseignement post-primaire avait été insuffisant.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Southern Cameroons, with which this work is concerned, is the Southern portion of the British Cameroons which was created after the First World War when Britain and France partitioned the German Kamerun. Britain further partitioned its own portion into Northern and Southern Cameroons, and from 1922, Northern Cameroons was administered as a part of Northern Nigeria while the Southern portion became one of the provinces of Southern Nigeria.

Following a United Nations plebiscite in 1961, the Southern Cameroons seceded from Nigeria and unified with the French Cameroons to form the Federal Republic of Cameroon. Thereafter, the Southern Cameroons was designated as the West Cameroon. After a referendum in May 1972, the Constitution of 1961 was changed and the federal structure of government was replaced by a unitary system of government and the country has since then been known as the United Republic of Cameroon. There is, therefore, nothing on the current political map of the Cameroons shown as the Southern Cameroons. But the term

"Southern Cameroons" or in rare cases, Cameroons will be used throughout this study in order to confine it within the period from 1922 to 1961 when the Southern Cameroons was administered by Britain under the Mandates of the League of Nations and subsequently of the United Nations Organisation.

With an estimated population of just under one million in 1961, the Southern Cameroons is composed of over fifteen different tribes speaking different but related languages and dialects. The territory is geographically divided into two broad regions which, with negligible exceptions, correspond largely with the ethnic and cultural division of the people. In the southern part which borders the Atlantic Ocean, there are tropical rain forests which merge into montane grassland in the north. The coastal or southern region is composed of Bantu and semi-Bantu tribes numbering a few thousand people and each tribe is subdivided into clans, villages and hamlets some of which have fewer than fifty people. Generally, each clan, village or hamlet is politically independent of each other. Ruel has described one of the coastal tribes as "one of the stateless societies of Africa" by which he meant that the tribe does not constitute itself into a

large political group but is divided into small politically independent units. This statement underlines the general characteristic of the majority of the coastal tribes of the Southern Cameroons.<sup>1</sup>

The northern section is composed mainly of Tikars with an admixture of semi-Bantu and Sudanese people. Unlike the coastal district, the northern section has large units which, as in the case of Nso, number up to about 80,000 people under the jurisdiction of one paramount ruler designated as Fon.<sup>2</sup> Each tribe is subdivided into small political units ruled by a sub-chief who in turn owes allegiance to the Fon. In general, traditional authority is stronger in the north than in the coastal district and, as far as this study is concerned, any

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<sup>1</sup>M.J. Ruel, "The Modern Adaptation of Association among the Banyang of the West Cameroon," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, 20, I (Spring 1964), 1-4. See also Edwin Ardener, Coastal Bantu of the Cameroons, International African Institute, London (1956).

<sup>2</sup>For references on the ethnic groups and for the economic, social and political organisation of the grass-fields of the Southern Cameroons, see for example, Daryll Forde (ed.), Peoples of the Central Cameroons. Ethnographic Survey of Africa, West Africa Part IX, International African Institute, London (1954), Elizabeth Chilver and P.M. Kabbery, "From Tribute to Tax in a Tikar Chiefdom," Africa (January 1960), XXX, I: 1-19.

mention of traditional rulers and traditional institutions will be confined to the northern section of the Southern Cameroons.

In view of the multiplicity of indigenous languages, the development of an indigenous lingua franca in the Southern Cameroons was impossible. This fact stresses the importance of a foreign language as a lingua franca necessary for the introduction of a national system of government and education. Consequently, the pidgin English, of which more will be said in the course of this study, has been very important for the political and educational development of the Southern Cameroons and of the United Republic of Cameroon as a whole.

The geographical differences between the low lying coastal region and the hilly grassland in the north also account for the differences in the economic development of the two regions. Broadly speaking, although most crops can be grown in both regions, large scale production of some, such as plantains, bananas, palms and cocoa is possible only in the coastal district. The production of potatoes, maize and groundnuts, as well as the breeding of cattle, are largely confined to the north. The development of means of transportation and communication

would have been easier in the coastal region because it is generally low lying but for the existence of the tropical forest with thick, intertwining undergrowth crowded with huge trees. On the other hand, although the vegetation of the northern section is mainly grass, the hilly nature of the region often presents problems which are costly to overcome in the process of road building. Therefore, there exist geographical factors in each region and in the country as a whole which create difficulties in the development of means of communication and in the development of agriculture.

#### Purpose of the Study

This study will be an attempt to examine the interrelationship between the problems of post-primary education and the political development of the Southern Cameroons from 1922 to 1961. In the context of this study, post-primary education is divided into two cycles, secondary and higher education, and it means education beyond the prescribed primary school course. This study will also provide background material for further studies comparing the French and British Cameroons under the League of Nations and subsequently under the United Nations

Organisation.

### Major Sources of Reference

There are annual reports on the British administration of the Southern Cameroons prepared by the administration itself; there are reports to the League of Nations and subsequently to the United Nations Organisation and to the British Government. There are also reports to the United Nations Visiting Missions and reports of individual missionaries engaged in education and school administration in the territory. There are Official Publications of the League of Nations and of the United Nations. Most of these reports give statistics and information on the educational and political development of the Southern Cameroons during the period under consideration, that is, from 1922 to 1961.

Vernon-Jackson's study reviews the historical development of education in both the British and French Cameroons from 1844 to 1961. Irvine Miller has carried out a study of the United Nations' Trusteeship System and Educational Advancement; while concentrating on the French Cameroons as one of his area of study, his work together with Claude Marchnad's L'Enseignement Au Cameroun Sous Le



Mandat Français (1921-1939), offer points of contrast useful for similar studies in respect of the Southern Cameroons. In addition, studies already carried out on Cameroons unification include the following:

Claude Welch, Dream of Unity. Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa.

Victor T. Levine, The Cameroons, From Mandate to Independence.

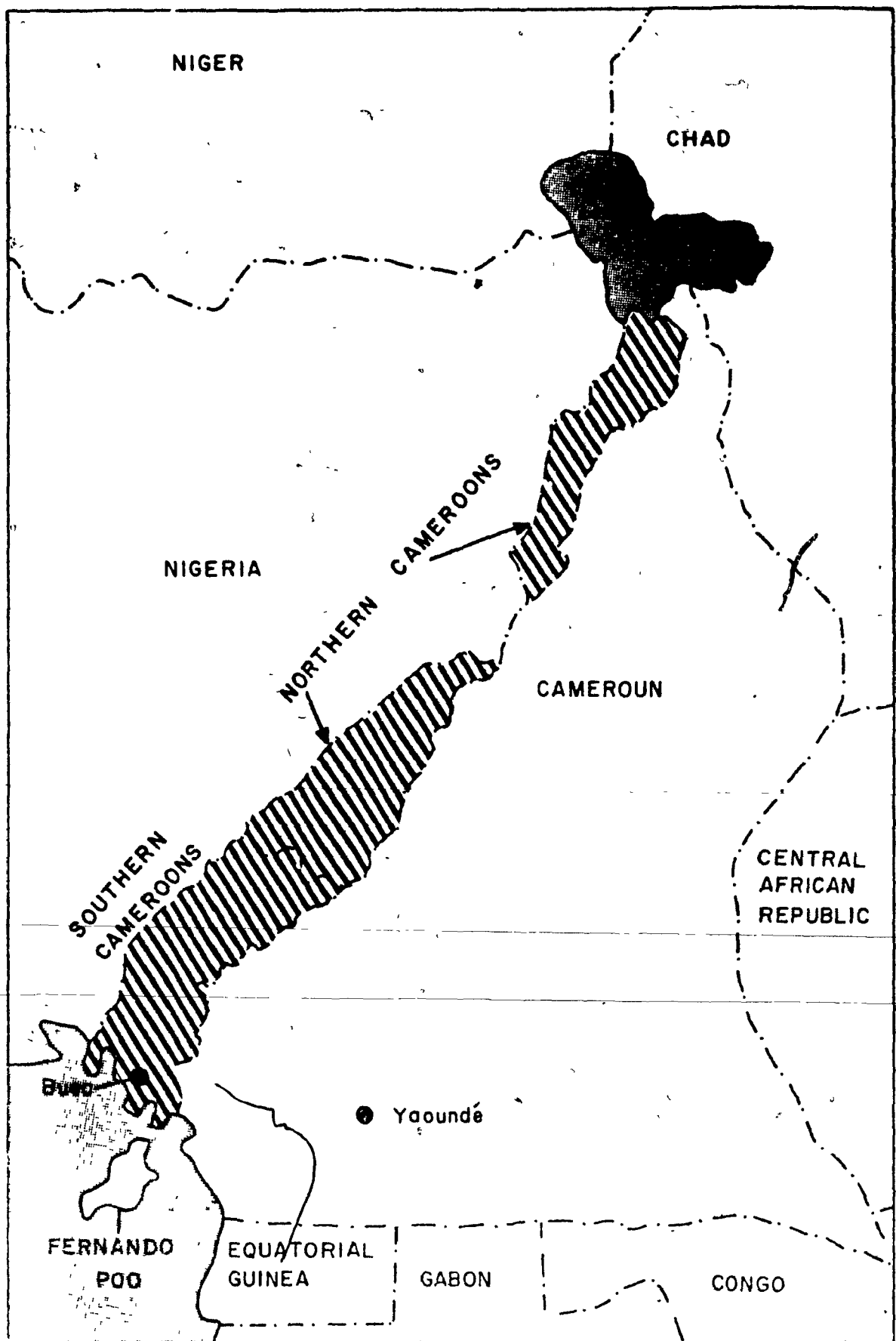
W.R. Johnson, The Cameroon Federation: A Political Integration in a Fragmentary Society.

There are also articles and essays written on the various aspects of political, social and economic development of the Southern Cameroons and on the League of Nations and the United Nations by Roger Louis, Edwin Ardener, Elizabeth Chilver, H.K. Jacobson, David Gardiner.

## HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses of this study are:

1. In comparison with other English-speaking countries in West Africa, post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons was meagre and belatedly developed;
2. As the result of the belated and meagre development of education, no class of educated elite emerged in the Southern Cameroons by 1961 when it gained its Independence by unifying with the French Cameroons;
3. The ultimate effect of the problems of post-primary education was that, unlike other English-speaking countries in West Africa where, in general, the movements for Independence were led by university graduates, the Southern Cameroons was led to Independence by people with insufficient post-primary education.



## CHAPTER I

### THE ORIGIN OF THE PROBLEMS OF POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE CAMEROONS, 1844-1914

#### The Introduction of Formal Education in the Cameroons, 1844-1884

Formal education in West Africa was not the development of indigenous institutions and culture of the native peoples but was introduced from Western Europe and North America by Christian missionaries and the respective colonial administrations. Educational development in any country in West Africa depended very much on the degree of co-operation or harmonious relations between the Christian missionaries and the colonial administrations. In almost every case, the Christian missionaries were the first to introduce formal education in West Africa and the colonial administration came in only later to participate directly by opening government schools and indirectly by giving encouragement, financial and material assistance to the missionaries. The extent of the success of the missionaries in many cases largely depended on the extent

of government assistance; where government assistance was substantial, there was a significant development of education but where government assistance was either belated or negligible, this was reflected in the degree to which education developed.

In almost every case, the extent of government participation in educational development was influenced by the policy of the colonial power towards the development of its colonies and towards mission schools. The history of education in West Africa is a reflection of the colonial policy of the respective colonial powers. In other words, formal education in West Africa is the child of colonialism. But, in the long run, formal education became the main weapon by which Africans were able to demolish colonialism and to lead their respective countries to independence.

Formal education produced a class of educated elite who, by reason of their education, were able to organise nationalist movements and to lead their respective countries to independence. Generally, nationalist leaders in West Africa were those who had received formal education beyond the primary school

level.<sup>1</sup> This fact establishes a relationship between formal education but especially post-primary education on the one hand and political development and political opportunities on the other, for, as Coleman points out, the transformation of the developing societies -

. . . is largely the product of the 'educated' minority; just as in other places at other times in history educated minorities have played a similar role . . . Whether they were activists, organisation builders, ideologists, or members of the literati, the leaders of nationalist movements that brought about sweeping structural and psychological changes in the non-Western world are the products of formal educational institutions, usually of the western variety.<sup>2</sup>

Although what has been said in the preceeding paragraphs is in general applicable to every country in West Africa, the history of formal education in the Cameroons,<sup>3</sup> but especially in that part of the country

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<sup>1</sup>See for example, the composition of the British West African Congress of 1919 held in Accra, Ghana, quoted in James S. Coleman, ed., Education and Political Development, New Jersey: Princeton University Press (1965), p. 380.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>The term was first used by Portuguese explorers who, impressed by the existence of numerous shrimps in the estuary of the Wouri River, named the area Cameroes which means shrimps. Later on, the Dutch, English, the

which later became known as the Southern Cameroons, appears to be unique among West African countries. Although the Cameroons had had contact with Western Europe at the same time as other West African countries, the Cameroons never came under any effective colonial administration until 1884 when European powers partitioned Africa into their respective spheres of political influence and when Germany annexed the Cameroons.<sup>4</sup>

However, before 1884 when Germany annexed the Cameroons, Joseph Merrick, a Jamaican of African descent who was a missionary of the Jamaican branch of the London Baptist Mission, had, in 1844, introduced formal education

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French and finally the Germans, adopted the term to designate a larger area than the Portuguese had meant. The spelling of the term has been different depending on whoever is using it. However, all the spellings are but various permutations of the Portuguese spelling. The Germans spelt it Kamerun, the English and French use the letter "C" but while the French spell it Cameroun, the English spelling is Cameroons and this will be used throughout this work.

<sup>4</sup>There are a number of references on the pre-colonial history of West Africa; the following are among those dealing specifically with the Cameroons; Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons: 1884-1914. A Case Study in Modern Imperialism, Yale University Press (1968); Edwin Ardener, Coastal Bantu of the Cameroons, London: International African Institute (1956).

and Christianity in the Cameroons in a place known as Bimbia, along the coastal district of the territory. He carried out a study of the Isubu language<sup>5</sup> and established the first printing press in the Cameroons. Subsequently, he translated portions of the Bible into the Isubu language. Joseph Merrick thus became the first person to put an indigenous Cameroon language into written form. He had been accompanied to the Cameroons by a number of other Jamaicans and the fact that formal education and Christianity were introduced in the Cameroons by Jamaicans of African descent has been important for its educational and political development. These Jamaicans intensified the use of the pidgin English in use at the time and thus assisted in its development as a lingua franca.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Isubu is a dialect of Douala, an important coastal language which became widely used among many of the coastal tribes because the Protestant missionaries used it as a medium of instruction in the beginning classes of the primary school and for religious purposes.

<sup>6</sup>The pidgin English is a corrupted form of the English language and was commonly used by Jamaicans and the freed slaves from the United States who returned to Africa. In comparison with the classical English language, the pidgin English is easier for the common and illiterate person to understand. The importance of the pidgin English in the educational and political development of the Cameroons will be dealt with in the course of this study.



Joseph Merrick and his other Jamaican colleagues were succeeded by Alfred Saker and other London Baptist missionaries. But the Cameroons had not come under any colonial administration. The London Baptist missionaries therefore carried out their work in the Cameroons without the assistance of any colonial government. Moreover, unlike the situation in other West African countries, the London Baptist missionaries remained the only body providing formal education in the Cameroons until 1884 when Germany annexed the territory. Therefore, in the absence of competition from other Christian missionaries, and in the absence of any colonial administration which might have given financial and material assistance to the London Baptist Missionaries, and because of the inadequate resources at their disposal, during the <sup>forty</sup> ~~thirty~~ years of their activities in the Cameroons (from 1844-1884), the London Baptist missionaries could establish only fifteen primary schools with a total enrolment never exceeding 360 pupils. Of this number, fewer than two dozen usually constituted the final class.<sup>7</sup> The total number of

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<sup>7</sup>H.O.H. Vernon-Jackson, Schools and School Systems in Cameroon: 1884-1961 (Ed.D. thesis), Teachers College, Columbia University (1968), p. 67.

primary schools and their enrolment was very small to support the establishment of even one secondary school; in addition, it does not appear that a secondary grammar school was planned. These circumstances helped sow the seeds of the problems of post-primary education in the Cameroons. The problem was aggravated by the fact that the London Baptist missionaries laid emphasis on vocational training which appears to have been at the expense of the academic content of the primary education which was offered because, half of each day was occupied by the school-boys in manual labor, including their own washing and ironing. This means that if a child completed five years of primary education in the Cameroons, the academic standard which he attained was comparatively lower than that acquired by his counterpart who had done the same five years of primary education in another English-speaking West African country where less emphasis was placed on vocational training and where the length of the primary school course was eight years. In the light of this explanation, it would seem that primary education in the Cameroons during the pre-colonial period of Cameroon history was not adequate as a preparation for academic secondary schooling.

German Annexation of the Cameroons and the  
Problems of Post-Primary Education,  
1884 to 1914

The efforts of the London Baptist missionaries were limited by inadequate resources at their disposal and particularly because the Cameroons had not been colonised by any colonial power. German annexation of the Cameroons in 1884 led to the departure of the London Baptist missionaries who had expected Britain and not Germany to annex the territory. At the same time, the German administration made it clear that German and not English-speaking missionaries were now required. Therefore, the German Basel missionaries took over the activities, including the schools of the London Baptist Mission. In addition to the coming of the German Basel Missionaries, other missionaries of various Christian denominations arrived in the Cameroons and their arrival more than offset the consequences which the departure of the London Baptist missionaries would have had on the development of education in the Cameroons. The Presbyterian missionaries came from United States, the Catholic Pallotine Fathers came from the Rhineland.

Their coming to the Cameroons coincided with the influx of German businessmen, German capital, personnel and technicians. The influx into the Cameroons of missionaries of various denominations led to competition among them and this competition was a new element in the history of education in the Cameroons.

Referring to the growth of missionary activities and their contribution to the development of education in Africa as a whole, Scanlon remarked -

Therefore, when the rapid expansion of missionary work in the 1880's began, it was only natural that education should be expanded. And added to the necessity of education for conversion was the new, powerful thrust of the social gospel. Education was the major means of alleviating the basic problems of health and poverty. There was no institution other than the school<sup>8</sup> that could undertake this responsibility.

Under the influence of the social gospel, Christian missionaries began to lay emphasis on improving the society as a whole while at the same time educating the individual citizens. Consequently, and as a means of improving the whole society, the various missionaries

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<sup>8</sup>D.C. Scanlon, Church, State and Education in Africa, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University (1966), p. 6.

undertook activities such as opening hospitals, health centers and dispensaries. In this way, the missionaries hoped to improve the health of the native peoples and make them better citizens and more capable agents for transforming the society. At the same time, the missionaries were engaged in the provision of formal education and by 1911, there were 631 mission schools with a total enrolment of about 34,000 pupils<sup>9</sup> in addition to six government schools with a total enrolment of 879 pupils.<sup>10</sup> The Basel Mission had 293 schools with an enrolment of 13,129 pupils; the Roman Catholic Mission, 112 schools with 10,456 pupils; the Presbyterians, 21 schools with 7,013 pupils, the German Baptist, 41 schools with 2,640 pupils.<sup>11</sup> Most of these schools were situated in the Southern half of the Cameroons and the farthest school in the North was a government school in Garoua in the Moslem-denominated area where, in general, the Moslems did not welcome the activities of the Christian missionaries. For most of the time after the German annexation there

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<sup>9</sup>Hans Vischer, "Native Education in German Africa," Journal of the African Society (1915), 130-136. (Vol. not given).

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

appeared to be no central body or organisation giving effective direction to the operation of schools and the organisation of each school depended on the initiative of respective missionaries.

