

## EDUCATION IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA

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**T**HE object of this article is to present a picture of educational work among the African population, particularly that undertaken by the Church in British East Africa, with special reference to Tanganyika Territory, since the school organisation and the various problems connected with it in Tanganyika can be taken as typical of educational work in the neighbouring countries of Uganda and Kenya.

These three territories, which are as large as Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and the British Isles put together, meet about the shores of Lake Victoria. The total population is 17,600,000, of whom 7,500,000 are in Tanganyika and roughly 5,000,000 in each of the other two territories. The European population is very small in proportion, and is made up mostly of Government officers, save in Kenya where there is a white settlement of nearly 20,000. There are 11,000 Goans and an Indian community of nearly 170,000, small in numbers but economically very influential, since most of the trading, in Tanganyika in particular, is in Indian hands. The natural African unit is a tribal one, each with its own taboos, customs, laws, languages and chiefs; and where the administrative boundaries cut across tribal areas or group them into districts or reserves, the tribal organisation, with the chiefs' barazas, is respected as far as possible.

The three territories which constitute British East Africa and the island of Zanzibar come within different political categories. Uganda and Zanzibar are Protectorates, Kenya is mainly a Colony with a narrow coastal strip formerly belonging to the Sultan of Zanzibar and now a protectorate area, and Tanganyika is a British Mandate. The territorial boundaries are entirely the result of the European occupation of East and Central Africa at the end of the last century. Since the former German colony, German East Africa, became the British Mandated Territory of Tanganyika there has been an increasing measure of regional co-operation between the adjacent territories of Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika. There are frequent inter-territorial conferences on technical matters of all kinds and the conferences of the

Directors of Education seem likely to play an ever more important rôle in bringing greater uniformity into the East African education services.

The heralds of education in East Africa were the humble catechetical centres, sometimes called bush schools. There was only one in the Holy Ghost Fathers' Mission at Bagamoyo when Stanley arrived there on his way to find Livingstone in 1872. Six years later the first group of White Fathers penetrated as far as Lake Victoria, and soon afterwards others reached the shores of Lake Tanganyika. Their first task was to master the native languages, gear them to the European alphabet and produce laboriously written manuscripts of Catechisms, Bible Histories, Holy Gospels, Lives of the Saints, Grammars and Dictionaries. As soon as there was a nucleus of Christians, a catechetical training school was opened at a central mission where selected men were admitted as pupils. Here they were taught how to read and write, and, after a further intensive course in catechism, they were equipped with books and sent as catechists to take charge of the evangelisation in other centres. A mud hut served as prayer house and school room, and for many hours daily over a period of two to four years adults and children were initiated not only into the Catholic Faith but also into the elements of reading, writing and arithmetic, the aim being to establish a literate Christianity. It was in these catechetical centres, the outposts of the Mission, that primitive people were taught how to *live* their Christianity. They learnt not only the theory but above all the practice: unselfishness, discipline, honesty and all those virtues which form the core of a Christian society. The catechetical centre was in truth a school, and offered a solid foundation on which to build a sound future education structure.

Only second in importance to the training schools for catechists and the catechetical centres came the training of African priests. This was necessarily a long process, and not infrequently the results were disappointing; but the missionaries gave themselves to the task with heroic faith and courage. From the earliest times seminaries were opened and candidates were selected from the children attending bush schools. In the minor seminaries the boys were taught, besides the vernacular, Latin, a European language as well as science and elementary mathematics. Those who succeeded in reaching the end of the minor seminary course (sometimes only

one in twenty) entered the major seminary of philosophy and theology. Here the teaching was facilitated by the use of imported European textbooks in Latin, French or German and the academic standard which was set was, like the rest of the formation work, extraordinarily high. It is therefore not surprising that many years passed before the first Africans received the call to the priesthood. But the missionary's zeal was tempered with extreme caution, and disappointment did not generate despondency. Seminaries multiplied and today there are 265 African priests working alongside the European missionaries, and there is an African Bishop in charge of a vicariate with a staff of nineteen European and fifty-five African priests. In all the three Territories there are now 320 in the major seminaries and 1,374 minor seminarians. But since the introduction of state-controlled education in the twenties the recruitment is no longer made from the catechetical centres, for since then there has been a considerable development in primary education everywhere.

