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# The Emergence of a Congo Church

H. C. Hobgood

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(2) **MASTER OF ARTS**

B. **AT THE**

- (1) The College of Missions
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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction: The Purpose of the Thesis.

In 1898 the Disciples of Christ took over the Equator station of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Union at Bolenge. From that time this mission has enjoyed a steady growth, both in missionary personnel and in its influence on native life in the Equator District of the Colony of Congo Belge. Its influence has also reached parts of three of the districts bordering on Equator District. It is with the church that this mission has won from the surrounding heathenism, and with the church that it is hoped may be built up in this section from this beginning that this thesis primarily deals. The question of an ultimate National Church, covering all or a large part of the Congo Basin, is dealt with briefly in the chapter on church polity. This hope may or may not be realized. But to me it seems necessary of realization if Congo Christianity is to be spared the bitterness and weakness of faction and division. If missionaries and their supporters in Europe and America would only seek the realization of the will of God for the Congo church rather than the perpetuation of their denominational idiosyncrasies in doctrine and polity, there would be no insuperable difficulty in uniting all the churches of Congo into one harmonious body. (1) There might grow up small bodies of seceders, but as long as the national church held to a true course of spiritual and evangelical Christianity, these would not win large accessions. It is to be hoped that the missionaries will pursue the non-denominational course.

(1) Gerdener, G.B.A.: Studies in the Evangelisation of South Africa.

The attainment of a central organization cementing a genuine union of the church groups that shall be built up by the various missions of Congo , would not necessarily require that the local groups should all have an organization exactly similar, nor even approximately so. Representation on the central organization might be pro-rated to territorial divisions according to the number of actual church members ,leaving each such territorial unit to develop its own local polity as seemed best to its own leadership.

The plan of this thesis is to set forth first the environment in which the Congo church has been planted and is being nourished. Then to outline desirable lines of development therefor , leading to the realization of the aim of a united , self-supporting , self-directing , self-perpetuating church. A church that will be an honor to those who have labored for its establishment and a glory to its eternal Head..

Larger use might have been made of the experience of missionaries in South and West Africa. Especially do the efforts toward autonomy of the African church in these sections justify close study. But aside from the experience of the Paris Evangelical Mission in Basutoland , no direct references have been made to the semi of fully autonomous churches of these regions. This mission was established four decades later than some of the others in South Africa. Still its efforts are typical of the best results. And in no section has a successful, wholly autonomous church emerged. Efforts in this direction in both South and West Africa have failed to win numerous adherents. These failures have been due to the fact that they have not attracted the ablest leadership; that they have degenerated into societies

for anti-white propaganda ; and they have often sought to introduce gross ancient immoral practices into the church in the extreme effort to stress racial inheritances. Doubtless the Congo church will seek complete autonomy faster than it is able to wisely exercise such control. But a wise and sympathetic missionary force , instructed by the experience of thier fellows in the older mission fields of Africa, ought to be able to guide these efforts at autonomy better, and so promote an earlier realization of a genuinely worthy and complete independence of foreign superintendence.

Limits of time have not permitted as thoro a treatment of the questions involved as it was at first hoped to produce. It is hoped, however , that the may furnish to many missionaries happy experience in working out and amplifying the dream here so inadequately traced, of an indigenus Congo church that shall be "fervent in spirit serving the Lord."

The largest ordinary political unit in the old regime was the clan. That is the largest unit that ordinarily recognized the authority of a particular leader to a pre-eminant authority over the whole group was that, in this sense, with the aid of a code of uncodified habits and customs, favored his own kind as in the case of the... lived in the central Congo basin, usually for years after the deaths of their founders.

That clan was chiefdom who recognized as the hereditary... in the case of high... Affairs regularly...

## CHAPTER TWO.

### The Political Background of the Congo Church.

The Church of Christ has been greatly influenced in the past by its political environment. This has been especially true in its formative periods. For example the organization of the church has at times been largely determined by that of the government or governments under which it has grown up.