The Absence of Post-Primary Education,  
(1884-1914) in Relation to  
German Colonial Policies

In the absence of any central direction, the organisation of each school depended on the initiative of the respective missionaries. But after the German elections of 1907, a Ministry of Colonies was formed in Germany to promote the development of the overseas colonies.<sup>12</sup> With the formation of the Ministry, the German colonial administration was eventually involved in educational development in the Cameroons. In 1907, the German administration convened an education conference which was composed of the representatives of the respective

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<sup>12</sup>The organisation of this Ministry followed the victory of the pro-colonialists in the German elections of 1907. Previously, an anti-colonial party was in power and was not in favour of developing the overseas colonies at the expense of the German tax-payer.

missionary bodies in the Cameroons. The conference laid down general principles which subsequently guided the respective missionaries in their running of schools. One principle was that the length of the primary schools would be five years. A second principle was that education should be vocationally oriented to give emphasis to the type of training that would begin with the elements in the immediate environment including general science to give the natives a knowledge of minerals, the products of plants and animal life.<sup>13</sup> To a large extent, the emphasis on vocational training corresponded with what obtained in Germany. In any case, this strong emphasis on vocational training made German education in the Cameroons different from the system of education in the British and French colonies in West Africa before the outbreak of the First World War.

The German colonial office had already stated that in general, native agriculture in the tropical colonies would be allowed to develop side by side with the plantations owned by the Germans, provided that such a

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<sup>13</sup> Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons: 1884-1914. A Case Study of Modern Imperialism, Yale University Press (1968), pp. 356-357.

system did not conflict with German interest. The government was prepared to give every encouragement to native agriculture in order to improve economic conditions.<sup>14</sup> In order to encourage native agriculture, the colonial administration set up an agricultural experimental station in Victoria, in the coastal district and this included a chemical laboratory. There was also a Department of Agriculture in Buea, the administrative headquarters; other agricultural stations were established in various administrative districts such as Dschang, Yaounde and Bamenda, to teach the natives better means of producing agricultural products for export.

The government officials in the 1907 conference insisted that German was to be the official language of instruction in the schools, even though the Protestant missionaries preferred the use of the two indigenous languages, Duala in the coastal district and Bali in most of the interior areas. It was at this point that the German colonial administration began to give financial assistance to the missionaries in an attempt to promote

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<sup>14</sup>Albert T. Calbert, The Cameroons.  
T. Werner Laurie, London (1917), p. 48.



the teaching of German in the schools; 30,000 marks were voted in 1913 and 60,000 marks in 1914.<sup>15</sup> The 1907 conference was a landmark in the history of education in the Cameroons because it was the first time since formal education was introduced sixty-five years earlier that the colonial administration took practical steps to give central direction and to give a measure of financial assistance to the missionaries. However, it is interesting to note that the conference appeared to have made no mention of post-primary education.

Although by 1914 schools had not been established in every village that deserved one by reason of its population, there is no doubt that much had been done to lay the foundations of post-primary education. In spite of this foundation as evidenced by the number of primary schools and their total enrolment, no secondary schools were established. The absence of post-primary education in the Cameroons during the period of German administration appears to be related to the policy of Germany towards the development of its overseas territories generally and towards the Cameroons in particular.

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<sup>15</sup>Rudin, p. 358.

German policy in the Cameroons was dominated by two business groups, the planters and the traders, who had pressured the German government to acquire colonies in Africa. Germany had been interested in confining its territorial ambitions within Europe and was for many years not interested in acquiring colonies in Africa. When Germany did acquire the Cameroons in 1884, there was, therefore, no well defined colonial policy because, being a late comer to colonial acquisition, Germany lacked the experience of how to administer the African colonies.

In contrast, Britain and France were experienced in colonial administration, having established their systems of administration in various parts of West Africa several decades before 1884 when Germany annexed the Cameroons.<sup>16</sup> In addition, the colonial policies of both Britain and France differed from that of Germany. France intended to produce a class of educated elite who would be perfect French men in everything but colour. This was reflected in the educational development in French-speaking West African countries in that attempts were made

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<sup>16</sup>The British government established control over the coastal area of Ghana by 1821; and of Gambia during the same year.

early to provide Africans with secondary and higher education both within Africa and in France. Britain never intended to educate African natives to become pure English men. However, like France, Britain also produced a class of educated elite by providing secondary and higher education indirectly through grants-in-aid to the respective voluntary agencies and directly by opening government educational institutions.<sup>17</sup> Had Germany not been a late comer to colonial acquisition, and had Germany a well-defined colonial policy, there might have been some attempt to provide Cameroonians with post-primary education and this would have laid a foundation on which Britain could have built when the Southern Cameroons became a de facto British colony after the First World War. But, Germany's attitude towards the blackman appeared to be one which did not require the provision of post-primary education in the African colonies because -

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<sup>17</sup> There are many references dealing with British and French colonial policies in West Africa and elsewhere; see for example, Michael Crowder, West Africa under Colonial Rule, Illinois: Evanston (1968).

Many Germans sincerely believed in the superiority of the white race over the black, suggesting the corollary that negroes were the natural hewers of wood and drawers of water. The idea that the negro was capable of absorbing European civilisation<sup>18</sup> was held only by a few stubborn optimists.

There was therefore no commitment on the part of Germany to develop the colonies as a means of improving the economic, social and political status of the African natives. Referring to the aims of German education in its colonies Mortiz wrote -

The shortage of able artisans, which still makes itself felt in this country and which is responsible for the unusual increase in artisans' wages . . . makes it the duty of the administration to counteract this unhealthy state of affairs and to consider a more extensive training of intelligent coloured boys who are to be employed chiefly by the civil administration in the more ordinary types of work of the blacksmith's, cobbler's and saddler's trade.<sup>19</sup> (Emphasis added).

The more ordinary types of work of the blacksmith, cobbler and saddler did not demand an education beyond the

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<sup>18</sup>Klaus Epstien, "Erzberger and the German Colonial Scandals, 1905-1910," English Historical Review, LXXIV (1959), 637-667.

<sup>19</sup>D.C. Scanlon, Traditions of African Education, Bureau of Publications, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University (1964), p. 28.

primary level, hence five years of primary education was regarded as sufficient for Africans. Therefore, although the emphasis on vocational training corresponded largely to the system of education in Germany, the whole educational system in the Cameroons under German administration, lacking any plans for secondary grammar schools, did not in fact correspond to the system in Germany.

The German colonial administration, unlike that of Britain and France, needed only "junior officials to serve in the administration and the European community" in the Cameroons.<sup>20</sup> By the outbreak of the First World War, Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone had already produced University graduates.

But German education in the African colonies, unlike that of Britain and France, was not meant to produce technicians of a higher level such as architects, engineers, medical and administrative personnel and university graduates in other fields needed to promote the economic, social and political development of the Cameroons. What were regarded as "higher" and secondary schools were in reality boarding and middle primary

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

schools and seminaries and not secondary schools in the British, French or in the generally accepted sense of secondary grammar schools which form the basis for higher and university education.<sup>21</sup>

Germany's official policy towards colonial development was guided by the principle that -

The value of the colonies must be calculated on a common-sense basis that avoided irrational enthusiasm; the primary justification for colonial effort lay in the spread of Christianity among the natives; . . . Within the framework of these principles a cautious colonial policy was permissible; . . . and a sound fiscal policy<sup>22</sup> which prohibited pouring vast sums into Africa.

Germany had not acquired colonies in Africa for purposes of colonisation but for exploitation.<sup>23</sup> Cana has stated that -

. . . one of the main objectives of the colonial movement in Germany was to obtain territory where Germans could settle and rear their children . . . territory which might become as thoroughly German as, for instance, New Zealand is British. . . . to acquire plantation colonies in Equatorial Africa, together with outlets for commerce, and harbours and coaling stations for the Germany navy and mercantile marine.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Vischer, p. 123.

<sup>22</sup>Epstien, pp. 637-667.

<sup>23</sup>Elizabeth Chilver, "19th Century Trade in the Bamenda Grassfields, Southern Cameroons," Africa Und

Any forms of development which took place in the Cameroons especially before 1914 were meant to satisfy the interests of German business groups who were the advance guard of colonialism and the declared purpose of the government was to protect them and encourage their trade. Railways were built in order to facilitate the recruitment of labour and the flow of raw materials from the interior of the Cameroons and subsequently to open up more plantations in the interior. Emphasis on agriculture was meant to ensure the efficient production of cash crops such as cocoa and wild rubber, to meet the demands of the German markets and industries and not to lay the foundation for the eventual industrialisation of the country. Hence, although it was the Germans who introduced food crops like yams and potatoes, little attention was given to promote the production of these and other indigenous food crops.<sup>25</sup> It was only some time after 1907 that a money economy was

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Ubersee, 14 (1961), 233-255. (Vol. not given).

<sup>24</sup>Frank R. Cana, "German Aims in Africa," Journal of the African Society, 19 (1915), 355-357.

<sup>25</sup>This would have led to the shortage of locally produced foodstuff; a problem which might have been solved by importing food from Germany.

introduced, due mainly to the opposition which the missionaries voiced against trade by barter. The Basel missionaries themselves had to engage in commercial activities, establish a savings bank as a means of introducing their converts to a money economy; the Basel Mission also engaged in the production of non-alcoholic drinks hoping to stop or limit the use of alcoholic drinks which German businessmen encouraged.<sup>26</sup>

It would appear that in comparison with other countries in West Africa, the problems of post-primary education in the Cameroons arose out of the unique colonial history of the country; whereas most other countries in West Africa, - at least the coastal regions - had been brought under a measure of colonial administration, the Cameroons appears to have been the only territory in West Africa in which colonial administration was established only after 1884. Again, unlike other countries in West Africa, the Cameroons appears to have been the only territory in which, for many years, only one missionary body was engaged in the provision of formal education and in the absence of competition from other

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<sup>26</sup>Rudin, pp. 356-357.



Christian missionaries. The absence of such competition, the absence of any colonial administration, and the inadequate resources of the London Baptist missionaries made it humanly impossible for them to expand their activities beyond the coastal confines of the Cameroons. In the circumstances, the London Baptist missionaries were unable to expand primary education to the extent which could support the establishment of one secondary school. These problems of post-primary education continued during the period of German administration because German colonial policy was dominated by German business interests and because Germany was not prepared to "pour vast sums" of money into Africa for the development of the colonies generally and for the development of education in particular. By the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 which ended German administration in the Cameroons, there were no post-primary institutions in the territory, nor did the five years of primary schooling as provided during the period of German administration provide sufficient grounding for secondary education.

The rest of this work will examine the reasons why these problems of post-primary education in the

Cameroons continued after the First World War in that part of the territory which became known as the Southern Cameroons. It will also examine the effect of the late and meagre post-primary education on the political development of the Southern Cameroons and how, in turn, the political and economic development affected the development of education from 1922-1961.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FOUNDATIONS OF POST PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE SOUTHERN CAMEROONS, 1922-1954

#### The Origin of the Mandates and Trusteeship Systems of Colonial Administration

The First World War of 1914-1918 ended with the defeat of Germany and with loss of Germany's overseas colonies. The most important consequence of the First World War, as far as the German Cameroons was concerned, was that the Cameroons was partitioned between Britain and France. After the war, the Allied Powers faced the problem of how to dispose of the German colonies in Africa and in other parts of the world. By 1919, the Allied Powers were of the general opinion that the German colonies captured during the war must not be returned to Germany. But this raised the problem of how to administer these territories to the best advantage of the native peoples. The major powers realised the rivalry among themselves and also the impracticability of a joint

administration of these territories. In the end, they all accepted that -

Concentration of responsibility (in the hands of one power) was essential, in an existing world of Sovereign States whose competitive relations as yet overshadowed their co-operative activities, (and) the only way to dispose of derelict backward peoples, who require both outside political control and also capital, is to entrust the task of administration under international mandate to one power.

It was also realised that the problems of international peace would not be solved but only intensified if each of the German territories was jointly administered by two or more of the Major Powers. In concentrating the responsibility of administering each of the German territories in the hands of one nation, the Allied Powers insisted that -

The well being and development of such peoples (formed) a sacred trust of civilisation, and that securities for the performance of this trust be embodied in the constitution of the League of Nations.<sup>2</sup>

The system of Mandates thus came into being as each of the territories concerned was eventually administered on behalf

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<sup>1</sup>H.M.V. Temperley, (ed.), A History of the Peace Conference of Paris, (Vol. II), London: Hodder and Stoughton (1920), p. 232.

<sup>2</sup>quoted in David Hunter Miller, "The Origin of the Mandates System," Foreign Affairs (January, 1928), 277-284.

of the League of Nations by one of the Major Powers. In theory, the system of mandates meant that the mandated power would nurse the territory to self-government and independence through political control and foreign capital. To ensure that the Mandatory power did not abuse the terms of the mandate, and that these territories were properly administered, the League of Nations subsequently set up a Mandatory Commission to supervise the administration of the territories.

But before setting up the Mandatory Commission, the League of Nations divided the territories into classes "A", "B" and "C" according to their respective stages of economic, social and political development. The "A" mandated territories were those which formerly belonged to the Turkish Empire and which had reached a stage of social, economic and political development higher than both the classes "B" and "C" territories. The "C" mandated territories were mostly those in the Pacific and in the Caribbean and also South West Africa. The Cameroons was included in the class "B" mandated territories which the League of Nations considered to have reached -

. . . such a stage that the Mandatory must be responsible for the administration of the territory under conditions which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion, subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals. . . .

Although the League of Nations was specific with regards to the type of territories which it regarded as class "A", "B" or "C", it failed to lay down specific principles regarding the administration of the territories because the "right of foreign nations to interfere in case of abuse or alleged abuse of power, was successfully contested by France and by Belgium."<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the final principles governing the administration of the territories were general and contained many loopholes which were easily exploited by the administering powers. For example, although the League of Nations held the interest of the native peoples to be above the material interest and advantage of any other nation or people,<sup>5</sup> and although the League stressed that the character of the Mandate differed according to the stage of economic, social and political development of the respective territories, the League authorised a "customs,

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<sup>3</sup>Article 22 of the League of Nations.

<sup>4</sup>Temperley, p. 236.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 226.

fiscal and administrative union between the area under mandate and the adjacent territory under sovereignty of the Mandatory power."<sup>6</sup> By authorising such a union, the League approved a system of administering the mandated territories which had serious consequences for the educational development of the Southern Cameroons. Having failed to lay down specific principles for the administration of these territories, the League of Nations merely trusted that the moral integrity of the administering powers would guide them to develop these territories as a sacred trust of civilisation and that the administering powers would not abuse the trust.

#### The Creation of the Southern Cameroons

In the peace conference of 1919 which settled the disposition of the German territories, a number of factors influenced the attitude of the British government, with the ultimate effect on the whole history of the Cameroons. Britain did not seem particularly disposed to further acquisition of territories.<sup>\*</sup> Many British and Commonwealth statesmen, including the British Foreign Secretary and

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 238.

certain Commonwealth Prime Ministers did not see victory in the war as another opportunity to expand the British Commonwealth even though they did not advocate the return of German captured territories. Generally, British public opinion was also against any annexations of territories either by Britain or by any other nation because "it was felt that annexations of territories was nothing other than imperialism which was considered to have been the cause of international rivalry among nations."<sup>7</sup> However, the idea of some gains for Britain as the result of victory in the war was not completely absent, but even in such instances, Britain hoped to

Get its share of the spoils, but not commit (itself) to obligations any more stringent than those Britain had already incurred in tropical Africa under the Berlin and Brussels Acts of 1885 and 1890.<sup>8</sup>

Britain had spent considerable sums of money maintaining troops overseas including those in German East Africa. Again, Britain appeared to be no longer prepared to bear more of what was considered to be a "white man's burden"

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<sup>7</sup>Roger Wm. Louis, "Great Britain and the African Peace Settlement of 1919," American Historical Review, 61 (1966), 875-892.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.



in the financing of additional colonial territories.

General Smuts of South Africa who shared the same sentiments as Prime Minister Borden of Canada and other Commonwealth leaders, but who was more interested in assuring the security of South Africa as one of its gains in the peace settlements, thought that -

If there were a choice between keeping German East Africa or the German West African colonies, he considered it much more important to make sure of the safety of the eastern route from South Africa, more particularly as the retention of German East Africa also assured the Red Sea route to India.

Under the influence of these ideas, and in the disposition of German territories, British interest lay more in East Africa, where, by acquiring German territories there, Britain hoped to "establish a missing link" between South, Central and East Africa which was considered to be strategically more important than West Africa because it provided control of the Indian Ocean. This consideration was reflected in the treatment of the German territories in West Africa (Togo and the Cameroons) whose partition between Britain and France was disproportionately in

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<sup>9</sup>Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet Committee on Territorial Desiderata, Secret, April 18 (1917), Chamberlain Papers.

favour of France. The partition of the Cameroons had been carried out during the war by British and French military officers, but in the final readjustment of boundaries which the League of Nations confirmed, Britain further relinquished some of what had constituted part of its own portion of the Cameroons during the first partition by the military officers. In the final assessment, Britain retained only about one-sixth of the Cameroons with a total land area of 17,548 sq. miles and a population of approximately 358,000.<sup>10</sup> Thereafter, this portion of the German Cameroons was designated as the "British" Cameroons.

Administrative Incorporation of the  
Southern Cameroons into Nigeria

What was finally administered by Britain as the "British" Cameroons was an elongated piece of land stretching northward from the Atlantic coast and <sup>which</sup> lay adjacent to Nigeria, the largest British colony in West Africa. The territory was not a contiguous piece of land but was divided by the Adamawa highland situated some

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<sup>10</sup>United Kingdom, Colonial Office, Report by His Majesty's Government on the Administration of the British Cameroons, 1922, p. 52. (Hereafter referred to as Annual Report). These estimates appear to be too consecutive.

300 miles from the coast. The elongated nature of the territory together with the existence of the Adamawa highland appeared to have made it difficult for Britain to administer the whole territory as one political entity. Consequently, Britain further partitioned the British Cameroons into Northern and Southern Cameroons; the Northern Section was administered by Northern Nigeria while the Southern Cameroons, with which this study is concerned, was administered as a province of Southern Nigeria. Gardiner has asserted that Britain acquired the British Cameroons in order "to fill the map of Nigeria and had never intended to erect a new political boundary,"<sup>11</sup> that is, that Britain did not intend to administer the British Cameroons as a separate territory independent of Nigeria.

In administering the Southern Cameroons as an integral part of Nigeria, the existence of the pidgin English as a lingua franca in Southern Nigeria as well as in the Southern Cameroons assisted the virtual annexation of the latter politically, economically and administratively - without an interim period of adjustment. This

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<sup>11</sup>Louis, pp. 875-892.

annexation of the Southern Cameroons to Nigeria was an important factor in the political and educational development of the Southern Cameroons.

The Expansion of Primary Education

1922-1954

In 1922, and subsequently by the "British Cameroons Ordinance" No. 3 of 1924, all the laws of Nigeria were extended to the Southern Cameroons. The currency that had been introduced in the Southern Cameroons during the last seven years of German administration was replaced by the Nigerian currency; the whole administrative, political and educational systems of Southern Nigeria were likewise applied to the Southern Cameroons.

The end of the First World War coincided with Britain's desire to reorganise the educational systems in its tropical colonies and this led to the Phelps-Stokes Report of 1925 and to the formation of the Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa.<sup>12</sup> In subsequent years, the Committee advised the British

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<sup>12</sup> Advisory Committee on Native Education in the British Tropical African Dependencies, Education Policy in British Tropical Africa, London: H.M.S.O. (1925), 3-8.

government on the expansion and the nature of educational reforms to be carried out in the tropical colonies. The Reports of the Advisory Committee and of Phelps-Stokes have been reviewed by Lewis,<sup>13</sup> and among their recommendations were the following: that the government gave encouragement to voluntary agencies in the operation of schools; that there should be sufficient co-operation between government and the voluntary agencies; that education should be adapted to the realities of African conditions. The Reports also emphasised the training of teachers, the education of women and the system of grants-in-aid to the voluntary agencies.<sup>14</sup>

But neither the Advisory Committee nor the Phelps-Stokes Report made any special reference to the Southern Cameroons and it would appear that it was expected that Southern Cameroons would benefit, on equal terms, with Nigeria, from the educational opportunities which would be expanded in Nigeria. But, these expectations were largely

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<sup>13</sup>L.J. Lewis, Educational Policy and Practice in British Tropical Areas, Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson (1954), pp. 13-14.