Despite the splendid work of education accomplished by the bush schools it was clear that sooner or later the Colonial Government would step in and take charge. The catechetical centres were not founded primarily as secular institutions and it was essential that they should preserve their original character of Mission cells and that, as the core of evangelisation, they should remain unfettered by governmental regulations. Moreover, as time advanced the rudimentary nature of the secular instruction given in the catechetical centres became more obvious, and the State alone could organise and equip the various types of educational institutions demanded by colonial development projects.

The White Paper of 1925 which followed upon the visits of the Phelps-Stokes Mission laid down the broad lines along which Education in East Africa has developed up to the present day. In the late twenties the Education Departments were reorganised and the State took over responsibility for all education. The Missions were invited to co-operate in the developments of schools of every type, provided they agreed to do so according to a uniform scheme laid down by Government. Government undertook to provide grants-in-aid for certain classes of Mission schools, based on the number of qualified European and African staff and on the efficiency of the school. Further, to assure that the co-operation between Government and the Missions remained a living reality,

a Central Advisory Committee on African Education was provided for in the new Education Ordinances.

The present legal position of Education in Tanganyika might be thus summed up:

(a) No school may be established or maintained except with the permission of the Director of Education.

(b) No school may be staffed except by teachers who have been registered by the Director of Education.

(c) Catechetical centres, i.e. places where people are gathered for prayers and religious instruction and where only a minimum of secular instruction is given, are not schools 'within the meaning of the act' and therefore outside the purview of the Education Department. Similarly, seminaries, 'the object of which is to train people for the sacred ministry', do not come within the scope of the Education Ordinances either.

(d) Anybody may open and conduct schools in accordance with the Education Ordinance and Regulations. Such managing bodies are called Voluntary Agencies and the normal channel of communication between them and Government is through an Education Secretary.

(e) Grants-in-aid may be paid to Voluntary Agencies in respect of teachers' salaries, equipment, maintenance of pupils and capital expenditure.

(f) Agencies pay their own teachers in accordance with an approved salary scale. Each agency is expected to organise its schools in the manner prescribed by Government regulations and to establish such supervision as will ensure that its schools are being conducted efficiently.

(g) The managing body has the right to appoint, transfer or dismiss its teachers, but it is expected to inform Government in due course of such appointments, transfers, and dismissals.

(h) Government may open and conduct schools under any conditions the Director of Education may judge reasonable and opportune.

At first the Missions obtained freehold property without difficulty, but with the development of European legislation the tendency has been not to alienate any Crown Land on a freehold basis. Thus, to obtain a school site application is made for a leasehold or Right of Occupancy or permission sought to build on Crown Land. In each case permission has to be sought first from

the Chief. In the event of a Mission wishing to build a school only, the normal leasehold is for thirty-three years. The Education Department, looking forward to the day when all schools will come under the direction of secular Native Authorities, tries to discourage the awarding of leaseholds for schools to the Missions; it would like to see all schools sited on Crown Land. Government however still continues to grant Rights of Occupancy since this is the sole legal guarantee Missions can have that the schools they erect are used for no other purpose. Almost all catechetical centres are built on Crown (tribal) Land mainly because the buildings are not expensive and because Government accords Rights of Occupancy very reluctantly.