There is every reason to expect that the government now existing, and that shall yet exist in Congo Belge shall produce profound re-actons on the formative life of the emerging church. It will be the duty of counselling missionaries and wise native leaders to see that these re-actions shall create only desirable results in the church.

The political background falls naturally into two parts, the past type and the present government.

#### Ancient Politics.

The largest ordinary political unit in the old regime was the clan. That is the largest unit that ordinarily recognized the inherited right of a particular leader to a pre-eminent authority over the whole group was what, in this thesis, will be called the clan. Occasionally a ruler of unusual ability and ambition, favored by circumstances, extended his reign over one or more neighboring clans. Such kingdoms were short-lived in the central Congo basin, usually falling to pieces before or soon after the deaths of their founders.

Each clan had a chieftian who was recognized as the hereditary head of the clan. He was usually the oldest male in the line of highest rank of the founder of the clan. This chief's authority was



generally merely nominal, except in the village where he actually lived. But certain honorary rights were conceded by all as his due. For instance the right to divide and appropriate certain parts of all leopards, eagles, and python killed by members of the clan. But this recognition did not involve payment of tribute. If wise in counsel he was considered the legitimate judge of inter-village disputes within the clan, provided these disputes were not satisfactorily settled by the patriarchs of the villages concerned. Theoretically he had the right to call on the whole clan to go to war against neighboring clans. However if he was not a man of strong character, villages other than his resident one could, and often would refuse him obedience, and even in his native village the elders often made his decisions for him.

A new clan was sometimes founded by the migration of a part of an existing clan, under the leadership of an outstanding member thereof. Usually such leaders were of high rank in the original clan, but ability for leadership might be the only qualification. In either case his descendants retained the leadership of the clan. Some clans had from two to five villages only, but most of them contained from ten to thirty villages.

A village was sometimes composed of a single family, but many large villages had two or more families. If more than one family was in a village each had its own head man. But over the village as a whole there was a ranking head man. He was the hereditary head of the highest ranking of the families composing the village.

So the scale of authority in the ancient native regime ran;  
 (1) Clan head, (2) Sub-head or village head-man, (3) Family head, (4)  
 Head of the immediate family.

Theoretically these men exercised autocratic power in their respective spheres. But in practice all but the most despotic followed the counsel of the family patriarchs. In some cases other more energetic members of the family practically usurped the head's authority. Usually such usurpation was not hereditary.

If a village consists of more than one family marriage is allowed between the different families of the village. But members of the same family cannot intermarry. The separate families of the village either occupy different streets, or long vacant intervals are left in the street between the families. The village family was divided into as many smaller or immediate families as there were legally married men in the family who had heirs. The immediate family was subject to a large measure of control by the whole village family.

#### THE PRESENT POLITICAL ORGANIZATION.

The organization of the foreign government of Congo Belge is somewhat complicated. From a functionary standpoint it is divided into administrative and judicial departments. The administrative performs the executive, legislative and military functions whereas the judicial department concerns itself with legal matters only.

The Administrative department is sub-divided as follows: (2)

- a. The King;
- b. The Governor General ;
- c. Minister of Colonies ;
- d. Provincial Governors;
- e. District Commissaires;
- f. Territorial Administrators;
- g. Military Officers;
- n. Postal and Customs Officers.

(2) Daye, Pierre : L'Empire Colonial Belge , 385-404 ; 255-262 ; 288-299

Vandervelde, E. : La Belgique et le Congo , 152-166.



The King is the nominal head of the colonial government , but the functions ascribed to him are exercised by the Belgian National Parliament thru the Minister of Colonies. The Minister of Colonies is, therefore, the real head of the colonial government, for while decrees and statutes relative to Congo Belge may originate with Parliament, they seldom do. However, Parliament does enjoy the right of accepting or rejecting the recommendations of the Minister of Colonies.