<sup>14</sup>David C. Scanlon, Traditions of African Education, Teachers College, New York (1954), pp. 92-93.

negated by the differences between the educational, social and economic developments between Southern Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons. The economic and social backwardness of the Southern Cameroons vis-à-vis the progress which Southern Nigeria had made by 1922 was aggravated by its political insignificance resulting from annexation.


By the Southern Cameroons Ordinance already referred to, the educational system in the Southern Cameroons was reorganised in line with that in Nigeria. The length of the primary school course was increased to eight years, then divided into Infants and Primary sections; the Infants or beginning classes lasted two years while the primary section was in turn divided into junior and senior primary sections. In most cases, the junior section extended from standard one to standard two and in some cases to standard four. In all cases, the senior section of the primary school consisted of standards five and six.

The first British education officer arrived in the Southern Cameroon in 1922. The Nigerian Education code, ordinance and regulations were extended to the Southern Cameroons in the same year. The ease with which the change was made from the German to the English system of

education was, in part, the result of the existence of pidgin English<sup>f</sup> as a lingua franca. It is true that local vernacular languages were used in many primary schools in Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons but these were usually limited to the beginning classes. Therefore, in view of the existence of a lingua franca, and in the absence of qualified Cameroonians as primary school teachers, it became easy and justifiable to transfer Nigerian teachers to the Southern Cameroons. This practice solved an immediate problem. However, it created other problems in the long run as Nigerians came to dominate the civil service and other aspects of the economy as can be seen from the 1936 Annual Report which showed that out of the forty-one teaching positions in government schools and the Government Teachers' Training College in the Southern Cameroons, Nigerians held sixteen of these positions, Southern Cameroonians thirteen, while French Cameroonians held three.<sup>15</sup> This kind of ratio continued throughout the period under consideration, that is, from 1922-1961, not only in the Education Department but in all other Departments and worked against the establishment of post

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<sup>15</sup> Annual Report, 1936, p. 8.



primary institutions.

However, primary education expanded greatly after 1922 and many factors contributed to this great expansion. The draft mandate of the League of Nations with respect to education in the Mandated territories regarded education as a "sacred trust of civilisation" and stated that -

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 system of self-government as may be appropriate for the territory and to the development of the territory for the benefit of its inhabitants.<sup>16</sup>

This idea of a steady and progressive development of education in the mandated territories was reinforced by another stipulation that -

The Mandatory shall ensure in the territory complete freedom of conscience and the free expression of all forms of worship which are consonant with public order and morality; missionaries who are nationals of States Members of the League of Nations shall be free to enter the territory and to travel and reside therein, to acquire and possess property, to erect religious buildings, and to open schools throughout the territory.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>League of Nations, Doc. of the Assembly 216, 10th December, 1920, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



These ideas contributed to the unprecedented expansion of primary education after 1922. With the arrival of an Education Officer, the whole educational system was reorganised to give it central direction and control which was extremely important, first because of the disruption which the First World War had caused on the existing system, and because of the coming of missionaries from different parts of Europe and the United States with different systems of education.

The Establishment and Expansion  
of Government Schools

In the reorganisation of education, the schools were divided into four main categories: government, Native Administration, Mission assisted and "hedge" schools. The government schools were run purely with government funds and were intended to serve as model schools with respect to staffing, equipment and general efficiency. The establishment of government schools also served to bridge the gap created by the events of the First World War when many schools were destroyed, delaying the progress of education during and immediately after the war. Also, every government school was to provide the

full primary school course of eight years. The initial intention was to set up one government primary school in each administrative Division of the territory so as to absorb pupils from the Native Administration schools where the final classes of the primary school course were not available. However, the idea was not fully implemented in respect of certain areas for there were no government schools in Wum and Nkambe Divisions, (two of the six administrative divisions). The reason for this on the government side seems to have been the difficulties of travel and communication between these areas and the rest of the territory.

#### Native Administration Schools

The Native Administration schools constituted a new factor in the history of education in the Southern Cameroons. Apart from being feeder schools for those run by the government, the Native Administration schools were meant to give -

Elementary education for the mass just sufficient to enable them pursue their normal occupation more efficiently and to give them grounding so that, if they desire it, they can continue their studies at the nearest government schools.<sup>18</sup>

The nomenclature of these schools must not mislead one to feel that they followed a "native" curriculum or a curriculum which was different from other schools. They were so designated because they were financed out of local or native council funds. The Southern Cameroons was divided into Native Administration areas based largely on the six Administrative Divisions into which the territory had been divided. In some cases, such as was the case with Mamfe Division (now called Manyu Division), there was initially only one native administration council and its funds were derived from part of the taxes paid by the natives of the various tribal groups within the Division. The local council supplied the textbooks,<sup>19</sup> paid teachers' salaries and put up the school and teachers' houses. The 1932 Annual Report showed that throughout the Southern Cameroons, there were 13 such schools with a total

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<sup>18</sup> Annual Report, 1926, p. 45.

<sup>19</sup> Fees later on introduced.

enrolment of 745 pupils and 33 teachers distributed as follows.<sup>20</sup>

Table 1

<u>School</u>		<u>Number on Roll</u>			<u>Avg. Attendance</u>		
	Tea- chers	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
<u>Victoria Div.</u>							
Bimbria	4	61	19	80	54	19	72
Muyuka	3	81	12	93	75	13	88
<u>Kumba Div.</u>							
Elung	3	74	-	74	72	-	72
Massaka	2	38	7	45	33	7	40
Kurume	2	49	3	52	36	3	39
Lipenja	3	49	3	52	35	2	37
<u>Mamfe Div.</u>							
Tali	3	56	-	56	49	-	49
Mfuni	2	80	1	81	59	2	61
Menka	2	60	-	60	62	-	62
<u>Bamenda Div.</u>							
Bali	3	93	5	98	86	5	91
Kom	2	29	-	29	34	-	34
Ndop	2	44	-	44	49	-	49
Banso	2	54	-	54	51	-	51
Totals, 1932	33	768	50	818	695	50	745
Totals, 1931	33	761	78	839	720	70	790

<sup>20</sup> Annual Report, 1932, p. 80.

As the above table shows, the Native Administration schools were not evenly spread and two of the Administrative Divisions, Nkambe and Wum, had no Native Administration schools. Again, a detail examination of the distribution of these schools within the respective Divisions shows that the schools, such as those in Mamfe Division, were largely concentrated in the area inhabited by one ethnic or tribal group and the effect was that this concentration of educational facilities gave the Ban/angi tribe educational leadership in the Division in contrast to the backwardness of other tribal groups such as the people of Akwaya.

This problem of the unequal distribution of Native Administration schools was pointed out to the Trusteeship Council when the Council's Visiting Mission came to the Southern Cameroons in 1949. The people of Ejaghem pointed out that -

There are Sixty Four Villages in Ejaghem land for which there is only one ill equipped Native Administration School running up to Standard Five. The children from these villages are expected to go to school at Nfuni. When these classes are filled, the rest of the children who are not admitted are forced by want of<sup>21</sup> knowledge to go outside their own homeland.

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<sup>21</sup>United Nations Doc. T/PET.4/8, p. 2.

The uneven spread of Native Administration and government primary schools led to Divisional and tribal imbalances in the distribution of opportunities for formal education. By 1955, and even up to 1961, Nkambe and Wum Divisions remained educationally depressed areas with rates of school attendance of 32.1% and 24.8% respectively as compared to the Divisions in the coastal district; Victoria, 72.9%, Kumba, 74.6% and Mamfe, 63.9%.<sup>22</sup> Also, before 1932, the Native Administration schools were limited to infant or beginning classes and in a few cases, extended to standard four. Pupils who wished to complete the full primary school course had to go to the nearest government schools which were usually several miles away and in many cases, could be reached only after trekking for several days.

In addition to being unequally spread, the Native Administration schools were, in general, poorly staffed as shown by the 1932 Annual Report when only four of the thirty-three Native Administration teachers had

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<sup>22</sup> Report on the Supply of Secondary Level Teachers in English-speaking West Africa (West Cameroons), Institute for International Studies in Education and the African Studies Centre, Michigan State University, East Lansing (1971). Appendix I.

received training as primary school teachers. In Kumba and Bamenda Divisions with four Native Administration schools in each and a total of 188 and 255 pupils respectively, none of the teachers had received any training.<sup>23</sup> It would appear that for many years, many of the Native Administration schools did not provide a sound basis for post-primary education. The number of trained teachers was insufficient to prepare the pupils for post-primary education in competition with better staffed and more locally accessible Nigerian primary schools.

#### Mission Schools - Assisted Schools

Other than government and Native Administration schools most schools were run by missionaries of various Christian denominations. Immediately after the war, and with the departure of the Germans from the Cameroons, French Roman Catholics established schools in Bamenda, the grassland area of the Southern Cameroons, while the British Roman Catholics concentrated their attention in the southern or coastal districts. In 1921, the Reverend Thomas Lewis who had been in charge of the London

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<sup>23</sup>Annual Report, 1932, p. 80.

Baptist Mission when Germany annexed the Cameroons in 1884, returned to the Cameroons and his visit helped revive the activities of the London Baptist Mission in the area.

Soon after the arrival of the Reverend Thomas Lewis, the Reverend Father Campling, who represented St. Joseph's Missionary Society also came to the Cameroons.

Missionaries of other Christian denominations, the Presbyterians from the United States and the Basel

Missionaries from Switzerland also arrived in the Southern Cameroons. By 1932, the total enrolment and average attendance of mission "assisted" schools were as follows.<sup>24</sup>

Table 2

Mission	No. of Schools	Class	Enrolment		
			Boys	Girls	Total
Roman Catholic	7	Infants	344	76	420
		Elementary	281	46	317
		<u>Total</u>	<u>625</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>737</u>
Basel	6	Infants	180	41	221
		Elementary	328	8	338
		<u>Total</u>	<u>510</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>559</u>
Baptist	2	Infants	113	22	135
		Elementary	83	5	93
		<u>Total</u>	<u>201</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>228</u>
Totals all Missions			1,336	188	1,524



There is no doubt that the coming of missionaries from different countries could very easily lead to different patterns of education being offered in the territory. The situation therefore called for a central control and direction over missionary activities. The government policy defined a recognised institution as one -

. . . in which not less than ten pupils receive regular instruction and include an assembly of not less than ten pupils for the purpose of regular instruction and any institution for training of teachers, but does not include any such institution or assembly where the instruction is solely of a religious character.<sup>25</sup>

While government policy towards missionary activity allowed them sufficient freedom to open and run schools, the government at the same time sought to prevent, any missionary body from indiscriminate opening of schools which would not conform to standards laid down by the government. Government policy further stated that -

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>25</sup>Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria, An Ordinance to make better provision in regard to Education in the Colony and Southern Provinces, No. 15 of 1926, Government Printer, Lagos, p. 1.

While government is anxious to give every encouragement to Missions in the work of education, and to bring into the schools of the Province as many children as possible with the means at its disposal, it has decided that the time has come to put a stop to the indiscriminate opening of schools which are inadequately staffed, badly equipped, and insufficiently supervised.<sup>26</sup>

#### Hedge or Unassisted Schools

There were already many small and inefficiently staffed village schools known as "hedge" schools which had been established during the period of German administration without official permission. The colonial administration described the hedge schools in the following terms -

The "hedge" schools, which consist almost entirely of irregular attending children, are often closed for long periods during harvesting and planting, and have no organisations, material or qualified staff. They . . . (were) the means employed by catechists of German days to keep together the numerous mission nuclei to be found in almost every village of any size . . . the schools can be neglected as institutions benefitting the province (Southern Cameroons) at all in the matter of education.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Annual Report, 1926, p. 66.

<sup>27</sup> H.O.H. Vernon-Jackson, Schools and School Systems in Cameroon: 1844-1961, (Ed.D. thesis), Teachers College, Columbia University (1968), p. 340.

Although the government had taken steps as early as 1926 to prevent the missionaries from indiscriminate opening of schools, and although these unauthorised schools received no government grants, their number steadily increased and out numbered all the government, Native Administration and Mission assisted schools put together. In 1923, the total number of pupils in hedge schools was 2,676 against 2,258 in all other schools;<sup>28</sup> by 1936, the number of hedge schools had increased to 132 with a total enrolment of 3,078 pupils while the total number of all other schools was 15 and the enrolment was 1,701.<sup>29</sup>

Although the government gave no money for running hedge schools, the number of these schools steadily increased because of competition among the respective missionaries whose intense desire to bring their own kind of Christianity and way of life to every corner of the country out weighed any consideration for government regulations. On the other hand, since the hedge schools did not come under government assistance, it became difficult to enforce government regulations in the

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<sup>28</sup> Annual Report, 1923, p. 52.

<sup>29</sup> Annual Report, 1936, p. 105-106.

way in which they were run. Moreover, because government and Native Administration schools were not evenly spread, the hedge schools served a useful purpose no matter how low their standards were. Because of the geographical nature of the Southern Cameroons, people tended to live in isolated areas and it became impossible to establish schools large enough to serve a number of different villages. Had it not been for hedge schools, many areas would have been without schools for many decades.

There is no doubt, however, that in view of the circumstances under which they were established, the hedge schools were poorly staffed, poorly equipped and their standards were comparatively low. Most of them were run by catechists who had themselves received only four or five years of formal schooling. Although, some of the pupils from hedge schools later completed their schooling in better staffed schools, the children were usually ill prepared for both the higher stages of the primary school and for secondary education.

Apart from financial grants from the government, the missionaries raised money in various ways to finance the provision of formal education and this is one of the reasons why they could circumvent government regulations

and continue to open hedge schools. The missionaries could raise funds from philanthropic organisations in Europe and in the United States. It was not unknown that certain missionaries inflated their estimates to the government and the extra funds thus realised were directed to the financing of hedge schools; there was also the practice whereby an untrained teacher could have his appointment terminated and was later recalled after the mission had received his salary for the months during which he was terminated; an untrained teacher could be told that he was not due his annual salary increment for a particular year; meanwhile, the mission would include the teacher's name in its estimates to the government for government grants, the mission would thus, and without the knowledge of the teacher concerned, claim money that was due to him.<sup>31</sup>

Roman Catholic missionaries were unique in their personal contribution to formal education in the Southern Cameroons. Some missionaries whether Roman Catholic or Protestant were engaged in teaching in the secondary school, Teachers' Training College<sup>se</sup> and in school

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<sup>31</sup>This is purely from personal experiences, having been a Mission teacher for more than five years.

administration as a manager or as a supervisor, and were paid a salary by the government. With respect to the Roman Catholic missionaries, the salary they received was not kept for personal use but was pooled in the Mission fund and used for the provision of education and to finance other mission projects. It was in this way that many of the hedge schools were maintained, some of which eventually satisfied government conditions, and qualified for government assistance. In fact, some of the very large primary schools today began as hedge schools and remained unassisted for many years.

#### The Emergence of Private Schools

Local participation in the provision of formal education in the form of Native Administration schools has already been noted. Another element of local participation emerged at the beginning of the 1950's in the form of community schools; these were confined to the Ejaghem areas along the Southern Cameroons - Nigerian border. This was perhaps in imitation of the system of community and private schools in Nigeria and it might also have been due to the fact that no schools had been opened in the area. The local people contributed money, built

the schools and teachers' houses, bought the equipment and paid the teachers' salary. In time, these schools received government assistance. But the initial administration was placed in the hands of a missionary body which in most cases was the Roman Catholic Mission. In addition to the community schools, there was one privately owned primary school at Sumbe name Sumbe Community school,<sup>32</sup> which also obtained government assistance after having fulfilled government conditions.

Important contributions to the expansion of formal education were made from the early part of 1950 by two voluntary bodies; the Cameroons Development Corporation and the Elders and Fyffes Ltd., both of which owned large plantations in the coastal districts. The German plantations were bought back by their former owners at the end of the First World War. These plantations had been put up for sale but did not attract buyers from Britain and elsewhere. After the Second World War, some of the plantations were then converted into a Government Corporation known as the Cameroons

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<sup>32</sup>This was opened by the late Ayuck, an ex-serviceman.

Development Corporation,<sup>33</sup> while others came under the ownership of a British firm, the Elders and Fyffes.

However, among the aims of the C.D.C. was the provision of education for the children of its workers in particular and for Cameroonians in general. In pursuance of this, the children of C.D.C. workers, at the expense of the Corporation, attended schools run by other voluntary agencies. But in the course of time, the C.D.C. opened its own schools where the children of its workers received free primary education.

The C.D.C. schools were staffed with the most experienced and best trained teachers that could be obtained locally or from Nigeria. Elders and Fyffes followed suit, opening its own schools.<sup>34</sup> In both cases, the children followed the same syllabus as that laid down by the Government and which was followed by Government, Native Administration and assisted voluntary agency schools. The first schools to be operated by the C.D.C. came into existence in 1952, for the Annual Report of the

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<sup>33</sup> Hereafter cited as C.D.C.

<sup>34</sup> The efforts of the Elders and Fyffes were on a smaller scale than those of the C.D.C.



Corporation for that year stated that -

In January, 1952, a scheme for the provision of free primary education of the children of the Corporation's employees was put into operation. Three first year classes and one second year class were opened at the new school at Mille Farm, Bota, under an experienced headmaster seconded from Government service. Schools established in temporary buildings at Idenau, Matute and Mabeta were opened, and about 250 children were admitted to them.<sup>35</sup>

By 1954, the C.D.C. had increased its provision of primary school education to the extent that -

More than 750 children were enrolled at the end of the year in the schools owned and managed by the Corporation as compared with about 500 in the preceeding year. It is anticipated that the enrolment figures in 1955 are likely to be over 1,000. About 450 children were enrolled in schools owned by the Corporation but managed by Missions. Finally about 2,300 children eligible for primary education at Corporation expense, have their fees paid in non-Corporation schools, making a total number of children receiving free primary education at Corporation expense of 3,500.<sup>36</sup>

The children who attended schools owned and managed by the Corporation and by the Elders and Fyffes, also received a free mid-day meal served by stewarts, and, particularly in the case of the C.D.C., the pupils did no manual labour

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<sup>35</sup> Annual Report of the C.D.C., 1952, p. 18.

<sup>36</sup> Annual Report of the C.D.C., 1954, p. 18.

which was a routine procedure in all other schools. Some of the school buildings were, by Southern Cameroons standards, similar to Nigerian secondary schools and were the best equipped primary schools in the territory.<sup>37</sup>

The existence of different voluntary agencies in the Southern Cameroons was a factor leading to the steady increase in the number of primary schools between 1922 and 1954 as shown by the following table.<sup>38</sup>

Table 3

Year	<u>Number of Children</u>		Total Enrolment %
	Of school age	Enrolled in schools	
1948	122,000	23,910	20
1949	118,000	26,310	22
1950	122,000	28,860	24
1951	121,000	29,590	24
1952	123,000	30,940	25

There were, in 1952, 285 primary schools of which the government and Native Administrations had 31; the

<sup>37</sup> Unfortunately no documents and statistics are available for comparison with Mission and Government schools, but this is from personal experience.

<sup>38</sup> Annual Report, 1952, p. 245.

missionaries had 61 assisted schools and 93 schools which were not under government financial assistance.<sup>39</sup>

The Provision of Post-Primary Education

1922-1954

The increase in the number of primary schools from 1922 to 1954 justified a corresponding increase in the number of Teachers' Training Colleges to be established in the Southern Cameroons. In this respect, a good number of institutions for the training of teachers were established to meet the demand for teachers. The first Teachers' College was opened in 1932 by the government; it was a two-year course for the training of teachers for the junior section of the primary school. By 1952,

Three men's and one women's Elementary Training Centres, with an annual output of approximately 100, have provided an adequate supply of Elementary Certificated teachers but the situation with regards to Higher Elementary Certificated teachers, who are needed for staffing the senior primary schools, is less satisfactory.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 156.

The problem of providing Higher Elementary teachers was solved by transferring qualified Nigerian teachers to teach in the Southern Cameroons and by sending Cameroonians to Nigerian training colleges to acquire further qualifications.