The basis of education in Tanganyika is a four-year literary course in primary schools for children between the ages of six and fourteen years. The goal of universal literary is still far distant and the present ten-year plan aims at having 310,000 of the estimated 825,000 children of school-going age in primary schools by 1956. Provision is made for one in every five of the pupils in primary schools to go on to Middle Schools. The Middle School is a new category, introduced in 1951. There will be only two hundred of these schools by 1956; and because of their limited number they will be generally boarding institutions. The aim is to provide a sound practical education without seriously impairing academical standards: girls will be taught Domestic Science and Child Welfare, and in boys' centres the emphasis will be on agriculture, animal husbandry, or handicrafts, according to local economic conditions. Pupils who complete the courses successfully will be enabled to enter the Grade II Teacher Training centres or Industrial Schools. The rest, it is hoped, will return to tribal life rather than float into the industrial centres and towns; but only the future can tell whether it is reasonable to believe that boys and girls can be educated for eight years and still wish to return to their villages and shambas. After standard VI at the Middle School a certain number—about 700-800 boys and girls—are allowed to qualify for entry into one or other of the twenty-four secondary Schools (of which for the moment there are only two for girls). A limited number of girls, on completing Standard VI join a Women's Teacher Training school where, after a two-year professional course, they will be awarded a Grade II teacher's certificate.

There are two types of secondary schools: Junior and Senior. Those who obtain the Junior Secondary Certificate may either enter a Grade I teacher training school, join one of the departmental training schools with a view to adopting such careers as those of hospital or laboratory assistance, postmasters, engineers, veterinary or agricultural instructors, or, if their academical history warrants it, they may join one of the three Senior Secondary schools where they are taken up to matriculation standard. The majority, however, of those pupils who complete the Junior Secondary course are absorbed into clerical work in Governmental departments.

Makerere University College in Uganda forms the apex of the education pyramid in all the three countries. It is open not only to students from Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya, but those from Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Zanzibar, the Sudan and Abyssinia; yet so far no Europeans or Indians have been admitted. The college, which was founded as a Technical School in 1922, was affiliated to the University of London in 1950. Qualifications for admission are based on certain credits in the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate Examination which is taken by all Senior Secondary Schools throughout East Africa. For some time to come not all the students who enter Makerere will read for a degree. There are several non-graduate professional courses given at Makerere: education, medicine, veterinary, science, agriculture and art. Before a student can train for these professions he has to read for two to three years in arts or science and reach approximately the London Intermediate Examination level. The comparative statistics of Makerere show that Uganda has been in a position to make better use of the East African College than any of the other territories.

About one in four of the Makerere students are Catholics. In Kenya the Fathers of the Irish Province of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost have succeeded in building up one of the best Senior Secondary schools in East Africa. This congregation has now accepted the direction of a Catholic Territorial Secondary School in Tanganyika near Dar es Salaam. There are three Senior Secondary Schools in Tanganyika, one Catholic, one Protestant and the third Government, and there are two Senior Secondary centres for girls, both in Uganda. In Tanganyika there is a Junior Secondary School for girls under government control, but efforts

are being made to find a suitable congregation of English-speaking sisters to open a more ambitious Catholic Girls' Secondary institution. There is little doubt that the next five years will witness a vigorous attempt in each Territory to make full use of the excellent opportunities which Makerere offers, and towards which the Governments of East African countries subscribe generously.

There are as yet no African graduates in schools although there are a few Africans reading for degrees in the United Kingdom. The policy is to substitute Africans for Europeans in schools as rapidly as possible. For the moment (and probably for many years to come) some European graduates are necessary in Junior and Senior Secondary schools, in Teacher Training centres and in Girls' Middle Schools.