The Governor General " exercises the executive power with certain exceptions stipulated by the laws , decrees , and statutes. He has the direction of all the administrative and military services established in the colony . " (1) He also has a considerable degree of legislative authority within certain prescribed limits.

There are four provinces in the colony, each administered by a provincial governor or vice-governor. " They take care of the administration and represent in their department, the governor general. They exercise the executive power which the King delegates to them. " (2) They have the power to issue certain decrees on matters that concern only their respective provinces. The district commissaires of the districts in the various provinces are under the direction of the governors of these provinces.

There are twenty-two districts in the colony. At the head of each of these is a district commissaire. He is " The sole authority in his circumscription , for the direction of all the services of the district, and assumes the responsibility of the administration of the territories which are confided to him." (3)

The districts are divided into territories. Each territory

- (1) Daye, Pierre : L'Empire Colonial Belge , 385,386.
- (2) " " " " " " " " " " " "
- (3) " " " " " " " " " " " " 386-388

has at its head an administrator, who is supposed to be assisted by one or more white territorial agents. The territorial officers collect the head tax from the natives, enforce the law, and look after such public works as are being carried on, which, in remote territories, are usually only the maintenance of passable paths thruout the territory. They also advise the chiefs as to their duties, such as the time and place they will be expected to gather their clansmen for the payment of the yearly head tax, as to co-operation with commercial agents in gathering forest products for sale, and the cleaning and maintenance of the afore-mentioned paths, and repressive and other law enforcement measures.

The Administrators have police power, and for its execution are provided with a small body of native police. Each district has a company of soldiers under the supervision of a military officer. These soldiers are used to maintain order and to suppress incipient rebellions. For these purposes small detachments of them are often detailed for service under local administrators when disturbances have arisen or threaten within their respective territories.

The character and personnel and organization of the judicial department are not germane to this thesis, and will not be described.

The native mind is profoundly impressed with the place of rank in the Belgian system of government. In church matters they frequently draw illustrations from this. A pastor-evangelist in a remote village compared Mr. Yocum, on his visit to their village, to the Governor General, Mr. Hensey, as the legal representative of the mission, to the provincial governor, a local missionary to the district commissaire, and Mark Njoji to the local administrator. If allowed to evolve their own church polity, without any outside influence in shaping it, it seems inevitable that this political system will characterize it to a consid-

able degree. In fact, tho I believe that the native Christians should ultimately decide what polity they shall adopt, it seems desirable that they shall be largely guided till they have reached a stage of spiritual discernment where rank will not exert too glamorous an influence in determining the outstanding features of that polity.

The State has based its native political control on the clan system of the ancient regime. The State officials seek out the highest ranking head man in the clan, and appoint him the paramount chief of the State over the clan. The other men of rank are the ranking village-chief or head man, and the family and sub-family heads. To enable these men to enjoy the prestige necessary to enforce the requirements of the State the clan and village chiefs are given medals which designate their rank, and which they usually wear suspended on a chain about their necks. The head men of lower rank do not receive medals, but they are given certificates which designate their rank. The aim is to make the authority of each of these men coterminous with his authority in the ancient scheme of the native clan organization.

Under the State the chiefs enjoy considerable authority. When they are men of energy they command genuine respect and fear. Mean chiefs take much advantage of their rank and oppress their subjects. Chiefs have the right to regulate native life in accordance with the accepted traditions of the people. They are also commissioned to enforce all laws of the Colonial government enacted for their administration, and all orders of their local white superiors. This law enforcement requires their suppression of all violations of both the traditional and the colonial statute laws. To this end they can imprison as long as fourteen days, can administer corporal punishment by flogging, and can require labor of the prisoners during their incarceration. Practically any case short of murder can be adjudicated by them, when agreeable to both par-

ties. It is difficult for individuals in remote places to appeal to the colonial authorities without their sanction. The elders may judge a case according to their ancient custom, but the chief has the legal right to reject their decision when he so desires. This is a big and dangerous augmentation of the authority of the head man, but the colonial government feels the need of a more dependable authority than that of the ancient group of elders. So their legal authority has been diminished to practically nil and that of the chief has taken both their place, and a considerable group of additional prerogatives. However most chiefs seek to carry on their judicial work under the traditional forms. When the elders reach their decision the chief announces it as his decision, and proceeds to enforce the judgment by his authority as a government chief.