Teachers in the Southern Cameroons and in Nigeria were classified according to experience and training as follows.

1. Probational teachers were those who had completed the primary school course of eight years and were employed to teach in the beginning classes of the primary school and sometimes up to standard two, that is, the first four years. A probational teacher was eligible for training as a grade three teacher only after having taught for not less than two years, on passing the entrance examination into the Teachers' Training College, and receiving a good recommendation from his employer. It was not unusual for some probational teachers to teach for eight years and even more before they gained admission into a training college. In any case, a probational teacher could be promoted to the grade of a "C" teacher if he had taught for more than two years and could not gain admission into any training college, and many teachers

ended up with this grade.

2. Grade III or Elementary Certificated teachers must have taught as probationer teachers for not less than two years and undergone a two or in some cases, a three year course of training and obtained the prescribed certificate; they were then qualified to teach up to the sixth year of the primary school known as standard four. A teacher who failed to pass the final examination for the teachers grade III certificate would be designated a C.T.R. or "C" Trained Teacher; he would be allowed to teach up to the sixth class like his colleague who passed the final examination and would also be given many opportunities to write the examination again.

3. Grade II or Higher Elementary teachers were those who had obtained the grade III certificate, taught for not less than two years and had subsequently undergone another two year course of training and passed the required examination. A teacher who failed the final examination for the teachers' grade II certificate was designated "Higher Elementary Uncertificated" but was allowed to teach up to the eighth class of the primary school or standard six. Ironically, "C" teachers with long standing experience were allowed to write the

examination for the teachers' grade II certificate as external candidates when the same possibility to write the examination for the teachers' grade III certificate did not exist. (A grade II teacher had therefore received not more than thirteen years of formal education.

4. Grade I or Senior Certificated teachers must have passed through the first stages of training and subsequently passed either the London General Certificate of Education at the Advanced Level or the Senior Cambridge in at least two of the subjects taught in the school usually referred to as "teaching subjects." A grade II teacher could also obtain the teachers' grade I certificate by doing a nine-month course in the United Kingdom for the Associate Diploma in Education or could do a nine-month course in Rural Science to qualify for the Diploma Certificate in the teaching of Rural Science. In the process of his training, a grade I teacher had received not more than fourteen years of formal schooling, eight years in the primary school, two or three years in the Elementary training course, another two years in the Higher Elementary training college and one academic years for the Diploma Course. The Associate Diploma courses did not in any way open up avenues for further education leading to

a degree. Had they been intended to open up avenues for further education for the award of university degrees, the courses would have been extended to cover a period of two years during which, in addition to courses in Education, two academic or "teaching" subjects would have also been taught to prepare the candidate for either the London General Certificate of Education at the Advanced Level or for the Senior Cambridge Certificate examination.

Added to the fact that the Associate Diploma in Education did not open up avenues for further education leading to university degrees, there was the problem of the academic content of the courses in the Higher Elementary Colleges which were low in comparison with that offered in the secondary grammar schools for the West African School Certificate, an equivalent of the London General Certificate of Education at the ordinary level.<sup>41</sup> This fact became evident when some teachers began to attempt the London General Certificate of Education at the ordinary level. However, teachers could compete well with secondary school leavers in public examinations especially

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<sup>41</sup>This is from personal experience having passed through all the stages and grades in the teaching profession in the Southern Cameroons.

those examinations which demanded maturity and experience.

The Associate Diploma in Education was therefore the highest teaching qualification acquired by Southern Cameroonians but it did not open avenues for further education; while this was also the same for Nigeria, Nigerians had other opportunities not available to Southern Cameroonians.

Teacher training remained the main form of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons from 1922 to 1954. However, in 1939, the Roman Catholic Mission opened the first secondary school in the Southern Cameroons; known as St. Joseph's College, it was situated at Sasse in the coastal district. This was ninety-five years after the introduction of formal education in the Cameroons (1844-1939). In 1946, the Legislative Council of Nigeria laid out a Ten year development plan. With respect to educational development, Vernon-Jackson states that -

Nigeria and the Trust Territory were treated as one and the plan was not prepared with the view to development and welfare of the Trust Territory separately from Nigeria, the plans for its development are a part of the greater plan for the development of Nigeria.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Vernon-Jackson, p. 416.



The funds to finance the plan were to come from the British government under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act and from the revenues of the Nigerian government (with the contribution of the Southern Cameroons in the form of taxes). The plan was important for the expansion of post-primary education opportunities in the Southern Cameroons. Under the plan, the Roman Catholic Mission received grants to expand St. Joseph's College in order to double its intake of students. Also, the Basel and Baptist Missions received government grants in 1949 which enabled them to jointly establish at Bali in the grassfield, the second secondary school in the Southern Cameroons. As far as the Southern Cameroons was concerned, the Ten Year Development Plan appeared to have said nothing about technical education. However, in 1952, the government opened the first Technical College at Ombe, in the coastal district. By 1953, there were 394 students in the secondary schools situated in the Southern Cameroons and 27 students in the Technical College.<sup>43</sup>

The contribution of the Cameroons Development Corporation to the expansion of primary education in the

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<sup>43</sup>Annual Report, 1956, p. 211.

Southern Cameroons has already been noted. The Corporation extended its contribution to include post-primary education and in its 1954 Annual Report, the Corporation stated that -

For the past few years the Corporation has provided 5,000 Pounds annually for the award of scholarships for Cameroonians pursuing courses of higher education. During 1954 five scholarships were awarded, of which only three were taken up, making a total of 31 scholarships awarded and finally accepted since the commencement of the scheme. . . . During the year, 33 children of employees of the Corporation were receiving secondary education at Corporation's expense, and 15 new scholarships to secondary schools were awarded before the end of the year. A total of 53 children have so far been awarded secondary school education and 23 children of employees were having fees paid for technical . . . Trade Centre at Ombe.<sup>44</sup>

By the end of 1954, there were four Teachers' Training Colleges, two secondary schools and one Technical College; the Teachers' Training Colleges had a total annual output of 134<sup>45</sup> while the other post-primary institutions together had a total output of not more than 61.<sup>46</sup> In other words, by 1954, the number of Southern Cameroonians

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<sup>44</sup>C.D.C. Annual Report, 1954, p. 19.

<sup>45</sup>Annual Report, 1956, p. 211.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

who had received post-primary education in the form of teacher training was greater than the total number of people who had received post-primary education either in the secondary schools or in the technical college. This meant that, by 1954, teachers constituted the greatest number of Southern Cameroonians who had received post-primary education. This by itself reveals one of the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons for, as will become clearer in the next chapters, teachers came to play a dominant role in the political development of the territory.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE PROBLEMS OF POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION, 1922-1954

#### Political Consequences of the Administrative Incorporation of the Southern Cameroons into Nigeria

The immediate consequences of the administrative incorporation of the Southern Cameroons into Nigeria was that it submerged the political significance which the Southern Cameroons would have had if it had been administered as a separate political entity. The economic, social and educational problems of the Southern Cameroons would have been more prominent and would have received greater attention from the colonial administration, the League of Nations and from the United Nations Organisation if the territory had not been integrated into Nigeria. But, because it was integrated into Nigeria -

The Southern Cameroons, idyllically lost between Nigeria and the Cameroons Mountains, failed to reap much benefit from being either a Mandate or a Trusteeship.

Moreover, the administrative union between Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons as permitted by the League of Nations was, for all practical purposes, a union between two unequals to the disadvantage of the Southern Cameroons.

In 1922, at the time of integration, the total population of Nigeria was estimated at 17½ millions while that of the Southern Cameroons was only about 359,000.<sup>2</sup>

In Southern Nigeria, a number of cities like Onitsha, Ibadan and Calabar had begun to emerge. Most of these cities were linked by motorable roads and by railways in some cases. The growth of these cities is an indication of the extent of the economic and social development which Nigeria had undergone by 1922. As a result of this economic and social development, there emerged a class of Nigerian indigenous businessmen capable of expanding their business operations beyond the national boundaries.

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<sup>1</sup>Victor Levine, "The Other Cameroons," Africa Report (February, 1961), 5-6.

<sup>2</sup>Robert R. Kuczynski, The Cameroons and Togoland: A Demographic Study, Oxford University Press (1939), p. 52.

On the other hand, the various tribal and ethnic groups in the Southern Cameroons were scattered and widespread. They were, in addition, isolated from each other by geographical factors such as fast running streams and rivers over which there were no permanent bridges. This economic and social disparity between the Southern Cameroons and Nigeria was greatly intensified by the administrative union which had an adverse effect on the development of education in the Southern Cameroons.

#### Problems of Cameroon Education

Apart from the differences in the economic and social development between Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons, there were also vast differences in the development of education in the two countries. Formal education was introduced in the Southern Cameroons on a very small scale in 1844 and in Nigeria in 1842. By 1922, there was a considerable difference between the educational developments in the two territories. One of the factors responsible for the differences was that the Southern Cameroons had never had an unbroken period of educational development. The period from 1844 to 1884 was one of unaided missionary activity; from 1884 to 1914 was a

period of German-cum-missionary education; then from 1914 to 1922 educational development was disrupted by the events of the First World War and finally, from 1922 to 1961, was the period of reorganisation under British administration. By 1922, the history of education in the Southern Cameroons had suffered from three different changes quite apart from the fact that each period by itself had problems which impeded the expansion of education as a whole and the introduction of post-primary education in particular.

The absence of post-primary education during the period of missionary activities and then during the period of German administration has already been referred to. The war period from 1914 to 1918 and then to 1922 when a new system of education was introduced by the British administration was not only a period of uncertainty but was one of a set-back in the development of education. As Vernon-Jackson has pointed out -

With the British military occupation at the beginning of World War I, German officials evacuated to eastern Cameroon while the German missionaries, including school organisers, managers and teachers, either fled eastwards too or else were interned and deported. . . . While the mission schools, left in the care of Cameroonian catechists and church assistants, for the most part, continued to function they became primarily classes of religious instruction. . . .

Constant changes in the language of instruction in the schools constituted a problem in educational development in the Cameroons from 1844-1922. It will be recalled that Joseph Merrick, the first missionary who came to the Cameroons, had studied the Isubu language and had also, along with other Jamaicans, intensified the use of the pidgin English. Alfred Saker who succeeded Merrick appeared to be more interested in the use of Douala, a sister language to Isubu, as the medium of instruction in the schools. Consequently, Douala and pidgin English became the two languages of instruction up to and beyond 1884 when Germany annexed the Cameroons. Bali, another indigenous language, was adopted by the Protestant missionaries as the medium of instruction in

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<sup>3</sup>H.O.H. Vernon-Jackson, Schools and School Systems in Cameroon: 1844-1961 (Ph.D. Thesis), Teachers College, Columbia University (1968), pp. 319-320.



the grassfield areas (the Roman Catholics continued to use the pidgin English throughout the coastal as well as in the grassfield areas). This meant that pidgin English and Bali were used as the medium of instruction in the grassfield areas while Douala and pidgin English were used in the coastal area after 1884 with the expansion of missionary activities into the interior of the Cameroons.<sup>4</sup>

But after 1907, the use of German was insisted upon by German colonial administration for, as Rudin has pointed out -

Closer regulation and supervision of the teaching of German in the schools were ordered by the decree of April 1910. It provided that mission schools, to get aid from the Government for teaching German must follow the school plan submitted by the administration. . . . an average of twenty thousand marks was appropriated for the aid of missions in teaching German.<sup>5</sup>

It would appear that because it was not possible to discontinue immediately the use of pidgin English, it was still being used as a medium of instruction even after

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<sup>4</sup>Bali, Douala, pidgin English and English were in use in the junior classes of the primary schools in the Southern Cameroons until the late 1950's.

<sup>5</sup>Harry R. Rudin, Germans in the Cameroons, 1884-1914, A Study in Modern Imperialism, New York: Greenwood Press (1968), pp. 357-358.

1907. It would seem therefore that at least for some time, there were altogether about three languages in use in each of the schools; pidgin English, Douala and German in the coastal district and Bali, pidgin English and German in the grassfield area.

These constant changes leading to the use of more than two languages in each school affected the development of education in that the time which would have been used in teaching other subjects was lost. It would appear that the changes in the language of instruction were usually carried out at the expense of other school subjects.

On the other hand, and in addition to the economic and social progress which Nigeria (especially Southern Nigeria) had achieved by 1922, education in that country had undergone a greater measure of progress than in the Southern Cameroons. By 1922 when the Southern Cameroons was administratively incorporated into Nigeria, there were seventeen post-primary educational institutions in Southern Nigeria offering five-year courses in secondary grammar schools and in the Teachers' Training

Colleges.<sup>6</sup> The first secondary school in Nigeria was opened in 1867, that is, seventeen years before the Cameroons came under colonial administration.<sup>7</sup> Again, there were no fewer than twelve organisations, including the government, providing educational opportunities in Nigeria before 1884<sup>8</sup> as opposed to only one body, the London Baptist Mission, in the Cameroons during the same period. By 1922, Nigeria had already produced secondary school and university graduates; in fact, Nigeria produced its first lawyer in 1893,<sup>9</sup> and by 1920, there were no fewer than fifteen lawyers and twelve doctors. The total number of university graduates was thirty and those still undergoing university studies numbered about twenty<sup>10</sup> and, for many years before 1922, "many local families in

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<sup>6</sup>J.E. Adetoro, The Handbook of Education in Nigeria, Town and Gown (1960)p. 16.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted in K.W.J. Post, "British Policy and Representative Government in Africa," L.H. Gann and Peter Duignan (eds.), Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1960 (Vol. 11), Cambridge University Press (1970), p. 36.

<sup>10</sup>Quoted in James S. Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, University of California Press (1960), pp. 141-142.

Nigeria had sent their sons and daughters for higher education abroad."<sup>11</sup> Also, (although) the population of Ghana was almost equal to that of the German Cameroons,<sup>12</sup> but, because of the differences between the colonial history of Ghana and the Cameroons, Ghana had, by 1920, produced no fewer than sixty lawyers,<sup>13</sup> the first one having graduated in 1887,<sup>14</sup> that is, three years after Germany annexed the Cameroons.

In comparison with the backwardness of the Southern Cameroons, and considering the date when Nigeria had its first secondary schools, it would appear that by 1922 when the Southern Cameroons was integrated into Nigeria, Nigeria was, in terms of educational development, several decades ahead of the Southern Cameroons. Under the circumstances, it is obvious that Southern Cameroonians were at a very great disadvantage because they were expected to compete on an equal basis with Nigerians for

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<sup>11</sup> Coleman, p. 41.

<sup>12</sup> Kuczynski, p. 52.

<sup>13</sup> Martin Kilson, "Emergent Elites of Black Africa," in L.H. Gann and Peter Duignan (eds.), op.cit., p. 352.

<sup>14</sup> Post, p. 36.

places in institutions of higher learning. As Vernon-Jackson has pointed out -

Nigerian facilities for secondary schooling, teacher training, and technical and vocational training were officially considered adequate throughout the 1920's and 1930's for what few pupils from Southern Cameroon schools were able, against considerable Nigerian numerical competition, to gain admission.<sup>15</sup>

It is important to recall that as the result of various circumstances already discussed, a sound foundation for secondary education had not yet been established in the Cameroons before 1922. Moreover, the British system of education which was introduced in the Cameroons in 1922 was different from that which had existed in the Cameroons for seventy-eight years, from 1844 to 1922. While there were constant changes in the language of instruction in Cameroon schools, primary schools in Nigeria used the vernacular in the beginning classes and English in the upper classes throughout and did not therefore suffer from the same conditions as primary schools in the Cameroons. Again, while the length of the primary school in Nigeria was eight years, that in the Cameroons had been only five years during the period of

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<sup>15</sup>Vernon-Jackson, p. 232.

German administration. In view of these differences between Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons, and if the latter was to follow a parallel line of economic, social and political development with the former, then it would have been prudent to give special consideration to the Southern Cameroons. This could have been done by various means such as accelerated educational programs, compensatory quota systems or by opening up secondary schools in the Southern Cameroons.

The 1925 Annual Report prepared by the colonial administration in the Southern Cameroons stated that there were only nine pupils completing the eighth class of the primary school course which was the required background for entry into the secondary school.<sup>16</sup> Another report compiled earlier had stated that such pupils were eligible for secondary education in Nigeria<sup>17</sup> and this, as has been noted, implied that primary school pupils from the Southern Cameroons were to compete on equal basis with

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<sup>16</sup>United Kingdom Colonial Office, Report by His Majesty's Government on the Administration of the British Cameroons, 1952. (Hereafter referred to as Annual Report).

<sup>17</sup>Annual Report, 1922, p. 44.

primary school pupils in Nigeria. It is true that at the very beginning of British administration of the Southern Cameroons the necessity to open secondary schools in the territory did not exist in view of the absence of pupils qualified for secondary education. But the practice of sending Cameroonians to Nigeria and in competition with Nigerians with better economic and social background continued long after the conditions which necessitated the practice had ceased to exist. Even if the practice was dictated by the fact that it was less expensive to send Cameroonians to Nigeria than to open secondary schools in the Cameroons, the practice of sending Cameroonians to Nigeria constituted one of the problems in the educational development of the Southern Cameroons.

There is no doubt that colonial governments - British or French - needed indigenous educated personnel to work in the colonial civil service and that the Southern Cameroons was not an exception in this respect. Hence one of the main reasons for the encouragement which colonial governments gave to missionaries to open schools was not merely because the colonising powers wanted to develop their respective colonies but more so because the colonial governments wanted educated personnel to work in

the civil service. But although the Southern Cameroons was not an exception in this respect, there was an exception in the composition of the civil service of the territory in that its civil service was dominated not by indigenous personnel but by African foreigners.

The colonial civil service in the Southern Cameroons appears to have been unique among other British West African territories because the civil service was dominated by other African specially from Southern Nigeria.<sup>18</sup> The administrative incorporation of the Southern Cameroons into Nigeria put the Southern Cameroons into the civil service pool of British West Africa. Other British colonies in West Africa had produced many secondary school leavers and university graduates who were already working in the civil service, whereas there appeared to be no persons in the Southern Cameroons who

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<sup>18</sup> The influx of Southern Nigerians into the Southern Cameroons which continued throughout the period under consideration is an important factor in the economic, social and political development of the Southern Cameroons and it is a factor which cannot be ignored in any study made on the Southern Cameroons. See for example, Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, Pan-Africanism and Political Integration in West Africa, New York: Cornell University Press, Itacha (1966).



had secondary education. It became the practice for the colonial administration to transfer civil servants from other West African territories to work in the Southern Cameroons without a reciprocal transfer of Southern Cameroonians to other West African territories. Transferring other West Africans to work in the Southern Cameroons solved an immediate problem but intensified the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons in the long run. This transfer of other West Africans to work in the Southern Cameroons reduced, as far as the colonial administration was concerned, the need to train Southern Cameroonians for the civil service.

The practice of transferring Nigerian teachers to fill a "vacuum" in the Southern Cameroons referred to in the previous Chapter, was extended to all other government departments and was also carried out by the respective commercial firms and missionaries.<sup>19</sup> For example, in 1952, thirty years after the administrative incorporation of the Southern Cameroons into Nigeria, there

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<sup>19</sup>Unfortunately statistics are not available and this is from personal experience. However, up to about the late 1950's, some headmasters of Mission primary schools were Nigerians and many of the staff of the various commercial firms were also Nigerians.

were five "other Africans" working in the Meteorological Department and no Cameroonian; forty-six in the Public Works Department against thirty-three Cameroonians; 104 in the Customs Department against fifty-eight Cameroonians; eight in the Co-operative Department and no Cameroonian.<sup>20</sup> The structure in the commercial firms was the same if not more in favour of "other Africans." The two main trading firms in the Southern Cameroons, the United African Company and the John Holt brought with them their Nigerian personnel with whom they had worked and who already had experiences in the various branches in these commercial firms. By 1956, there were 74,000 Nigerians in the Southern Cameroons.<sup>21</sup>

However, in the Cameroons Development Corporation the main employer of labour in the Southern Cameroons, the picture was slightly different for the reason that Cameroonians were already in the employment of the Corporation long before the joining of the Southern Cameroons to Nigeria which led to the influx of Nigerians to the Southern Cameroons. By 1955, Nigerians

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<sup>20</sup> Annual Report, 1952, pp. 204-209.