Primary education in Kenya and Uganda is given in one or other of the main vernaculars. In Tanganyika, however, the language used in all primary schools is Swahili. The syntax of this language is Bantu, but the grammatical structure and part of the vocabulary of it has been enriched by infiltration of words from Arabic, Persian, Hindustani and even Portuguese. It is the native language of Zanzibar and of the Sultan's former territory of the East African Litoral. It found its way inland among the old slave routes and later it accompanied Indian and Arabic traders as far west as the Belgian Congo. Because of its Bantu nature it is understood by all Bantu-speaking tribes, and in a country of such a large and varied range of vernaculars as Tanganyika, first the German, then the British Colonial Government adopted it as the official vehicular language. In Uganda, in the North West area of Tanganyika, and in the greater part of Kenya, the Africans are attached to their own tribal languages and Swahili is seldom heard and never liked. Swahili, however, is introduced as a subject in the later stages of the primary schools in Kenya and is taught as such throughout the secondary schools. It is not taught at all in Uganda. In the Tanganyika middle schools Swahili remains the medium of instruction, although an intensive course of English is given in all standards. In Secondary schools teaching is carried out entirely in English, Swahili being allocated merely an academic place in the syllabus. In Makerere University College English reigns supreme.

At present almost all educated Africans in Tanganyika, in-

cluding the modern type of Grade II teachers, read and speak three languages, the vernacular, Swahili and English. Off the highways and outside the administrative and commercial centres Swahili is for the most part heard only in the schools, for even in Tanganyika unlettered people regard it very much as a foreign importation. Many Catholic and Protestant Missions have adopted the native language to the exclusion of Swahili as the medium of religious instruction and there are several local vernacular newspapers published by these Missions. All native languages will certainly not survive, but some of the more important ones such as Kisukuma and Kihaya may well hold their ground against the inroad of Swahili.

The two main Voluntary Agencies in Education are the Protestant and Catholic Missions. Their schools cater chiefly for their respective adherents, although they admit also all children who wish to attend, whether pagan or Muslim. Muslim organisations, it appears, own a few primary schools (no mention is made of any such schools in the 1950 Report of Tanganyika Government to U.N.O. except a grant of £10,048 for 'Muslim Associations and Agencies'), and most of the Mohammedan children in school attend Government or Native Authority centres, which have to cater principally for pagans as well as for Christian children in areas where there are no Mission Schools.

Something might be said here on the respective positions of the three main religious denominations. Islam is especially strong along the coastal regions, in many administrative centres up-country along the former slave trails and wherever there are Arab or Indian dukas. There are very few Mohammedans in the north west of Tanganyika, in Uganda or in the hinterland of Kenya. It is, however, practically impossible to give even an approximate figure to represent the number of Muslim Africans in East Africa principally because of the absence of methodical organisation and of organised proselytism, and because of the rudimentary forms to which Islam is reduced in the greater part of East Africa. It is certain, however, that Islam is spreading rapidly in Tanganyika, especially in large centres like Dar es Salaam and Tanga; most Muslims are missionaries of a creed which, at least in this part of Africa, pagans may accept with very little moral or intellectual effort and which causes no appreciable disruption either in the pagan soul or in pagan society.

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Catholics, including catechumens, numbered in 1949, 2,253,442 or almost thirteen per cent of the population. The ecclesiastical divisions of East Africa are as follows: Uganda, six vicariates with a total population of 1,089,700 Catholics; Kenya, three vicariates and one prefecture and 370,700 Catholics; Tanganyika, 792,849 Catholics distributed over thirteen vicariates and three prefectures. The Anglican missionary societies at work are the Church Missionary Society and the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, and their adherents, together with those of the former German Lutheran Church and the Church of Sweden, number 308,000.

There remain to be considered the Native Administration schools. As found in Tanganyika, these are Primary and Middle schools established by Government after consultation with the local African barazas and they are managed by the District Commissioner and an Education Officer. They are found everywhere, but especially in towns and administrative centres and near tribal barazas. The teachers are trained in Government training centres, and although many of them are Catholics (mainly ex-Mission teachers who transferred their services to Government at a time when Government teachers were more highly paid than Mission teachers), the majority is Protestant and Muslim. Native Administration schools are undenominational, although Government seeks some arrangement by which Christian and Muslim children would receive religious instruction according to a regular syllabus approved by the respective heads of religious bodies. So far all attempts in this direction have failed, and the most that can be done is allow a catechist or koranic teacher into the schools twice a week for religious instruction. And even this is not always possible owing to lack of organisation or enthusiasm on the part of the religious bodies concerned. The problem of providing catechism classes for Catholic children in Native Authority schools will become more actual as time goes on, since an increasing number of Catholic children are finding no other alternative but to attend these schools owing to the absence of an accessible Catholic school.