The maintenance of law and order and of public works, require the exertion of strong local authority. Respect for this authority must be maintained if it is to be effective. Abuse of authority by chiefs must, therefore, be punished by colonial officials with the utmost caution lest they destroy that reverence for the chief that law enforcement and public work require. Therefore the power of native rulers has been increased, and is sometimes upheld in the face of apparent justice for the sake of the morale of the law enforcement.

It is easy to see that the growing power of native political leaders is likely to lead to an expectation on the part of the native Christian leaders of a position of authority in the church corresponding to that held by their political friends in their spheres. They are likely to feel these two reasons urging them to strengthen their authority ; a. maintenance of sufficient respect to make their administration efficient requires this authority , and b. The suppression of abuses in the church requires it. In primitive society the majesty of spiritual

righteousness alone will not secure the needed effect in suppressing abuses. Even in the church the administrators must be upheld by the feeling on the part of those governed that their position is one of considerable authority, and their word requires obedience. Church leaders are likely to want this authority to become a recognized attribute of certain offices in the church. And the political authority of their kinsmen under white super-administrators, will as shown above, provide them with a ready model on which to seek the fashioning of their authority.

It is not that of an old-fashioned, but there is, nevertheless, an actual traditional feeling of family unity in the tribe. In some parts of Congo tribe unity was sometimes maintained in politics prior to the arrival of the white man.

The tribe in the interior, also, may be taken to mean a collection of a few recognizing a common ancestor or tribal hero and founder. The chief emphasis of the tribe will be found to speak the same language. There will be certain traditional prohibitions and taboos and constructions will be the same; the tribe, in this sense, is simply the enlarged family unit.

The name of the tribe occupying the central equatorial part of Congo seems to be the Mungu-Kimbo tribe. There are people in this section known by other names, as the Moko, the Moko and the Moko, but these are really subdivisions of the same tribe. Counting in the adjacent basin of the Congo, the population of this tribe will number nearly a million. But these people are not the best tribe. They are usually spoken of as the inferior of the two. Typically they are somewhat smaller than their neighbors. They are shy, and are therefore more difficult to keep under the discipline of the long training required to make them well educated. In many places they are easier to win to Christianity than their Mungu-Kimbo kins. Fair mental inferiority to the Mungu-Kimbo has not been proved, the many believe them inferior.

CHAPTER THREE

Central Congo Society.

I. The Family.

The ultimate social unit of Congo is the family. And the largest extension of the family is the tribe. Usually, of course, the family is not that of as so embracing, but there is, nevertheless, an actual traditional feeling of family unity in the tribe. In some parts of Congo Belge tribal unity was sometimes maintained in politics prior to the advent of the white man.

The tribe in its widest sense, may be taken to mean a collection of clans recognizing a common ancestor or tribal hero and founder. The clans composing the tribe will be found to speak the same language. There will be decided dialectical differences but the basic vocabularies and constructions will be the same. The tribe, in this sense, is simply the enlarged family unit.

The name of the tribe occupying the central Equatorial part of Congo Belge is the Mongo-Nkundo tribe. There are people in this section known by other names, as the Mbole, the Ekonda and the Nkole, but these are really sub-divisions of the same tribe. Counting in the aboriginal Batswa or Bushmen, the population of this tribe will number nearly a million. But these Batswa are not the same tribe. They are usually spoken of as the inferior of the two. Physically they are somewhat smaller than their conquerors. They are shy, and are therefore more difficult to keep under the discipline of the long training required to make them well educated. In many places they are easier to win to Christianity than their Mongo-Nkundo lords. Their mental inferiority to the Mongo-Nkundo has not been proved, tho many believe them inferior.