<sup>21</sup> Annual Report, 1956, p. 137.

nevertheless constituted 31.5% of the labour force in the Cameroons Development Corporation.<sup>22</sup>

The Contribution of British Administration

As has been mentioned, the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons at the initial period of British administration were largely due to the absence of qualified pupils in the territory who were capable of benefitting from secondary education. But even after qualified pupils became available, the problem continued for a number of reasons for which the colonial administration appears to have been responsible because it failed to tackle the problems realistically. In the 1937 Annual Report on the Southern Cameroons prepared by the administration it was stated that -

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<sup>22</sup> Edwin Ardener, et.al., Plantation and Village in the Cameroons, London; Oxford University Press (1962), pp. 27-31.

During the (past) four years, 126 boys sat the (entrance) examination, of whom 28 have passed and six have been awarded Government scholarships carrying free tuition and maintenance. Of the 22 boys who could have been admitted as fee-paying students only three actually went since few boy's parents can afford the fees. Two girls entered for the combined entrance and scholarship examination for Queen's College, Lagos, and, though both passed, neither was successful in winning a scholarship.

There appears to have been some problems in the admission and in the award of scholarships to Southern Cameroonians and the only body which should have solved the problem was the colonial administration. It was the colonial administration which conducted the entrance examinations and arranged for the award of scholarships to Southern Cameroonians, and although the final decisions were made only in Lagos, it is possible that the colonial administration in the Southern Cameroons, as the spokesman for the Southern Cameroons, could have secured the award of more scholarships to Southern Cameroonians.

In addition to failing to solve the problem in the award of scholarships, some of the colonial officers in the Southern Cameroons did not appear to have had a proper understanding of the problems of the

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<sup>23</sup> Annual Report, 1937, pp. 79-80.

territory. Consequently, they sometimes gave incorrect information on the problems and progress of the Southern Cameroons. As for example, in the 1923 Annual Report, it was stated inter alia that -

The population as a whole are clamorous for learning; money is available, but qualified teachers, even unqualified teachers possessed of character, are not forth coming in numbers in any way commensurate with demand.<sup>24</sup>

This report was written when there were 2,676 pupils<sup>25</sup> in all types of primary schools in the Southern Cameroons. The number of primary schools and their total enrolment continued to increase and by 1952, the total enrolment in the schools was 30,940 pupils which was estimated to be 1,330 pupils above the enrolment for 1951;<sup>26</sup> as has been shown in the last Chapter, the school enrolment in 1952 was one percent above that of 1951.<sup>27</sup> The fact that the primary school enrolment for 1952 was 1,330 over the previous year is sufficient proof that there was considerable improvement and indicates the interest of the people in formal education. As has been mentioned

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<sup>24</sup> Annual Report, 1923, p. 50.

<sup>25</sup> Annual Report, 1952, p. 245.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 146.

earlier, by the early part of the 1950's, some communities in the Southern Cameroons established community primary schools at their own expense and initiative while many adults, including women, were enrolled in adult literary classes in various parts of the territory. In Bamenda Province in the grassfield for example, there were in 1952, 1,478 men and 312 women attending such classes.<sup>28</sup>

In addition -

The South Eastern Native Authority in Bamenda (had) agreed to levy a 2s.7d. education rate in order to further the educational advancement of its area. The other two Federations (were also) engaged in the detail planning of a similar rate. It (was) anticipated that the number of school children (would) increase by at least 20 percent in the areas as the result of rating.<sup>29</sup>

However, in spite of the interest which the population was showing in formal education, the same 1952 Annual Report stated that -

Development of education in the Southern Cameroons is limited not by the supply of teachers, but by the demand for education. In some areas, there is little demand, and existing schools are by no means full . . . Besides lack of interest, another limiting factor in primary education is the inability or unwillingness to pay fees, coupled with the fact that at the same time the cost of education rises.<sup>30</sup> (Emphasis added).

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

Reference has already been made to the geographical nature of the Southern Cameroons and it was stated that the various villages, tribal and ethnic groups are isolated from each other by lack of modern means of communication. Reference has also been made to the hedge schools, whose establishment made it possible for small and isolated villages to benefit from formal education. However, in view of this geographical factor, many of the schools could not but "be by no means full" and this was not indicative of the peoples' lack of interest in education but was due mainly to geographical factors. In any case this shows that some colonial officers in the Southern Cameroons did not appear to understand the real problems of education and could not therefore have been able to suggest realistic solutions to the overall problems of education in the territory.

The formation of the United Nations Organisation after the Second World War led to the establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and to the Trusteeship Council to which mention was made earlier. In pursuance of the desired purpose of the UNESCO, one of which was to promote the development of education in dependent territories, member

states of the U.N. began to award scholarships for higher studies to developing countries including the Trust Territories. But it would appear that the Southern Cameroons did not take full advantage of some of these scholarships and the excuse given by the colonial administration was that -

. . . most of the offers of scholarships did not include provision for the cost of travel to the country concerned, and before the local administration could make grants for the purpose, they must be sure that the facilities offered were not available elsewhere.<sup>31</sup>

#### Contribution of the Trusteeship Council

In 1949, the Visiting Mission of the Trusteeship Council made a tour of the Southern Cameroons in an attempt to study the problems of the territory. A number of petitions were addressed to the Visiting Mission on various aspects of the territory and particularly on the problems of post-primary education. In addition to the one already quoted in the last Chapter, another petition was presented in Bamenda in the grassfield which said inter alia -

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<sup>31</sup>Yearbook of the United Nations, 1953, p. 651.



For over thirty years since the Cameroons became a Mandated and later a Trusteeship Territory, under United Kingdom Administration, the highest Government educational Institution in the Territory is a Centre for the training of Teachers for Elementary Certificate, the minimum qualification in Nigeria to entitle one to the situation of Schoolmaster started in 1932 and raised to Higher Elementary in 1947. The only avenue through which Cameroons' youths have been acquiring secondary and higher education is by studying in Nigerian secondary schools, where on the average it has been thrice as expensive for Cameroons' students as for his Nigerian comrade.<sup>32</sup>

In spite of this petition, the Visiting Mission recommended to the United Nations the eventual introduction of free primary education in the territory<sup>33</sup> and in fact appeared to have said nothing about the absence of post-primary education even in response to the petition which it had received during its visit to the territory. It may be assumed that the Southern Cameroons would have been fortunate if the plans of a free primary education had been implemented. But the expansion of primary education by the 1950's indicates that primary education was no

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<sup>32</sup>United Nations Doc. T/PET.4/16-5/7, Printed in the United Nations Trusteeship Council Official Records (TOR), Annex, Vol. II, Fourth Year, Sixth Session, Geneva, pp. 60-70.

<sup>33</sup>Yearbook of the United Nations, 1952, p. 673.

longer a problem in the educational development of the territory. Secondly, and very important, the political development of the Southern Cameroons in the later part of the 1950's (together with the post independence political developments of the territory), appear to suggest that by 1950, post-primary education should have been a priority over free primary education. Moreover, free primary education meant that the government had to shoulder greater financial responsibilities. The cost of free primary education would have been met by increasing taxes and this was impossible because few people could have been able to pay increased taxes. About a decade after the time of this recommendation, Ghana which was far richer than the Southern Cameroons experimented on free primary education but without complete success. The government had to resort to taxing the pupils for "book money" in order to be able to meet the cost of free primary education.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Hugh Hawes and Peter Williams, "Universal Primary Education in Nigeria: Aims of the Programme," West Africa (September, 1974), 1155.

The Contribution of Christian Missionaries to  
the Problems of Post-Primary Education

The contribution of Christian missionaries towards the development of education in the Southern Cameroons has already been outlined. It was pointed out that some missionaries were engaged in teaching in the primary and secondary schools and in the teachers training colleges. With available Cameroonians qualified to teach in the primary schools, the missionaries concentrated their efforts in the secondary schools and training colleges and in the administration of education as managers and supervisors. The unique methods adopted by the Roman Catholic missionaries to raise money for the development of education and their personal sacrifices ~~was~~ <sup>were</sup> also outlined. In every respect, the missionaries solved the immediate problem created by the absence of qualified Cameroonians. However, by solving this problem, the missionaries intensified the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons.

In view of the personal sacrifices made by the missionaries, most of them came to regard their respective educational institutions as Mission property and were not broadminded enough to foresee the

possibility of either handing over these institutions to Cameroonians or giving Cameroonians greater responsibilities in the management of these institutions. Had the missionaries foreseen these possibilities, they would have done everything, using their connections in Europe and in North America, to enable Cameroonians<sup>to</sup> acquire higher education and qualify as principals of secondary schools and training colleges and as graduate teachers, managers and supervisors of schools.<sup>35</sup> This fact is of special importance for the political development of the Southern Cameroons because, as will be discussed in the next Chapter, ~~it was~~ the Mission teachers who played a dominant role in the political development of the Southern Cameroons and led the territory to Independence and

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<sup>35</sup>It was by the late 1950's that the Protestant Missions started giving some responsible positions as Managers and Supervisors of schools to Cameroonians; the Roman Catholic Mission followed soon. In all cases, Cameroonians who held such positions were grade I teachers since there were no graduate teachers. With the expansion of Secondary schools and Teachers Training Colleges immediately before and after Independence, there were not enough missionaries to teach in these institutions and the problem of the shortage of qualified or graduate teachers was solved by relying on volunteer teachers from the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

unification with the French Cameroons. Most of these teachers were headmasters of primary schools run by the respective Missionary bodies and were among those who would have benefitted from higher education, obtained university degrees and become graduate teachers and in some cases become principals of post-primary institutions if the missionaries had foreseen early enough the possibility of handing over their educational institutions to Cameroonians. This is particularly true of the few teachers who had obtained the teachers grade I certificate and were teaching mostly in the junior classes of the secondary schools and the training colleges. Had the missionaries foreseen this possibility and had provided some of their best teachers with higher education before 1961, the missionaries would have thus provided the Southern Cameroons with a more enlightened political leadership.<sup>36</sup>

There is no doubt that formal education in the Southern Cameroons owed its progress to the untiring efforts of missionaries who, ironically, contributed to

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<sup>36</sup> Many teachers who acquired university degrees after Independence, refused to teach with the Missions possibly because the Missions neither gave them responsible positions nor offered the prospects of such positions.

the problems of post-primary education which had existed from the pre-colonial history of the Cameroons. However, although the missionaries contributed to the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons, the administrative incorporation of the territory with Nigeria appears to have been the most important factor in perpetuating the problems.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION, 1954-1961

#### Political Developments from 1951-1954

Educational development in the Southern Cameroons was intricately related to the political development of the territory. The political development was in turn influenced by a number of factors among which were the policies of the British government towards the Southern Cameroons, the influence of the League of Nations and subsequently of the United Nations Organisation, and the political developments in Nigeria.

Many factors emerged after the Second World War to foster rapid political changes in Nigeria. The United Nations replaced the League of Nations while the Trusteeship Council replaced the Mandates Commission which had previously supervised the administration of the Mandated Territories which were now designated as Trusteeship Territories. Unlike the League of Nations, the United Nations Organisation included in its membership nations

such as India which were once colonial territories but had gained their independence; also included in the membership of the United Nations were countries such as the Soviet Union which had no territories in Africa. In turn, the Trusteeship Council reflected the composition of the United Nations and other factors which made the United Nations different from the League of Nations for as Young has pointed out --

The Trusteeship Council was very different from the earlier Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. The Permanent Mandates Commission was dominated by experts on colonial administration and sought to enforce minimum standards of imperial decency. Its powers were only advisory and were exercised with considerable discretion and reserve. The Trusteeship Council had representatives of the administering powers, generally drawn from Afro-Asian and Latin American States . . . The Trusteeship Council thus included an important anti-colonial element, and increasingly interpreted its task as enforcing power transfer with reasonable despatch.<sup>1</sup>

Hence, with respect to the Trusteeship Territories, the Trusteeship Council set up to supervise their administration, urged the administering powers to -

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<sup>1</sup>Crawford Young, "Decolonisation in Africa," in Peter Duignan and L.H. Gann (eds.), Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960, Cambridge University Press (1970), pp. 450-502.



Intensify their efforts to bring about the establishment of new representative organs of government and administration in the Trust Territories, with increasing participation therein by indigenous elements of those territories . . . in order to facilitate an approximate determination of the date on which the populations of the Trust Territories, would be prepared for self-government or independence.<sup>2</sup>

It has been mentioned that when Britain acquired its own portion of the German Cameroons, it did not intend to promote any political developments which would lead the territory to independence as a political entity separate from Nigeria. Any political development in the Southern Cameroons, as far as Britain was concerned, was to be consistent with the territory's status as a part of Nigeria. This policy was not completely consistent with the stipulations of the United Nations, nor, as events later proved, was it consistent with the political aspirations of the natives of the Southern Cameroons.

However, as the result of the pressure exerted by some members of the United Nations on the colonial powers to grant independence to their colonies, there were political developments in British West African territories. In Nigeria, the first of these developments was the

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<sup>2</sup>General Assembly Resolutions passed December 14, 1954.

introduction of the Richardson Constitution in 1951. The Constitution divided Nigeria into three Regions, the Northern, Western and the Eastern Regions and each Region had a House of Assembly. There was, in addition, a Federal House of Representatives in Lagos, the national capital. As a part of Nigeria, the Southern Cameroons had, by reason of geographical proximity, been in fact administered as a province of what was now the Eastern Region of Nigeria with its Headquarters in Enugu. In addition to sending representatives to the Regional House of Assembly, each province also sent representatives to the Federal House of Representatives in Lagos. Before the Constitution of 1951, there had existed a Legislative Council in Lagos with nominal powers while the final decisions on all matters rested with the Governor General of Nigeria. The 1951 Constitution therefore ended the existence of the Legislative Council and the changes introduced by the Constitution were the beginning of the process in the course of which political and administrative power were devolved into the hands of Nigerians enabling them to gain their independence from Britain. These political changes in Nigeria were of great importance for the political and educational developments in the

Southern Cameroons.

Because of the concern of the United Nations for the political development of the Trusteeship Territories, the Nigerian constitution of 1951 reserved a number of seats and ministerial portfolios for the Southern Cameroons in both the Regional House of Assembly at Enugu and in the Federal House of Representatives in Lagos. Consequently, although in terms of its population the Southern Cameroons was less than one-twentieth of Nigeria, the total number of seats for the territory in both the Regional House of Assembly and in the Federal House of Representatives was one-twentieth of the total number of seats in each House.<sup>3</sup> This representation which was out of proportion to its total population, enabled the Southern Cameroons to enjoy some political advantages over the other provinces of Nigeria.

Nevertheless, this advantage which the Southern Cameroons had over the other provinces of Nigeria did not

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<sup>3</sup>For more information on the Constitutional development of Nigeria, see for example, Kalu Ezera, Constitutional Developments in Nigeria, Cambridge University Press (1964). See also Yearbook of the United Nations 1952, p. 667.

in any way satisfy the political aspirations of the people of the territory. This was the result of the emergence of political awareness among the people of the Southern Cameroons during the decades preceeding the Second World War. A number of Southern Cameroonians resident in Nigeria, together with others who had gone there to receive post-primary education, appeared to have been influenced by the formation of various tribal unions in Nigeria during the period between the two World Wars. In 1939, these Cameroonians formed the Cameroens Youth League;<sup>4</sup> this was in fact the first organisation that brought Southern Cameroonians together on a large scale and can be regarded as the first Cameroonian Nationalist Movement. The aim of the C.Y.L. was to stimulate interest in the study of the historical connection between the Southern Cameroons and Nigeria. The studies led the members of the C.Y.L. to the conclusion that the Southern Cameroons had gained nothing from its association with Nigeria. The C.Y.L. did not appear to have offered any practical suggestions as to what could be done to enable the Southern Cameroons to enjoy its due benefits from

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<sup>4</sup>Hereafter referred to as C.Y.L.

being a part of Nigeria. In subsequent years, the members of the C.Y.L. came into contact with the members of the Union des Population du Cameroun, a radical political party from the French Cameroons which advocated the immediate unification of the British and French Cameroons.

The implication of the unification of the two Cameroons was that both sections of the British Cameroons would secede from the Federation of Nigeria. The contact between the members of the C.Y.L. and the U.P.C. led to the formation of the Cameroon National Federation to which all existing tribal organisations in the Southern Cameroons were affiliated.<sup>5</sup> While the C.Y.L. had confined itself to the study of the historical connections between the Southern Cameroons and Nigeria, and the problems arising therefrom, the C.N.F. went further to offer practical suggestions as a solution to these problems. The C.N.F. advocated the creation of the Southern Cameroons Region

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<sup>5</sup>There were no representatives from the Northern Cameroons in the C.N.F. For more information on the U.P.C. see Williard Johnson, "The Union des Population du Cameroun in Rebellion. The Integrative Backlash of Insurgency," in Robert I. Rotberg and Ali Mazuri (eds.), Protest and Power in Black Africa, Oxford University Press (1970), 671-692.

within the Federation of Nigeria but this did not meet the expectations of the U.P.C. In a petition presented to the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Southern Cameroons in 1949, the C.N.F. stated inter alia -

During the German regime, there was plenty of prosperity and happiness, but the earning capacity of the people had fallen so low - almost to nothing in some cases - that many of them find salvation only in plantations or in the lowest rungs of the Civil Service.

The C.N.F. appeared to have been convinced that these problems resulted from the administrative incorporation of the Southern Cameroons into Nigeria. This idea seems to have influenced its members to suggest that the best solution to the problems lay in the creation of a separate Region for the territory. A separate Region would preserve the identity of the Southern Cameroons and also enable the Federal Government to look directly into the problems of the territory, independent of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. Because this idea of a separate Region for the Southern Cameroons had existed before the introduction of the 1951 Constitution in Nigeria, and because of the pressure and the moral support of the United Nations, the idea was bound to influence the drawing

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<sup>6</sup>United Nations Doc. T/PET.4/61-5/66, Nov., 1949;

up of the Constitution.

Although the Southern Cameroons had a generous number of seats in both the Regional House of Assembly and in the Federal Legislature, Southern Cameroonians saw this arrangement as temporal because -

Regional separation remained the goal of the 'Cameroons block' formed within the Eastern Regional House. Members of the block pledged their support to the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (N.C.N.C.) in so far as the policy and objectives of the N.C.N.C. (were) not opposed to the national objectives of the Cameroons under United Kingdom Trusteeship.<sup>7</sup>

Political crises soon developed in the Eastern House of Assembly leading to the dissolution of the House. Southern Cameroonians saw this as an opportunity to increase their demand for separation from the Eastern Region of Nigeria and become an autonomous Region of equal status with other Regions of Nigeria. The British government agreed and in 1954, the Southern Cameroons became a "quasi" Region within the Federation of Nigeria.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa, New York: Cornell University Press, Ithaca (1966).

<sup>8</sup>For more information on the political development of the Southern Cameroons, see for example, Welch, Ibid.

A quasi regional status meant that the Southern Cameroons did not enjoy full regional status and had only a measure of autonomy. However, ~~the~~ most important development was that while remaining a part of Nigeria, the Southern Cameroons was administratively separated from the Eastern Region of Nigeria.

Having separated from the Eastern Region, the Southern Cameroons had its own House of Assembly composed of the Commissioner of the Southern Cameroons as the President. There were three unelected members known as Official members; there were thirteen elected members; six members representing the Native Administrations and two Special members nominated by the colonial administration.<sup>9</sup> There was an Executive Council instead of a Council of Ministers as was the case with other Regions having full Regional status. The Executive Council was made up of the Commissioner, the three Official members and four of the elected members.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>United Kingdom, Colonial Office, Report on the British Cameroons for 1956, p. 18. Hereafter referred to as Annual Report.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 20.