The rapid development of the Native Authority schools may be gauged by the rate of expansion during the past twelve years. In 1938 there were ninety-five Government and Native Authority Primary schools with 10,225 pupils; in 1950 there were 354 with

40,193. During the same period the Mission Primary schools, Catholic and Protestant, rose from 889 to 1,024. Government Secondary, Middle and Teacher Training centres also have developed rapidly; in 1937 there were five Government secondary schools and one Teacher Training and Middle School; today there are more than ten Secondary schools and fourteen Middle schools and Teacher Training schools under Government control.

Of the 162,000 children in Primary schools in Tanganyika in November 1950, 40,193 were in Government or Native Administration schools and nearly 67,000 in Catholic schools; in other words, the Catholic Church has over forty per cent of the total primary school enrolment. There is the same percentage of children in Catholic Middle schools.

As regards Secondary education in Tanganyika, the figures for November, 1950, give 2405 pupils on the roll, 2248 boys and 157 girls. Government schools accommodate 1110 boys and 76 girls. According to the returns of March, 1951, 918 pupils were in Catholic Secondary schools, of whom only 36 were girls.

In the Primary Teachers Training schools (Grade II) on a territorial total last year of 826 boys and 139 girls, 209 were in Government centres, and 630 boys and 126 girls in the centres conducted by the Voluntary Agencies. The figures for Catholic Training schools in January this year were 345 boys and 68 girls.

Girls' education is very underdeveloped. Africans, many Christians even, do not understand what benefits can accrue to the girls themselves, to their parents or to society, from even the most elementary type of education. The woman is still considered as a man's chattel, whose lot it is to help her mother at home while she is young, to be married off in exchange for a substantial dowry as soon as the law permits, and sometimes even earlier than that, and in her married state to bear children, till the fields, draw water, gather firewood and cook the family meal in exactly the same way as African women have done since the dawn of time. Moreover, in practice if not always legally, an African woman cannot exercise the right to possess 'mali' and she depends on her husband's generosity to keep her supplied in clothes and trinkets. When the times comes, as it surely will, for African women to assert their right to own property, there will be a profound change in the social structure of Africa. African girls, however, particularly when they are children of Christian parents

and when it is possible to have women teachers in charge of the class, are beginning to attend school regularly. But women teachers are very few, since girls marry so young (between fifteen and eighteen is the normal age), and, once married, their teaching career comes to a premature end for most of them. The Church hopes to solve the problem of the dearth and short life of women teachers by building up congregations of African teaching Sisters. Of the five hundred African Sisters in Tanganyika, nearly two hundred are certificated teachers, and 112 of these are at the moment actively engaged in Primary and Middle Girls' schools.

A final word on Industrial Education in Tanganyika may be useful. Many Catholic Missions conduct Industrial Schools where boys are admitted after completing the Primary School or on leaving Standard VI of the Middle School. The course is from four to five years. In them such subjects as Rural Carpentry, Tailoring and Leatherwork are taught. The Education Department has never shown much encouragement to these centres which have been in existence for nearly twenty years and have fulfilled a useful rôle in training rural craftsmen. Despite the expert lay-brothers who direct these centres it is not possible to develop them adequately with financial assistance from Government, and the Director of Education has announced that after this year the meagre grants-in-aid which are now given to some of these schools will cease. Government is planning to spend considerable funds on establishing one or two large Industrial Schools where only candidates who have completed the Middle School course will be admitted.

No matter what will be the future of the Rural Mission crafts schools, there is surely a profound need also for a more advanced type of industrial, technical and agricultural training. The establishment of a few such Catholic centres is much to be desired; but here we should require the services of a Congregation of Religious who are especially equipped for this kind of apostolate.