All the Mongo-Mkundo trace back their ancestry to the great hero Liyanza. The State attempts to trace the ancestry of all paramount chiefs to this tribal hero. Whether Liyanza was a real character or is fictitious is of little importance to us. For the story establishes the general acceptance of this group of their common origin. This fact is of sociological value, and in the church it is probable that those who share this tradition will feel a natural tendency to form a unit in the church, binding them in a specially close spiritual union.

The clan and its sub-divisions has already been treated in the preceding chapter. Of course the clan heads were expected to be able to establish their lineal descent from Liyanza. And sub-chiefs were expected to establish their descent from those whom held the corresponding positions in Liyanza's day. Of course where usurpers established their rule for a considerable period of time the family was accepted as the ranking family of the village, or even of the clan.

It has been pointed out that the clan heads were of the reputed descendants of Liyanza. So the clan, like the tribe, is simply an enlarged family unit, less comprehensive than the tribe. It is composed of people of common origin, tho its members are not necessarily of actual blood kin. A man's blood kin are called his "ilongo." In the case of the clan head it does not follow that all the members of his "ilongo" outrank the members of other families in the clan. It is only those whose relationship to the clan head is close enough to enable them to succeed to the headship itself that enjoy any individual rank by reason of that kinship. That is the clan head has a larger and a smaller family. The smaller family is made up of his close kin. Any male member of this smaller family is eligible to succeed to the clan headship. The right to a voice in affairs of the immediate family is not usually recognized beyond third or fourth cousins.

If members of different clans intermarry, a man's family will naturally be inter-clan. For a man's family is co-extensive with his blood relationship. And the relationship is traced thru both the father's and mother's families.

It is necessary to pay close attention to the terminology of kinship, for this is a true index to the native conception of proximity of relation, and the inheritance of its rights and duties. The actual father of a man is not the only one who enjoys the rank of father over him. For the father's brothers are called fathers also, and the father's sisters are "women fathers." And these possess the rights denoted by their titles. The real father, unless the head of the family, is not allowed to give his daughter in marriage without the consent of his brothers and sisters, and also of his uncles, aunts, his father, grandfather and other close relatives. The right of maternal aunts and uncles must also be recognized. They seldom have a deciding voice in family projects, but they share in its results. For example in paying for a wife the mother's family must be satisfied as well as the father's.

Besides the immediate family there is the village family. This is co-extensive with the group previously designated as the larger family, so far as the larger family are residents of a single village. But in the village that group which recognizes that all its members are of common recent ancestry make up the village family. They do not always know just how close is the relation between some of the members of the group. They may not all address each other by terms of kinship. Yet the relationship is too close to permit of intermarriage. Marriage between members of this group is considered incestuous, and incest is a heinous offense among Congo people. As already noted two or more of such families may live in a single village. Each of these families maintains its identity, and lives in a separate part of the



village. Inter-marriage between these groups is permissible, provided of course, blood kinship does not exist between the parties seeking marriage. Between more distant relatives in the village family illicit relations are sometimes winked at, but they may not lead to legal marriage. But if conception results it becomes a public scandal, and may lead to serious quarrels between the members of the immediate families concerned. There was recently such a case at Lotumbe. Relatives of the boy and girl, all Christians, asked advice of the missionaries. Since the relationship was so distant as not to be exactly traceable the missionaries said that the moral standards of the church required them to marry. But the heathen relatives of the girl were loathe to yield to such a "lowering" of their moral code. The girl suffered miscarriage, and nearly died. Had the boy been under ordinary native jurisdiction the family of the girl would have required a large money payment. Had she died they would have demanded the price of a wife. Family dignity could only have been maintained by enough cash to remove the moral stigma. This high-priced family honor is one of the most trying problems of the young Congo church. This will be seen in the problem now to be considered.