Between 1951 and 1954, the Cameroon National Federation had been transformed into a more politically oriented party named the Kamerun United National Congress<sup>11</sup> and led by Dr. Emmanuel Endeley. Because of his position as the leader of the K.U.N.C., Dr. Endeley was selected as the Leader of Government Business.<sup>12</sup> The members of the Executive Council did "not hold Ministerial office but, the Commissioner assigned to individual members subjects and groups of subjects for which there were Heads of Departments in the territory."<sup>13</sup> In addition, and as a part of Nigeria, the Southern Cameroons sent six representatives to the Federal House of Representatives.

Other measures followed this political development and enabled the Southern Cameroons to completely separate from the Eastern Region of Nigeria, administratively, economically, and educationally. From October 1st, 1954, an independent budget for the Southern Cameroons was

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<sup>11</sup>Hereafter cited as K.U.N.C.

<sup>12</sup>He did not hold the same executive powers as the Premiers in the other Regions.

<sup>13</sup>Annual Report, 1956, p. 18.

instituted and the Legislature was -

. . . empowered to raise revenue from sources open to a Regional Legislature. It considers an annual Appropriation Bill which, when passed, requires the assent of the Governor General of the Federation.<sup>14</sup>

In addition to raising money from available sources, the Constitution provided that the Federal Government -

. . . pay to the Southern Cameroons in respect of each financial year such sums as is declared by the prescribed authority to be equal to the amount . . . by which the revenues of the Federation for that year that are attributable to the Southern Cameroons exceed the expenditure incurred by the Federation in respect of the Southern Cameroons during that year.<sup>15</sup>

The Southern Cameroons government had therefore to boost economic development in order to raise the national as well as individual incomes of the natives and hence be able to raise money to meet its financial targets and commitments. A number of economic organisations such as credit unions were established while those already in existence were promoted. For example, due to government encouragement the number of co-operative societies in existence increased from seventy three with a total membership of 5,000 to ninety four with a membership of 7,000 in

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

1956.<sup>16</sup> A Southern Cameroons Production Board was established to finance schemes for economic development; a Marketing Board was to secure the most favourable arrangements for marketing agricultural produce.

The Expansion of Primary Education,

1954-1961

These political and economic developments from 1951 to 1954, were significantly reflected in the development of education. The Nigerian Education Ordinance of 1952 was amended to allow for the setting up of Regional Education Boards, including one for the Southern Cameroons under the chairmanship of the Chief Education Officer for the Southern Cameroons. By amending the Education Ordinance, the powers previously vested in the Inspector General of Education in respect of education in the Southern Cameroons, were transferred to the Chief Education Officer for the territory. Reference has already been made to the establishment of an Executive Council in the Southern Cameroons. The Executive Council did not have the same constitutional and political powers

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

as the Council of Ministers in the other Regions of Nigeria but it remained the main instrument of policy making in the Southern Cameroons until after 1961.<sup>17</sup> It was stated that the Commissioner did assign subjects and groups of subjects to members of the Executive Council and one of such subjects was Education. This means that for the first time in the history of educational development in the Southern Cameroons, a "quasi" Ministry of Education was established in the territory.

The Southern Cameroons thus achieved a measure of political autonomy and was in a position to take decisions affecting its own destiny. The government was aware of the lack of secondary and higher education and was determined to -

Encourage as far as possible an even development throughout the Southern Cameroons and . . . proposed therefore to award Scholarships for secondary, technical and professional courses, a stipulation with regard to the last two (being) that in general awards will be made only to pursue courses of study which (would be) of assistance to the general development of the territory and which (would) lead to the eventual 'Cameroonization' of the civil service.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>18</sup>Policy for Scholarships, Government Printer, Buea, 1954.

It has been stated in the course of this study that the civil service in the Southern Cameroons was dominated by British expatriates and by Nigerians and that this had, as far as the colonial administration was concerned, removed the need to give Cameroonians secondary and higher education which would have prepared them for responsible positions in the civil service. Cameroonians therefore remained in the lowest rungs of the civil service throughout. But with the developments which gave the territory a measure of political autonomy, there arose the need to Cameroonise the civil service, that is, to staff the civil service with Cameroonians who would have the same political aspirations as the politicians. Thus a harmonious relationship would be established between the civil service and politics.

The desire to Cameroonise the civil service meant that the government had to expand opportunities especially for secondary and higher education. In its efforts to realise these objectives, the government stimulated the interest of the general public in education by setting up Educational Committees as well as Parents' Committees throughout the territory. Secondly, the government increased its expenditure on education. In the 1955/56

financial year, the government voted 17,000 Pounds for scholarships and this amount was supplemented by another 5,000 Pounds from the Cameroons Development Corporation;<sup>19</sup> then in the 1956/57 financial year, the amount voted for scholarships was increased to 30,000 Pounds.<sup>20</sup> The government also hoped that -

. . . firms operating in the territory (would) give consideration to the establishment of scholarship schemes which (would) enable the best of their employees to be trained for managerial and executive positions within these firms.<sup>21</sup>

No encouragement had previously been given to private bodies except Missions to participate in the provision of education in the Southern Cameroons. This encouragement came with the political developments after 1954 and with government's desire to expand educational opportunities. The result of this encouragement was that of the 30,000 Pounds available for scholarships in the 1956/57 financial year, the government and Native Administrations contributed only 17,000 Pounds while the Missions contributed 6,000

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<sup>19</sup>Annual Report, 1956, p. 217.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Policy for Scholarships, Government Printer, Buea, 1954.

Pounds and the Cameroons Development Corporation increased its contribution to 12,000 Pounds.<sup>22</sup>

Added to government's desire to expand educational opportunities, was the pressure of individual politicians in Parliament who, in order to "please" their electorates, appealed to one or other of the Missionary bodies to open primary schools in the politician's "constituency." The political pressure exerted by individual politicians together with government interest in expanding educational opportunities led to a phenomenal increase in primary education as shown in the following table.<sup>23</sup>

Table 4

Year	Primary School Enrolment
1955	44,600
1956	46,800
1957	50,600
1958	54,900
1959	64,000
1960	73,400
1961	86,200

<sup>22</sup> Annual Report, 1956, p. 217.

<sup>23</sup> Report on the Supply of Secondary Level

In the period before the political developments from 1954, primary school enrolment for any one year, as for example the enrolment of 1952 already cited, was never more than two thousand greater than the previous year. It was from 1955 and mainly due to political developments that primary school enrolment for one year exceeded that of the previous year by more than 2,000 and by 9,000 in 1960.

The Expansion of Post-Primary Education,  
1954-1961

The significant increase in primary education provided a base for post-primary education and therefore called for an increase in secondary education and Teacher Training Colleges. The only post-primary institution for the education of girls which existed in the Southern Cameroons before 1954 was the Girls' Training College in Kumba, run by the Roman Catholic Mission and limited to training grade 11 teachers. Otherwise there was no secondary school in the territory for girls and every girl wanting a secondary education had to go to Nigeria. Most

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Teachers in English-Speaking West Africa, (West Cameroons),  
Institute for International Studies in Education and the  
African Studies Centre, Michigan State University, East  
Lansing (1971), Appendix I.



other training colleges also offered only two-year courses leading to the teachers' grade II certificate. But in view of the expansion of primary schools from 1954, many of the training colleges were extended from providing only two-year courses for the grade III certificate to providing four-year courses for the teachers' grade II certificate.

By the middle of the 1950's a new element in teacher training was the entry of secondary school leavers into the teaching profession. Secondary school leavers who probably failed to see an immediate opening for further education became interested in the teaching profession and, many of them perhaps wanted a period of rest during which they could secure opportunities for higher education. However, their entry into the teaching profession had important consequences for the profession. A secondary school leaver who had done five years of post-primary education was required to undergo a two-year course of teacher training along with a grade III teacher who had previously done only two or three years course to qualify as a grade III teacher. In other words, a grade III teacher who had done only two or three years of post-primary education entered the training college for the teachers' grade II along with a secondary school leaver,

who had done five years of post-primary education. In many cases, the secondary school leaver did not do better than his colleague who had previously done only two or three years of post-primary education. But on the completion of the training course, the secondary school leaver was designated as a Pivotal teacher and given a higher salary than his colleague who was a grade III teacher and had now qualified as a grade II teacher.

It has been pointed out that teacher training was a closed-ended system of education because it did not open avenues for higher education leading to a university degree. The highest qualification which a grade II teacher could hope for was the Associate Diploma in Education obtained after a nine-month training either in the United Kingdom or in an agricultural institution in Nigeria. But the opportunities to acquire this qualification were extremely rare and depended on exceptional recommendations by the employer.<sup>24</sup> The entry of secondary school leavers into the teaching profession brought about psychological and material changes in the profession.

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<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately no statistics are available for the number of grade I teachers in the Southern Cameroons by 1961.

Grade II teachers were encouraged by the desire to qualify for the Pivotal grade and began to take the examination for the London General Certificate of Education at the Ordinary level because a pass in five subjects raised a teacher's salary while at the same time opened up avenues for further education leading to a university degree.

This desire was intensified by the opening of the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology in the middle of the 1950's, the entry qualification being a pass in the London General Certificate of Education at the Ordinary level, in not less than five subjects. The examination for the London General Certificate of Education revolutionalised the career of many young and ambitious teachers. From the late 1950's onward, many primary

school teachers competed with secondary school leavers for university scholarships and later on for places in the Cameroons College of Arts, Science and Technology opened in 1962.<sup>25</sup>

Corresponding with the expansion of primary schools and teacher training colleges, was the expansion

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<sup>25</sup>It was opened immediately after the Southern Cameroons seceded from Nigeria and Nigerian facilities for Cameroonians to do post-secondary schooling were no longer available.

of secondary grammar schools from 1954 to 1961. By 1960, the total number of post-primary institutions in the Southern Cameroons was seventeen distributed as follows: Teacher Training Colleges, twelve with an enrolment of 699 students; Secondary grammar schools, three with an enrolment of 513 students; Technical and Vocational colleges, two with an enrolment of 192 students.<sup>26</sup>

By the late 1950's a new element emerged in the history of educational development in the Southern Cameroons. Due in part to a measure of economic growth, and also due to the general interest in education as a whole, a number of enterprising Cameroonians began to establish private post-primary institutions designated as Commercial and Technical Colleges.<sup>27</sup> While these colleges did much to reduce the problems of post-primary education, the quality of education which they offered was comparatively low because these institutions did not come under government assistance and the proprietors could not employ qualified staff. In addition to this, the colleges were

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<sup>26</sup> Nigerian Yearbook, 1960, p. 119.

<sup>27</sup> Cameroons Development Corporation, Annual Report, 1955, p. 20.

poorly equipped. In many cases, most of the tutors were those who had just completed their own studies in the same Commercial College.

In comparison with the previous decades since the introduction of formal education in the Cameroons in 1844, the decade from 1954 witnessed a phenomenal expansion of opportunities for secondary and higher education in the Southern Cameroons. The expansion of secondary and higher education which included teacher training and private colleges, and the expansion of opportunities for higher education were due mainly to the political developments from 1954. These political developments also led to economic and social growth as witnessed by the development of various economic institutions such as co-operative societies. The year 1954 therefore remains a turning point in the history of educational development in the Southern Cameroons.

\* The increase in secondary school enrolment was also due to a number of economic and social factors. In addition to their inability to meet the cost of post-primary education, many people in the Southern Cameroons had for many years not realised the importance of post-primary education and the reason was because primary

school leavers easily got employment either with the missions as probational teachers or with the government and the C.D.C. as clerks and messengers. But by the late 1950's, the Southern Cameroons began to experience a measure of unemployment among primary school leavers. This appears to have been partly due to the increase in the number of secondary school leavers some of whom entered into jobs which were formerly held by primary school leavers. These economic and social factors led many Cameroonians to realise the importance of post-primary education more than they did in the previous years. This realisation of the importance of secondary education increased the demand for secondary schooling and this demand was supported by the increase in the earning capacity of the people.

Between 1954 and 1961, one aspect of the problems of post-primary education, that of secondary education, was being resolved. An attempt was also being made to tackle the problems of higher education and the effort of the C.D.C. with respect to both secondary and higher education was praiseworthy. In its Annual Report for 1955, the C.D.C. stated -

For the past few years the Corporation . . . provided annually five thousand Pounds for awards to Cameroonians pursuing courses of higher education. With the establishment of a Southern Cameroons Government and the setting-up of a Southern Cameroons Scholarship Board, the functions and commitments of the former awarding committee (were) taken over by the new Scholarship Board, and the Corporation . . . (made) an annual grant of five thousand Pounds to this Body.

In addition,

Employees of at least two years' standing (were eligible to) apply for scholarships for higher education.<sup>28</sup>

Some of the Native Administrations were already awarding scholarships to children from their respective areas for studies in secondary schools. So, from 1954, the respective bodies responsible for the provision of education intensified their efforts especially with regards to post-primary education.

But in spite of this progress in educational development, government participation still left something to be desired. Apart from the Government Teachers' Training College, and apart from the Government Trade Centre, the government's direct participation in secondary education in the Southern Cameroons appears to be unique among most British West African countries in that it did not establish its own secondary schools. By opening

government primary schools and by providing scholarships for higher education, but by failing to open government secondary schools, the government thus created a parenthesis in its participation in the development of education. Furthermore, the government did not make efforts to train Cameroonians for responsible positions as graduate teachers in its only Teachers' Training College. The result was that by the late 1950's, with the departure of the Nigerian teachers from the staff of the College, the government had to borrow teachers from the Missions and from the Native Administrations and was also forced at times to allow grade II teachers to teach in the college which produced grade II teachers.

In the light of what has been discussed in the preceeding paragraphs, it would be true to say that due mainly to the political developments from 1954 to 1961, the Southern Cameroons government made a deliberate effort to solve the problems of post-primary education in the territory. But as will become clear in the next Chapter, the expansion of opportunities for post-primary education did not affect the political development of the Southern Cameroons.



## CHAPTER V

### THE EFFECTS OF THE PROBLEMS OF POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION ON THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTHERN CAMEROONS

#### Political Developments From 1954 to 1961

The political development of the Southern Cameroons from 1922 to 1954 was discussed in the last chapter. It will be remembered that the Constitutional changes in Nigeria raised the political status of the Southern Cameroons from a province to a quasi-region within the Federation of Nigeria and thus ended the administrative dependence of the territory on the Eastern Region of Nigeria. The granting of a quasi-regional status to the Southern Cameroons appeared at the time to be a great political advancement which, as far as the British colonial administration was concerned, was expected to satisfy the political aspirations of the inhabitants of the territory. From the point of view of most Southern Cameroonians however, this quasi-regional status was only the beginning of further political changes which would

lead the territory to secede completely from the Federation of Nigeria and eventually unify with the French Cameroons. Most Cameroonians together with most members of the Kamerun United National Congress (K.U.N.C.) advocated that the territory should become a full Region but there arose a question among Cameroonians as to whether on becoming a full Region, the territory would remain within the Federation of Nigeria or would unify with the French Cameroons. The question of secession from Nigeria and unification with the French Cameroons became the most important political issue in the Southern Cameroons from 1954 to 1961.

Initially, the K.U.N.C. now transformed into the Kamerun National Congress (K.N.C.), had stood for the complete secession of the British Cameroons - both North and South - from the Federation of Nigeria and the eventual unification with the French Cameroons. It was because the party advocated unification with the French Cameroons that it had adopted the German spelling of the Cameroons by using the letter "K" instead of British or French spellings. By adopting the German spelling, it was implied that the party wanted the restoration of the German boundaries of the Cameroons through unification

with the French Cameroons. But after the Southern Cameroons had gained a quasi-Regional status, the leader of the party, supported by some of the members, retreated from the original idea of complete secession from the Federation of Nigeria. They now advocated a full regional status within the Federation of Nigeria. However, other members of the party continued to advocate complete secession from Nigeria and eventual unification with the French Cameroons. The advocates of this idea, led by a primary school teacher, broke off from the K.N.C. and formed the Cameroon National Democratic Party.<sup>1</sup> There was also another small group of politicians also led by a former school teacher, who had formed the Kamerun People's Party<sup>2</sup> to oppose any form of regional autonomy for the Southern Cameroons. They wanted the territory to remain a part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria but would accept, as an alternative, an autonomous Cameroons Region so long as it remained a part of the Federation of Nigeria. In broad principles, the K.P.P. had more in common with the K.N.C. than with the

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<sup>1</sup>Hereafter referred to as K.N.D.P.

<sup>2</sup>Hereafter referred to as K.P.P.

K.N.D.P. in that neither the K.P.P. nor the K.N.C. accepted any political developments which would lead the Southern Cameroons to secede from Nigeria.<sup>3</sup>

With other political developments in Nigeria from 1954 which were to lead Nigeria to Independence in 1961, the issue as to whether the Southern Cameroons would secede from Nigeria and unify with the French Cameroons became an international issue involving both the British government and the United Nations Trusteeship Council. During the 1957 Nigerian Constitutional Conference which reviewed the earlier Constitution, the date for Nigerian Independence was set for 1961. In that Conference, the British Secretary of State for Colonies expressed the view that -

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<sup>3</sup>For more detail on the political developments of the Southern Cameroons from 1951, see Claude E. Welch, Dream of Unity, Pan-Africanism and Political Unification in West Africa, New York: Cornell University Press, Ithaca. (1966).

<sup>4</sup>The idea of an independent Southern Cameroons as a Nation by itself was rarely advocated by any of the political parties.

There can be no question of obliging the Cameroons to remain part of an independent Nigeria contrary to her own wishes (and that) before Nigeria independence the people of the North and South sectors of the Cameroons would have to say freely what their wishes were as to their own future.<sup>5</sup>

The Constitutional Conference of 1957 promised full Regional status for the Southern Cameroons when Nigeria would become independent in 1961. This status was expected to enable the Southern Cameroons to enjoy equal status with the other Regions of Nigeria. On becoming a full Region -

A premier would be designated and there would be an official (elected) majority in the Executive Council which would become the principal instrument of policy, the elected membership of the House of Assembly would be enlarged and, in addition, a House of Chiefs would be set up.<sup>6</sup>

This statement promising a full regional status for the Southern Cameroons satisfied the political aspirations of most Cameroonians. However, the statement that the territory would not be obliged to remain a part of Nigeria tended to give moral support to those who advocated complete secession from Nigeria. Consequently, the

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<sup>5</sup>Yearbook of the United Nations 1958, p. 347.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

K.N.D.P. which advocated complete secession from Nigeria won increasing popularity among the people of the territory at the expense of both the K.N.C. and the K.P.P. as shown by the results of the elections held between 1954 and 1959. As the elections of 1959 approached, the issue of unification with the French Cameroons was tied up with that of secession. With the pressure of most African countries and of some members of the United Nations, and with the campaigns of the U.P.C., unification with the French Cameroons was to be "immediate" and this meant that there would be no interim period of independence for the Southern Cameroons after it seceded from Nigeria. The results of the 1959 elections seemed to have indicated that the majority of Southern Cameroonians wanted secession from Nigeria for, in that elections, the K.N.D.P. which was in the opposition in the Southern Cameroons parliament, and which wanted secession from Nigeria, defeated the K.N.C. and K.P.P. alliance, thus creating an unprecedented event in West Africa if not in the whole of Black Africa in which an opposition political party defeated the governing party in a parliamentary elections and assumed the reins of Government.

The Dominant Role of Primary School Teachers  
in the Political Development of the  
Southern Cameroons

As the elections of 1959 approached, and as the Southern Cameroons indicated by the increasing popularity of the K.N.D.P. moved towards the goal of secession and unification with the French Cameroons, the following predictions about the Southern Cameroons were made -

It seems then, that even if the K.N.C.-K.P.P. alliance comes off, there is a distinct possibility of K.N.D.P. winning the next general elections. This might be a tragedy for the Southern Cameroons, since it is difficult to see people in the party capable of taking ministerial appointments.

The prediction did not state the reasons for the absence of people capable of taking ministerial appointments.

Furthermore, the prediction seemed to imply that people capable of taking ministerial appointments could be found only in the K.N.C.-K.P.P. alliance and this was in fact an overstatement of the real situation in the Southern Cameroons in 1959.<sup>8</sup> However, Ardener, who probably agreed

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<sup>7</sup>(Anonymous), "Secessionism in Southern Cameroons," West Africa (January 25, 1958).

<sup>8</sup>Apart from Dr. E.M.L. Endeley, there were only two

with the prediction seemed to have hinted at the reasons for the lack of people capable of taking ministerial appointments, for he said -

The Southern Cameroons intelligentsia has had 'old' and 'new' waves. The old was lucky enough to be in at the outset of political activity and fathered the present opposition. The new has grown up almost in the last years and has arrived, in a sense, too late for politics. Its members are not represented in the government party, but most of them, together with most young men in training outside the territory, are sincerely<sup>9</sup> in favour of unification with the Republic.

Ardener's meaning of intelligentsia must be interpreted according to Southern Cameroons standards because, apart from the former Leader of Government Business who was a university graduate, and who became the Leader of the Opposition after the defeat of his party in the 1959 general elections, and apart from another university graduate in the Federal Legislature, the majority of people in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly were grade II

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other persons in the K.N.C.-K.P.P. alliance who had gone to a secondary school while the rest were either grade I or grade II teachers including some Rev. Pastors of the Protestant Missions.

<sup>9</sup>Edwin Ardener, "Crisis of Confidence in the Cameroons," West Africa (August 12, 1961), 878.



teachers. In 1956, there were twenty five persons representing the Southern Cameroons in both the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly and the Federal Legislature in Lagos, (nineteen were elected to the House of Assembly in Buea, and six into the Federal Legislature) of these twenty five members, fifteen were primary school teachers; of these, fourteen were Mission teachers and one was a retired government primary school teacher. During the same year, three of the Southern Cameroonians in the Executive Council were primary school teachers.<sup>10</sup> By 1961, almost seventy per cent of the members were primary school teachers.<sup>11</sup>

The 1952 Annual Report on the Southern Cameroons stated that -

Thirteen students (were) attending universities overseas . . . In addition, the C.D.C. continued to provide a grant of up to five thousand pounds for existing and new scholarships which were opened only to natives of the Cameroons. In 1952, eight of such students were at University College, Ibadan, studying Arts, Medicine, Science and Agriculture, three were studying at Fourah Bay; two women were training as nurses in England, and one woman was taking Domestic Science; two men were taking teaching courses, one in London and the other in Edinburgh.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Annual Report 1952, p. 18.

<sup>11</sup> Calculated from the Southern Cameroons Almanack, 1961.

Most of these had returned home by 1959 and were immediately absorbed into the civil service; in all, "there were fewer than two dozen Cameroonians with university level qualifications at this time."<sup>13</sup> By the colonial civil service regulations, this trickle of university graduates were not allowed to enter active politics. The anonymous writer who predicted a disaster for the Southern Cameroons if the K.N.D.P. won the 1959 elections must have been misled by the existence of the more voluble members of the K.N.C.-K.P.P. alliance in parliament to believe that they were more capable of taking ministerial appointments than the members of the governing party. The first lawyer of Southern Cameroons origin returned home only after the 1959 elections; the first two university graduates entered parliament only after the post-Independence elections at the

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<sup>12</sup>Annual Report 1952, p. 155.

<sup>13</sup>H.O.H. Vernon-Jackson, Schools and School Systems in Cameroon: 1844-1961 (Ph.D. thesis), Teachers College, Columbia University (1968), p. 500. Dr. Vernon-Jackson was an Education Officer in the Southern Cameroons just before and after Independence and was the first Principal of the Cameroons College of Arts, Science and Technology and his estimates can be accepted as reliable.

end of 1961.<sup>14</sup> It is true however, as Ardener pointed out, that what could be regarded as a class of intelligentsia in the mid 1960's came too late for politics.

Some of the effects of the problems of post-primary education on the political development of the Southern Cameroons can be deduced from the predictions of the anonymous writer and from the statement made by the Leader of Government Business who, as has been said, was the only university graduate in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly and whose party was defeated in the 1959 elections. While he was the Leader of Government Business, he had -

Regrettably remarked that the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly was heading for a disaster and this was an obvious reference to the low standard of debate which the members put up.<sup>15</sup>

If this statement was referred without exception to all members of parliament, then the impression given by both the anonymous writer and by Ardener about the kind of

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<sup>14</sup> the first University graduates to enter the Southern Cameroons Parliament were the late Abendong and Ekha-Nghaky who until recently was the Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity. Some of the candidates who won the 1959 elections did not complete the fully primary school course of eight years; in other words, they were primary school "drop-outs."

<sup>15</sup> (Anonymous), "Contradictions in the Cameroons", West Africa (October 5, 1957), 945.

people in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly appears to be misleading. Most other parliamentarians, including some of these teachers, had not played any significant rôle in politics before 1959 but in the face of political necessity, they had been hand picked over night by the various political parties to contest elections which they won largely for lack of better educated opponents. In every respect, the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly was composed of a majority of people with neither sufficient post-primary education nor with political experience which would have compensated for their meagre education.

The problems created by the absence of an educated elite were aggravated by other factors. Despite the victory in the 1959 elections of the party which advocated secession from Nigeria and unification with the French Cameroons, the British Government as well as the Trusteeship Council appeared not to regard this victory as a sufficient indication that the majority of people in the Southern Cameroons wanted secession from Nigeria and unification with the French Cameroons. Meanwhile, the date for Nigerian Independence was approaching. At the same time, terrorist activities in the French Cameroons appeared to make the issue of unification which was a condition for secession

from Nigeria, a dubious political goal. It was at this stage that the issue of unification was strongly tied to that of secession from Nigeria; in fact, the issue was not only unification but immediate unification. This meant that there would be no interim period of independence during which the Southern Cameroons would prepare for unification. By tying up the two issues together, it might have been expected that Southern Cameroonians would rather prefer to remain a part of Nigeria than to unify with the French Cameroons which was at the time in political chaos. Hence, to test the effectiveness of this design, a United Nations sponsored plebiscite was to be conducted in the Southern Cameroons to determine the wishes of the people for their political future. However, to many British expatriates civil servants and businessmen in the Southern Cameroons, the results of the elections offered the indication that the majority of people might vote in the plebiscite for unification with the French Cameroons since they had voted into power the party that favoured such a course. Subsequently, following the United Nations plebiscite which confirmed that the Southern Cameroons would unite with the ex-French Cameroons, the majority of British civil servants in Southern Cameroons quit the

territory leaving a vacuum in the civil service. Had the idea of "immediate" unification not been tied to that of secession from Nigeria, British expatriates in the Southern Cameroons would not have left in such number and all at much the same time. The Southern Cameroons would have been allowed an interim period to prepare itself for unification; in this case, British expatriates might have continued to work in the territory at least for some time and would have left a more experienced indigenous civil service in the territory. In addition, they would have helped prepare the political leaders of the territory for unification. There were Cameroonians in the civil service but, as Vernon-Jackson had pointed out -

Due to the long-term paucity of formal post-primary educational training facilities for Cameroonians, the majority of Cameroonian staff members of government, missionary societies, public corporations and large scale private business was largely in the lower levels of responsibility and administration and technical expertise.<sup>16</sup>

Hence, by quitting the Southern Cameroons en mass, the British expatriates left the territory -

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<sup>16</sup>Vernon-Jackson, p. 497.

In the ironical position of being the only 'liberated' British territory in which there (was) . . . no continuity of expatriate staff, despite the insistent desire of the local government to keep them.<sup>17</sup>

The employment of British and Nigerian expatriates had satisfied the needs of the colonial administration and had intensified the problems of post-primary education by largely removing the needs to give Southern Cameroonians secondary and higher education. In all other West African countries, both British and French, the process of independence was gradual and the process of "Africanisation" of the civil service was also gradual. The expatriates gradually handed over the administration to their African counterparts, the top positions being handed over to university graduates or to other Africans with a reasonable measure of post-primary education. In all cases, the African usually had a good deal of administrative experience in his field of training. But, as the result of the problems of post-primary education, the Southern Cameroons lacked a reasonable number of experienced indigenous civil servants by 1961. Many Cameroonians in the civil service were primary school leavers who, without having passed any

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<sup>17</sup>(Anonymous), "Contradictions in the Cameroons," West Africa (October 5, 1957), 945.

further examination in addition to the First School Leaving Certificate Examination taken after the completion of the primary school course, were promoted from the position of messengers to third class clerks, then to second and first class clerks and finally even to government officers.

In the wake of Independence in 1961, and because of the exodus of British expatriates, the government of the Southern Cameroons was left with no other choice than to promote a number of first class clerks to hold positions such as District and Assistant District Officers and other important positions in the civil service. In these circumstances, it became imperative for the government to promote the few university graduates to Heads of Departments. These were positions in the civil service which they could not have held during the period of colonial administration because they should have acquired enough experience in addition to having had sufficient post-primary education before being promoted to such responsible positions.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, even after

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<sup>18</sup> A young man in his late twenties who returned to the Southern Cameroons with an Associate of the Institute of Bankers (A.I.B.) became the director of the newly



promoting a number of first class clerks and giving responsible positions to university graduates, there were still many places in the civil service to be filled. Consequently, the government had to recruit a number of grade II teachers as District and Assistant District Officers and for other administrative positions. In time, grade II teachers came to dominate some of the Government departments such as for example, the Department of Co-operatives.

The Southern Cameroons government came under heavy criticism by the Opposition party and by some members of the public for recruiting grade II teachers into important positions in the civil service. The recruitment of

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established "State" Bank which in many cases employed secondary school leavers as Branch managers; the Bank collapsed four years after Independence and would have probably been liquidated if the Federal government had not injected more money into it; meanwhile, many of the Branch managers suffered terms of imprisonment for either mismanagement or for embezzlement. Another young man, also in his late twenties, became the Attorney General and politicians had to intervene in certain criminal cases before the accused were convicted. The Cameroons Development Agency (not the C.D.C.) also headed by a former primary school teacher, began to fail in all its undertakings in just under three years after Independence. Some of the Permanent Secretaries in the Ministries who were in fact Technical Advisers to the Ministers had been promoted during the colonial period from the rank of messengers to first class clerks. Was there a tragedy for the Southern Cameroons?

grade II teachers was regarded by many people as an act of nepotism by which the government, dominated by grade II teachers, wanted to show favour to their former colleagues. But, in hindsight, all evidence appears to lead to the conclusion that the government had no other choice than to recruit those who, by their training and experience, were the only ones remotely able to help fill the vacuum left by the British expatriates.

The ultimate effect of the problems of post-primary education on the political development of the Southern Cameroons was that the territory was led to Independence and unification by grade II teachers with not more than fourteen years of formal education while the majority of the civil service personnel had neither received a good measure of post-primary education nor had had a good measure of administrative experiences. Hence, in the absence of an educated elite such as lawyers, political scientists and university graduates in parliament, the Constitution for unification with the French Cameroons was drawn up by grade II teachers from the Southern Cameroons on the one hand, but on the other hand, that is, the ex-French Cameroons, by an educated elite of considerable sophistication including direct professional and legislative

experience in the metropolitan country, France.<sup>19</sup>

The dominant role played by grade II teachers in the political development of the Southern Cameroons shows one of the unique characteristics of the political development of the territory in relation to the problems of post-primary education. It is true that in the British West African territories in general, primary school teachers played a comparatively important role in the political developments of the respective territories.

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<sup>19</sup>President Ahidjo who probably headed the Constitutional Conference had been the Vice-President of the National Assembly in France before Independence. Many political changes have taken place in the Cameroons since unification in 1961 and some of these changes have been swift and surprising. After the introduction of the One Party system of government in 1966, and after the referendum of May 1972, a Unitary system of government was established and this replaced the Federal structure of government as stipulated in the Constitution for unification. In every respect, these political changes in about ten years after Independence have not only submerged the political significance of the "Southern Cameroons" but have in the process, either eliminated most of the architects of unification from the Southern Cameroons or "suppressed" them into the background of politics. What Southern Cameroonians wanted was a Federal structure of government in which they would preserve their Anglophone identity. These expectations have at last not been fulfilled because those who led the Southern Cameroons to unification lacked sufficient post-primary education and signed the Constitution for unification like a "blank cheque." The post-Independence political changes have in fact betrayed the hopes of many Southern Cameroonians who were sincerely in favour of unification. These changes

Although some teachers became Ministers of State in some English-speaking West African territories, in general, the role of primary school teachers was confined to the grass roots level as party supporters, party organisers and vanguards of party organs and youth movements. It was only in the Southern Cameroons that a primary grade I teacher led the territory to Independence and unification with the French Cameroons; subsequently, he became the Vice-President of the Nation; he was succeeded by a grade II teacher as the Prime Minister of the "West" Cameroons<sup>20</sup> who in turn was succeeded by another teacher.<sup>21</sup> The composition of the Southern Cameroon House of Assembly in 1961 has already been referred to; primary school teachers

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would not have been possible if the Southern Cameroons had been led to Independence and unification by persons with a greater measure of post-primary education because they would have better understood the terms of the Constitution. Under the Constitution for unification, the existence of the Southern Cameroons as a Region was in fact illusory. Again, was there "a tragedy for the Southern Cameroons"?

<sup>20</sup>The Southern Cameroons became known as the "West Cameroons" after unification in 1961. Following the referendum of May 1972, it was divided into the North West and South West Provinces respectively.

<sup>21</sup>They were, Mr. John Ngu Foncha, Augustin Ngom Jua and Solomon Tandeng Muna respectively.

constituted just under seventy per cent of the members of parliament. There was also a cabinet of Ministers made up of seven members including the Prime Minister; of these seven, six were primary school teachers; in addition, there were two parliamentary secretaries, one of whom was a primary school teacher while the other had not received formal education for more than eight years.<sup>22</sup>

Primary school teachers played a dominant role in the political development of the Southern Cameroons because of the absence of an educated elite. The system of training teachers has already been discussed and it may be added that teacher training was more realistic to rural conditions than education in the secondary schools. In the course of his training, a teacher was taught to lead and to obey; the courts set up to try students for breach of discipline were not courts of justice but of discipline, that is, these courts were not logical in their proceedings but were more interested in finding out why the student exposed himself to disciplinary measures. Moreover, student discipline was

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<sup>22</sup>It is doubtful if he completed the primary school course; he worked with the C.D.C. as a tinker on a daily salary of 4.5 shillings before becoming a Parliamentary Secretary on an estimated salary of 4.5 pounds a day.

largely in the hands of students themselves and except in extraordinary circumstances, there was very little or no interference from the administration of the college. Again, in the course of his training, a student teacher had to do practical teaching. Practical teaching was usually done in the presence of other students and tutors, all of whom would pose questions when the student was already in the process of teaching. Consequently, and several days before he carried out his teaching, a student teacher had to lay out a good plan and a well thought out logical approach in order to put his ideas to his pupils in a way that caught and sustained their interest. Over many years of such practice, teachers came to develop the ability of public speaking that was both logical and humorous.

Therefore in many respects, primary school teachers had advantages over the secondary school leavers; among some of these advantages were that the great majority of teachers worked in the rural areas, they had a training which was both practical and professional and hence more realistic

to rural environment, and, above all Mission school teachers were not subjected to the same conditions as the civil servants and government teachers; Mission teachers were not prevented from active politics and did not have to

resign as a pre-condition to active political participation. Mission teachers could go to school in the morning and do politics in the afternoon, that is, they could do both teaching and politics together provided that their political activities were not at the sacrifice of their school work. They also came to know the community through the children whom they taught. Teachers also had many other personal connections with the local people for, in addition to being teachers, they were also petition writers for their local area, they were secretaries of almost every social meeting and traditional councils and, in most cases, virtually became the spokesmen and recognised leaders in their villages. Again, in comparison with secondary school leavers, and because of the practical nature of their training, teachers were often found to be suitable for employment even outside the teaching profession especially in occupations which demanded maturity and the ability to come down to the level and thinking of the ordinary man.<sup>23</sup> In these circumstances, it is not hard to see why primary

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<sup>23</sup> Many primary school teachers have by dint of hard work, acquired university degrees and have become lawyers, magistrates and High Court judges; others hold very responsible positions in the country as administrators and directors or heads of government departments.

school teachers came to dominate the political development of the Southern Cameroons, especially as they were almost without competition.

The political development of the Southern Cameroons in relation to the problems of post-primary education shows another unique characteristic which is a departure from what generally obtained in other English-speaking countries in West Africa. In contrast with other African countries, and in contrast with the French Cameroons, nationalist movements in the Southern Cameroons were comparatively humble, civic and with no conflict with the colonial administration. After the Second World War, many educated Africans in Nigeria, Ghana and elsewhere in English-speaking West African countries, were continually excluded from the civil service and from the administration even though some of the Africans were more educated than the British expatriates in the colonial administration. Many African university graduates returned home and became frustrated because they could not find employment within the civil service which was dominated by British expatriates. It was this class of educated Africans who, by reason of their education, organised nationalist movements and led their respective countries to



independence. In this process of organising nationalist movements, these Africans came into conflict with the colonial administration because they voiced strong criticism against the colonial administration and against anything that was "European" including the Christian missionaries and Christian religion. Words like "Imperialism," "Colonialism," "Neo-Colonialism" and "Exploitation" were in common use by this class of educated Africans in English-speaking West Africa. In addition, they organised boycotts against European goods and sometimes this involved riots. In many instances, some of these Africans ended up being involved in cases of sedition, were arrested, and sentenced to political imprisonment.<sup>24</sup>

It has been pointed out that some of the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons were: that there was no class of educated elite in the territory before 1961; that the trickle of university graduates in the territory were immediately absorbed into the civil service and were prevented from participating in active politics; that in the absence of an educated elite

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<sup>24</sup>The late Dr. Nkrumah and other Ghanians are examples of West Africans imprisoned by the colonial administration during the process of nationalist movements in West Africa.

nationalist movements were organised by grade II teachers. Because they did not have the same grievances against the colonial administration as their Nigerian and Ghanaian counterparts, nationalist leaders in the Southern Cameroons did not appear to have used terms like "Imperialism," "Colonialism," and "Neo-Colonialism"; there was no conflict between nationalist leaders in the Southern Cameroons and either the colonial administration or with the Christian missionaries; there were no seditious cases, no arrests and no political imprisonment in the Southern Cameroons before 1961.

The Effects of the Problems of Post-Primary  
Education on Educational Development  
in the Southern Cameroons

The problems of post-primary education not only affected the political development but also affected the development of education. Consistent with its administrative integration with Nigeria, the syllabus and textbooks in educational institutions in the Southern Cameroons contained little or nothing which promoted the study of the territory. There were, as a matter of fact, no textbooks written specifically about the territory.

Some history and geography textbooks which appeared after Independence were written by some ambitious young Cameroonians who were trying to fill a vacuum.<sup>25</sup> In comparison with publications by Nigerian school teachers, those in the Southern Cameroons were below standard because they had been written by persons without adequate professional and academic training.

There were only two Cameroonian graduates<sup>26</sup> in the teaching profession in the Southern Cameroons before 1961; there was also a negligible number of grade I teachers and they were teaching either in the secondary schools or in the teacher training colleges; there was a negligible number of pivotal teachers while the majority of primary school teachers were in fact grade III. With the departure of nearly all British expatriates on the eve of Independence, the two Cameroonian graduates in the

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<sup>25</sup>A committee was set up some time after Independence to study the production of textbooks and there appears to have been no further progress beyond the committee stage.

<sup>26</sup>One of them was the first Southern Cameroonian to rise from the rank of a Probationary teacher to become a university graduate. He subsequently was the first Southern Cameroonian to become the Director of Education and is currently the Deputy Director for UNESCO, West Africa.

Education Department were pre-occupied in matters of educational administration. In the circumstances, there were no teachers with sufficient professional and academic background to write textbooks for educational institutions. Consequently, the syllabus and textbooks used in Nigerian schools continued to be in use in the Southern Cameroons after the territory had in fact seceded from Nigeria and unified with the French Cameroons, and this did not reflect the political identity of the Southern Cameroons now separated from the Federation of Nigeria.