## II. MARRIAGE.

Marriage in Congo is a familial rather than an individual transaction. The right to the marriage relation is that of the regular husband and wife only, but the securing and maintaining of the relation is the mutual affair of the two families, and not just of the two individuals contracting marriage.

A girl may be sold into marriage by her father and responsible relatives without even mentioning the affair to her beforehand. This is unusual, but her willing consent is by no means necessary. Girls are usually married to old men. They take the marriage as a matter of course.

It is custom. Their families have the right to thus mate them, and it would be shameful to remain unmarried. If they want to form other relations later there are ways of managing. So why protest? A girl is usually pledged by an initial payment while she is still quite young. This is added to from time to time so that when she reaches puberty she she may become a wife of her purchaser without the delay of getting the money together. Another reason for this early clinching of the purchase is that the supply of wives is not sufficient to meet the demand. Naturally in a society that is polygeneous there will not be enough women to supply all demands, since the number of women is only about the same as that of the men.

The French dowry name of "dot" has been generally adopted to designate the marriage price paid for a wife, and it will be used in the remainder of this thesis. The payment of the dot gives the husband primarily, but his family in general, a large degree of legal control over the wife. They call her their property and she does not resent the term. Before the dot is sufficient to enable the purchaser to take the woman all responsible members of her family must give their consent to the marriage. If this is neglected they are almost sure to become a sore trouble to the husband until he has satisfied their impecunity. He is likely to get off much cheaper by paying the whole bunch in advance. If they are not satisfied they will demand cancellation of the marriage if there is immediate prospect of a better bargain elsewhere.

The husband has the right to the wifely labor of his mate. This means the planting and care of a garden, the preparation, for his consumption, of the food therefrom, or of any other food with which he may provide her. She must provide him with water for drinking and bathing, must keep his premises in order and provide wood for his fire, and keep the fire going.

The dot does not make the woman a slave from the native viewpoint. It is a peculiar feature of native thinking that a wife who has not been paid for, or for whom only a part of the required dot has been paid, is considered a slave. In their quarrels these delinquent husbands will taunt their wives as being slaves, since they have not paid for them. The reason is that wives are higher priced than slaves, and also that slaves were frequently secured in war without any money payment. Nevertheless, even in native thinking, there is a close analogy in some respects between the position of a wife and that of a slave. As already noted, she is the "property" of the husband and his family. She is legally subject to corporeal punishment by her husband for misdemeanor either moral or in failure to fulfill her husband's demands in work or in the marital relation. Her social and religious life are theoretically under the control of her husband. And she is supposed to pay him extravagant respect; but even heathen husbands usually are wise enough not to demand too much of fulfillment of their legal rights in such things.

The dot does not give the husband the right to sell his wife. This another outstanding difference between the status of the wife and that of a slave. If the marriage the husband is dissatisfied with the wife he may demand that her family take her back and restore his dot, or substitute a satisfactory wife, but he has to prove her a disobedient or unfaithful wife before he has a legal right to demand restitution of the dot. And such proof is frequently difficult to produce, especially if her family do not have another and more profitable marriage in view. If the husband forces his wife to leave him he has no legal right to demand restitution of his dot money. If he grossly mistreats her her family has the traditional right to take her from him without the restitution.

tution of the dot. If her family is of much more influence than hers they may sometimes enforce this right to the full, but not otherwise. If he has a considerable influence with native authorities he will get a large part if not all his money returned.

The wife's family cannot wilfully take her away from her husband. But they may take her from him if he has grossly mistreated her, or if she has insisted on release from the marriage as obnoxious to her. But it is common for her family to make continuance of the marriage contract untenable if opportunity for a much better bargain presents itself. They may insist with her that she pick a quarrel with her husband that will alienate them. Since she owes a higher allegiance to her own kin than to her husband who is not of the slightest relation to her, she usually follows their commands. Also if a woman wants to leave a really oppressive harem master, her family often forces her to remain with him, unless they have good prospects of another acceptable marriage for her. For her leaving will necessitate an early repayment of the dot, and since this was appropriated by various individuals immediately on its payment, they are unable or unwilling to raise the money. Failure to repay it will mean the imprisonment of the father or some other close relative, often till the deserting wife returns to her husband or the dot is refunded.

Young men are seldom in a position to pay down as large an initial dot as old men. The result is that most of the young women go into the harems of the old men and the young men go wireless. This phase of the marriage question can best be treated after a study of the institution of polygamy.

There are three arguments for polygamy always in the minds of Congo men. They are

(a) Satisfaction of sexual passion ; (b) Economic advantage ; (c) Social prestige. The first of these is rarely mentioned , but nevertheless is the basic reason for the existence of the institution. If it stood alone, however, it would be the easiest support of polygyny to overcome. For even heathen people are usually ashamed to argue for the harem on this point, their innate moral sense being repulsed at an open expression of its essential beastiality. But the lustful harem master has more lookly foundations to build his defenses upon, and so glosses this one over, and almsot forgets that it is the real foundation of the institution of the harem.

The economic argument is double-headed. For both the buyer and seller seek to profit by the transaction. Often a man with many sons and no daughters would be glad if wives were free, or better still carried dowries, as in some European countries. But the man with many daughters and no sons declares just as emphatically as the harem master "women are our bank." And the average family, where the sexes are about evenly divided, is willing to let things stand as they are.

Primitive society has no sound means of storing wealth. But wealth must either be stored or invested in profit bearing enterprises if the owner is to continue wealthy. Scarcity of legal money, and the danger of its theft, if stored, make increase of wealth in Congo society thru storage very difficult. The practical means, therefore, for continuing attained wealth and for increasing it, is investment in human beings, slaves and wives. The colonial government has forbidden slavery so wives are the only means of accumulation left.

The strength of this argument is, contrary to its apparent significance, the same as that presented under (a). For this arrangement enables the old men to get most of the young women in their harems.



Therefore most of the young men are without wives. It is just here that the interest bearing nature of the old man's investment comes in. For his young wives form illicit relations with their young lovers. The old man is not slow to discover such cases. Such a young man becomes his lackey. He must bring the old man payments of money when demanded. He must give him choice parts of game he may kill, and occasionally a whole animal. He must build the old man a house or clear a garden plot for him. He gather's heavy wood for the old man's fire. In fact he performs enough labor for this old gentleman, were it directed in gain-getting employment, to earn enough to pay for a wife in a few years. But when these few years are up he has not paid a cent toward a legal wife, because his gain has all gone to maintain his right to the concubianl relation already formed. Truly this wife is the old man's bank. He has been repaid capital with continued interest on his original investment and still has his investment intact.

Another of the economic arguments of the polygenist is a bit less questionable from the moral standpoint. He argues that if he has only one wife, and she gets sick, he will have no one to cook for him and provide for his other needs. And further still, tho his wives are all in good health, several women can provide an ampler menu than one. Especially is this true when the variety of the menu will depend chiefly on each wife's efforts at production as well as in preparation of the food. And other cares than that of food can be more abundantly assumed by the hands of many than by those of one only. So the polygenist expects better living than the monogenist. In ancient heathen society this argument was true to facts, and still is in most of the heathen villages. In time it seems certain that the financial support of plural wives will become a burden, and then this economic argument will break down.

The third argument for polygyny, that of social prestige, exerts a fascinating influence over many Congolese Africans, as all other societies, make wealth the chief criterion of social pre-eminence. So it is because many wives make much wealth that the many-wived man occupies a high place in society. Fortunately snobbery is unknown to this aristocracy. Men may boast their social pre-eminence and in the same breath seek marriage with the daughter of the poorest and lowliest member of the clan. Social prestige gains ease, honor, and may sacrifices to ones ghost after death, but does not create a class.