The Role of Traditional Rulers in the  
Political Development of the  
Southern Cameroons

In the Southern Cameroons as well as in other British colonies in West Africa, traditional rulers were not suppressed either by the German or by the British colonial administration. In all British West African territories, the British administration purposefully promoted traditional rulers and traditional political institutions to assist in their own attenuated administration with the hope that these would form the basis for the eventually wider political development of

each territory. Traditional rulers, as far as the colonial administrations were concerned, were more representative of the native peoples than the educated elite. Referring specifically to the Southern Cameroons, the Acting Governor of Nigeria said in 1922 that -

. . . even the primitive inhabitants of the province possess governmental and judicial institutions which may be turned to good account as instruments of our administration . . . the object . . . must be, not to force upon the tribes systems alien to their methods of thought, but rather by the evolution, under guidance, of their own institutions to place them on the road which leads to further measure of self-realisation.<sup>27</sup>

Lord Lugard, the architect of the system of Indirect Rule<sup>28</sup> in Nigeria, had felt the need to "educate the traditional rulers in their duties as rulers so as to regenerate the natives through them."<sup>29</sup> With these ideas in mind, and on the administrative incorporation of the Southern Cameroons with Nigeria, the British government extended to the Southern Cameroons the system of Indirect Rule that had

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<sup>27</sup>Annual Report 1922, p. 56.

<sup>28</sup>For a full discussion of the meaning of Indirect Rule, see for example, R.L. Buell, The Native Problem in Africa, New York: Macmillan Company (1928).

<sup>29</sup>Annual Report 1952, p. 52.

been introduced in Nigeria by Lord Lugard. The Southern Cameroons was divided into Native Authority areas which, with negligible exceptions, corresponded largely with the ethnic and tribal groupings of the people. Native Administration courts were established in every Native Authority area and traditional rulers in many cases played an important role as the custodians of the traditions of the people. But appeals as well as criminal cases were decided by a higher colonial officer such as the District Officer or by the Resident. In these native courts, traditional methods were employed in the trial of cases and this involved the swearing of traditional oaths.<sup>30</sup> In this way, many of the traditional rulers came to play an important role as the agents of peace-keeping which was necessary for any colonial administration. But such influence as was exercised by the traditional rulers was local and did not extend outside their respective tribal boundaries.

The Legislative Council in Lagos, Nigeria after 1922 when the Southern Cameroons became an administrative

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<sup>30</sup>Native guns, idols, etc., were used in place of the Bible as in modern court procedures.

part of Nigeria, included a traditional ruler from the Southern Cameroons.<sup>31</sup> During the political changes in Nigeria and during the 1957 Constitutional Conference in London, a traditional ruler was the political adviser to the delegation from the Southern Cameroons.<sup>32</sup> It was during this conference that the Secretary of State for Colonies promised a House of Chiefs for the Southern Cameroons when the territory would be raised to the status of a full Region in 1960. Again, there were three traditional rulers in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly in 1956;<sup>33</sup> in fact, a House of Chiefs was set up by the

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<sup>31</sup>He was the late chief Manga Williams of Victoria and appeared to have been the only literate and comparatively well informed traditional ruler in the Southern Cameroons at that time.

<sup>32</sup>This is the Fon or traditional ruler of Bali in the grassfield; he had, after completing the primary school course, worked as a nurse in the hospital before succeeding his late father. His nomination as the political adviser to the Southern Cameroons delegation seemed to have been merely a political tactic in order to get the support of all traditional rulers in the issue of secession from Nigeria and for the impending elections, otherwise it is doubtful what sort of advice he was expected to give since he appeared to have been the least educated among the members of the delegation.

<sup>33</sup>They were, Chief S.A. Asungwa of Bangwa, chief Manga Williams of Victoria and chief Nformi of Nkambe.

Southern Cameroons government on the eve of Independence and after the elections of 1959. The above discussion offers sufficient indication that something was done by the colonial administration and by the Southern Cameroons government to promote traditional rulers and, by implication, the institutions they represented.

But the system of Indirect Rule contained many contradictions because while the system promoted traditional rulers and traditional institutions, the whole society was undergoing various forms of transformation which were inconsistent with traditionalism. Consequently, these various forms of transformation eventually and gradually destroyed the basis of traditional authority. However, although this was generally the case with all British colonies in West Africa and in other places where the system of Indirect Rule was practised, the British colonial administration had established special schools in other parts of West Africa for the education of the sons of chiefs. As Kilson has pointed out -



Some colonisers, the British especially, also had an ideological preference for sending sons of chiefs to the supposed African equivalent of British 'Public Schools'. In 1906, for instance, the Sierra Leone government opened Bo School solely for the sons and nominees of chiefs . . . A certain number of chiefs made their way into the new elites. Some chiefs acquired Western education, a new way of life, new economic interests and new administrative functions. Some of them later became lawyers, doctors, etc., but in general, they made their living in the modern sector of the economy.<sup>34</sup>

Even France adopted the same policy of educating the sons of chiefs and one of the first schools opened in Senegal was exclusively for the sons of chiefs.<sup>35</sup>

No such efforts were made to educate the sons of chiefs in the Southern Cameroons nor is there any evidence to indicate that traditional rulers in the territory were given encouragement in the education of their children. Therefore, apart from the social changes which in many ways destroyed the foundations of traditional authority, most traditional rulers, especially those in the grassfields (the northern highlands of the Southern Cameroons) showed

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<sup>34</sup> Martin Kilson, "Emergent Elites of Black Africa" in Peter Duignan and L.H. Gann (eds.), Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960 (Vol. 11), Cambridge University Press (1970), pp. 358-359.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

little or no interest in educating their children and even where such interest was shown, there was no thought of educating their children, beyond the primary school level. Formal education was introduced by the Christian missionaries and was tied up with the Christian religion, with ideas, practices, and beliefs which in many ways could not be accepted by traditional rulers without compromising their authority as the custodians of traditional customs and practices. Hence, when formal education was introduced, many traditional rulers in the grassfield area preferred to send the sons of slaves and aliens to school than to send their own children. Most of these were of alien descent who had been victims of traditional practices in their own tribes of origin and had migrated to take refuge in another tribe. Some aliens had been accused of witchcraft in their own tribes and were among the earliest people to accept Christianity as an escape from their own tradition and religion of which they were victims. In some cases, they became catechists, labourers and cooks with the Missions. In general, such aliens had little or no traditional positions of importance either in their own homes of origin, or, except within the jurisdiction of the Mission compound, had they any civic

and political rights in their new homes." Because they had no civic rights, their children could very easily be forcefully recruited for formal education in the same way that labourers had been forcefully recruited for work in the plantations during the period of German administration. Consequently, it was often the children from this class of people and not the sons of traditional rulers and traditional aristocrats who were the earliest beneficiaries of formal education in the Southern Cameroons.

The system of Indirect Rule and the various forms of social transformation continued to isolate the traditional rulers from the mainstream of modernisation and from the school system. In the post-Independence elections held in 1961, only one traditional ruler contested and successfully entered parliament,<sup>36</sup> while the rest of the traditional

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<sup>36</sup>He is the Hon. S.A.N. Angwafor, traditional ruler of Mankon in the grassfield. By 1961, he seemed to have been the only traditional ruler who had successfully completed the secondary school course; before Independence, and before he succeeded his late father, he worked as an Agricultural Assistant having received some training after his secondary school course. In addition to his traditional position as the Fon of Mankon, he is currently the Chairman of Mankon Area Council, the Divisional President of the Cameroon National Union (political) Party, and the only traditional ruler in parliament. One other traditional ruler is holding an important civil service position, he is Yakun-Toh of Bambalang, also in the

rulers merely played the part of party supporters and as agents for influencing elections in their respective areas of jurisdiction. Notwithstanding the fact that most of them expected to enter into the House of Chiefs, even those who had at once been in parliament, lacked the intimate and sophisticated knowledge of modern institutions which required campaigns and popularity beyond tribal boundaries.

The Role of Women in the Political  
Development of the Southern  
Cameroons

Both the missionaries and the government, especially after 1954, did much to encourage the education of women in the Southern Cameroons. The missionaries began by establishing a number of primary schools exclusively for girls even though there were other schools in which the girls had equal opportunities with the boys. As will be remembered, the Roman Catholic Mission established the

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grassfield. He was a Commissioner of Police before Independence, studied law in the United Kingdom after Independence and succeeded his late father when he returned home but continued to work in the civil service until he was recently appointed the Governor of the South West Province.

Girls' Training College in Kumba shortly after World War II and this college trained girls for the Teachers' grade II certificate. The 1952 Colonial Report on the Southern Cameroons showed that a number of women from the territory were already receiving post-primary education both in Nigeria and overseas (in the United Kingdom). With grants from the Southern Cameroons government in 1955, the Roman Catholic Mission opened in the territory the first secondary school for girls in Okoyong, Manyu Division.

But inspite of these efforts, the education of girls lagged behind that of boys from 1922 to 1961. Throughout this period, the ratio of girls to boys in the primary schools was far below the ratio of girls to boys of school going age. The 1956 Colonial Report showed that there were 368,800 females and 383,900 males in the Southern Cameroons;<sup>37</sup> during the same year, there were 46,800 children in the primary schools of which 36,900 were boys and only 9,900 were girls.<sup>38</sup> This proportion was maintained throughout as shown by the following:<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Annual Report 1956, p. 133.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
1955	35,500	9,100
1956	36,900	9,900
1957	39,600	11,000
1958	42,200	12,700
1959	48,200	15,800
1960	53,400	20,000
1961	62,700	23,500

The ratio of girls to boys in post-primary institutions was even lower than that in the primary schools. In 1956 for example, there were 442 boys and twenty six girls in the secondary schools; there were 321 men and only forty five women in the training colleges; of the 1,658 teachers in the territory in 1956, 1,432 were men while only 226 were women and of the thirty five tutors in the training colleges, only six were women.<sup>40</sup>

A number of factors which created problems in the education of women in the Southern Cameroons may be suggested. The 1957 Colonial Report on the territory pointed out that -

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

The status of women in the Territory as in most of Africa is very different from that in the West and many other parts of the world. Polygamy is an accepted custom and though there are no legal restrictions on the occupation women may take up, in fact the great majority of them spend their lives looking after their homes and children and in work on the land.<sup>41</sup>

For many years even after many Cameroonians eventually came to realise the importance of formal education, the majority gave little attention to providing their daughters with education especially beyond the primary school level. Instead, and particularly in places where high bride price pertained, families preferred to arrange marriages for their daughters and use part of the money realised from the bride price to educate the boys. Also, in a society where polygamy is accepted, the importance of women, not necessarily educated, at home is considerable; they have the responsibility to provide enough food to feed themselves, the husband and their children. Meanwhile, the younger children have to be cared for and there is a host of services the woman has to render to the husband, such as participating in the production and in the carrying and selling of agricultural produce. Consequently, it would

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<sup>41</sup>Annual Report 1957, p. 84.

appear that, especially in the grassfield where traditional norms have tended to remain unchanged in many ways, women probably would not have played any significant role in the political development even if they had been given equal opportunities with the boys for post-primary education.

In addition to these economic and social factors, there were other factors which combined to limit the opportunities for women's education. Apart from the Girls' Training College mentioned earlier, there was no secondary school in the territory for girls until after 1954.

Opportunities for secondary education for Cameroonian girls existed only in Nigeria. If it was difficult for the boys to receive secondary education in Nigeria, then it was even more so for the girls. In the absence of girls' secondary schools in the territory and in the absence of any other institution providing teacher training for the girls, the Teachers' Training College remained the only institution from which the educated boys could look for wives, if they chose to have wives educated beyond the primary school.

Hence, the few girls graduating from this institution were in many cases married before they actually graduated, but despite this, for reasons of salary, such wives usually became school teachers.



There does not appear to be evidence that any women in the Southern Cameroons had acquired a university degree before 1961. They were however, a number of women who had studied overseas but had obtained university diplomas and not degrees, for example, in Home Economics and Social Welfare. The absence of women in the Southern Cameroons with university degrees and the comparatively small number of women who had received post-primary education together with the general lack of post-primary education available for women combined with economic and social factors, appear to have been responsible for the negligible role which women played in the political development of the Southern Cameroons. A few who have sat in parliament have been nominated and not elected on popular basis nor is there evidence that any women in the territory have ever contested elections.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

In comparison with other British colonies in West Africa, the development of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons was belated and inadequate and, as a result, the political development of the territory was carried out by Cameroonians with insufficient formal education. An attempt has been made in the course of this study to examine some of the causes of the problems and to show the interrelationship between these problems and the political development of the territory from 1922 to 1961 when it became independent by unifying with the French Cameroons.

The Cameroons was in the <sup>un</sup>fortunate position of coming under colonial rule several decades later than other countries in West Africa. Even when the territory came under effective colonial rule, educational development was bedevilled by the absence of those factors and conditions - financial aid from the colonial administration and various forms of economic and social changes - which fostered the development of education in other parts of

West Africa. The immediate result of this belated colonisation of the Cameroons and of the absence of factors responsible for the development of education was that the London Baptist Mission which introduced formal education carried out its activities under extremely difficult conditions. Moreover, the fact that the London Baptist Mission was the only body providing formal education in the territory was in itself another cause of the problems of educational development. Without subvention from any colonial government, the resources of the London Baptist Mission were not adequate to enable it to expand education beyond the coastal confines of the territory. Consequently, for the thirty years of its activities from 1844 to 1884, it could not lay the foundations for post-primary education.

Available evidence tends to suggest that, due mainly to the unfortunate pre-colonial history of the Cameroons, the seeds of the problems of post-primary education were sowed right from the initial period when formal education was introduced in the territory.

These problems of post-primary education failed to receive a solution during the period of German administration in the Cameroons from 1884 to 1914 because Germany

was for a long time reluctant to carry out the development of its overseas colonies. Evidence appears to lead to the conclusion that for many years, because of its inexperience in colonial administration, Germany's policy towards the development of its overseas colonies was one of lukewarmness and neglect. It was only after 1907, twenty-three years after its annexation of the Cameroons, that Germany established definite plans for developing the Cameroons in general and its education in particular. But this program did not appear to have included post-primary education. Consequently, at the end of Germany's thirty years of administration in 1914, there were no secondary schools in the Cameroons and the five-year period of primary education with its emphasis on vocational training was inadequate as preparation for secondary school.

After the First World War, Britain and France partitioned the German territory of Cameroons into British and French Cameroons respectively. But the partition was so disproportionately in favour of France that Britain retained only a fraction of the territory. In the face of political and administrative expediency, Britain further partitioned its own portion of the Cameroons into Northern and Southern Cameroons respectively, the Northern part

administered as part of Northern Nigeria and the Southern Cameroons as part of Southern Nigeria. The partition of the Cameroons between Britain and France, the subsequent partition of the British Cameroons into Northern and Southern sectors, and their administrative incorporation into Nigeria appear to have been very important in perpetuating the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons during the period of British administration from 1922 to 1961. These three factors submerged the political significance which the Southern Cameroons may have enjoyed had it been administered as a separate political entity. Also, the administrative incorporation of the territory into Nigeria removed the need to provide Southern Cameroonians with post-primary education because the Southern Cameroons was put into the civil<sup>service</sup> pool of British West Africa and the colonial administration found it easier to transfer other West Africans to work in the Cameroons than to train Cameroonians for responsible positions in the civil service.

Meanwhile opportunities for post-primary education existed in Nigeria, but many factors prevented Cameroonians from taking advantage of these opportunities: the system of awarding government ~~scholarships~~ to Cameroonians,

economic and social forces including the general under-development of the Southern Cameroons and the attitude of the native peoples towards formal education.

With respect to the economic and social problems, the Southern Cameroons remained a neglected territory for most of the time it was administered as a British Mandatory and then as a British Trust Territory. There were few motorable roads in the territory and the rate of economic growth was comparatively slow. Moreover, Nigerians who dominated both the civil service and the economy appeared to have been the greatest beneficiaries of the limited form of economic developments that were carried out in the territory. This problem was aggravated by the fact that opportunities for post-primary education for Southern Cameroonians were for many years available only in Nigeria. This factor made both the cost and the conditions for acquiring post-primary education almost unbearable for the great majority of Cameroonians.

In spite of these problems, primary education expanded and opportunities for teacher training increased from 1922 to 1954. In every case the expansion of education was due in large part to the untiring efforts of Christian missionaries. Apart from two secondary schools,

one opened in 1939 by the Roman Catholic Mission and the second one in 1949 by the joint efforts of the Protestant Missions, and apart from one technical college, teacher training remained the only form of post-primary education until 1954. But teacher training was largely professional, providing academic courses which were lower than those offered in the secondary grammar schools elsewhere in English-speaking West African countries. Teacher training did not, nor was it intended to, open avenues for further education leading to university degrees. It was not until late 1950's that grade II teachers began to follow university studies leading to degrees, after having passed the London General Certificate of Education at the Ordinary and Advanced Levels.

A significant expansion of primary education and opportunities for post-primary education took place in the Southern Cameroons from 1954 to 1961. Two new elements emerged during this period. One was the establishment in the territory of the first girls secondary school in 1955 by the Roman Catholic Mission with grants from the Southern Cameroons government. The second element was the beginning of privately owned commercial and technical colleges. Previously, private initiative or participation in

educational development had been limited to primary schools.

The expansion of education opportunities at all levels from 1954 to 1961 was largely the result of political developments which raised the status of the Southern Cameroons from a province to a "Quasi" Region within the Federation of Nigeria. This separated the administration of the territory from that of the Eastern Region of Nigeria; a "quasi" ministry of education was for the first time established in the Southern Cameroons and all decisions concerning education were henceforth taken within the territory.

The Southern Cameroons government was now in a position to expand educational opportunities and this was necessitated by the desire to produce high level personnel in order to "Cameroonize" the civil service. But these efforts to expand educational opportunities for secondary and higher education did not appear to have had any significant effect on the political developments of the territory.

Because teacher training had been the dominant form of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons before 1954, and because of the absence of an educated elite, primary school teachers, especially those who had



obtained the teachers grade II certificate, constituted the most important social class in the territory until after 1961 when the earliest beneficiaries of the expansion from 1954 began to return. But these new graduates arrived too late to prepare the Southern Cameroons for Independence and unification with the French Cameroons. Consequently, and as the dominant social class, primary school teachers came to play a major role in the political development of the Southern Cameroons before and even after Independence.

A number of social and economic factors together with some traditional values combined to isolate the traditional rulers from the school system and also led to the small extent to which women in the Southern Cameroons had received formal education. If education is important in the political development of the Southern Cameroons as it is in the development of other nations, then the negligible role which the traditional rulers and women played in the political development of the Southern Cameroons is one of the consequences of the problems of formal education generally and of post-primary education in particular.

In summary, the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons under British administration

from 1922 to 1961 and their political consequences were due to a combination of external and internal factors, most of which could have either been avoided or solved, if the Southern Cameroons had not been integrated into Nigeria.

The attempt that has been made in the course of this study to examine the problems of post-primary education in the Southern Cameroons from 1922 to 1961 and their effects on the political development of the territory has brought out other problems for further research. Two of these problems, the role of traditional rulers and women in the political development of the Southern Cameroons with reference to the problems of education in general and post-primary education in particular, have already been discussed. But it is admitted that this aspect of the problems of post-primary education has not been exhaustively dealt with. A more satisfactory investigation would require the combined efforts of Anthropologists, Sociologists and Educationists. Other problems which may be of interest to Historians and Educationists are:

- (a) Why was the Cameroons not colonised before 1884?
- (b) Why were Christian Missions, other than the London Baptist Mission not interested in extending their activities to the Cameroons before 1884? The present study provides

material useful for a comparative study of similar problems in the French Cameroons during the period. Such a comparative study is necessary because it provides a background for the understanding, the planning and the development of a harmonised system of education in the United Republic of Cameroon.

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