Young men feel that they owe it to the honor of their families to take over the wives left by their fathers, uncles, brothers, etc., for thus the pre-eminent social position of the family is retained. To reject these honors is to lower the family's prestige as well as one's own. More Christian young men claim this motive in taking over the wives left by deceased relatives than all other reasons combined. It is also the first reason assigned by heathen for similar action. If a man refuses to take over his family inheritance of wives his family assails him with the bitterest invective for his family disloyalty, and declare he has disgraced them all.

Herewith is a summary of the chief points in the marriage customs, most of them already treated in more detail:

1. Marriage is an alliance between two families, in the making of which the husband and wife, especially the wife, does not necessarily have a voice.
2. The woman becomes the wife of only one man in the family, but is the property of the whole family, and at the husband's death may be given by the family council to any member of the family. Her consent is not necessary to this new alliance. The new husband will pay the family a small additional amount.

3. The dot is : a system of inter- clan relations is necessary to regulate the

a. The purchase price of the wife. It is never fully completed, r  
 ecurrent payments being demanded from time to time till the woman's d  
 eath.

b. " partial guarantee against gross mis-treatment, as such conduct  
 subjects the husband to loss of both wife and money.

c. A partial guarantee of the permanence of the marriage, as the de-  
 sertion of the wife necessitates the return of the dot by her fam-  
 ily, and the husband cannot sell her to others except thru her family,  
 so will not drive her away.

Polygony is;

a. sustained because of (1) lust, (2) wealth, (3) social prestige.

b. It draws most of the women, young as well as old, into the har-  
 ems of old men.

c. Therefore many young men cannot obtain legal mates.

d. But they form illicit relations with young women in the harems,  
 and in order to maintain such relations pay the legal husbands  
 in money and service.

e. Both or either party to an illicit relation may be severely p  
 unished if the woman's husband so desires. In this way prom  
 iscuity is greatly limited.

f. The wrong of illicit marriage relations is an economic one, not  
 a moral one.

g. Hence sexual immorality, when not economically objectionable,  
 usually arouses little protest.

h. This fact has led most non-missionary whites, and even some mis-  
 sionaries ,to oppose the abolition of the dot, on the ground that the  
 elimination of the economic restraint would result in moral  
 chaos.



A summary of inter-clan relations is necessary to complete the survey of the social conditions of the Congolese.

Before the conquest of the country by Belgium there were frequent inter-clan wars. In some cases these wars were almost continuous. They were caused; (1) By migratory clans seeking to settle in lands already occupied. (2) By efforts to extort tribute. (3) Lust for booty, especially slaves. (4) Oure love of fighting, (5) Genuine enmity, (6) perhaps most frequently of all by property quarrels, frequently a difference about a wife. Frequently neighboring clans lived on friendly relations. In such cases inter-clan relations in marriage, visiting and trade were sustained.

The enmity between hostile clans was bitter. No inter-marriage took place between hostile clans except with women captured in war. Such women were considered as slaves and not as wives. Members of a ruling clan frequently purchased wives in a tributary clan, but the subject clansmen got few if any wives from their masters.

References on Chapter three;

Dye, Mrs. Eva : Bolenge, Chaps. 2, 3, 4, 11.

Hensley, A. F. : My Children of the Forest, chaps. 9, 11, 14, & 15.

Smith, Herbert : The Call of the Congo, Book I, chaps. 5-7, Book II Chap. 3.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Economic Situation.

Economic conditions are changing very rapidly in the Belgian Congo(1). The present study attempts only a bare outline of economic conditions, but enough to show its rapidly changing nature.

What were the economic conditions prior to the advent of the white man? There was a fairly abundant supply of game in the forest, and of fish in the rivers and swamps. But there was always the necessity of capturing these animals under natural conditions most obstinately resistant. The result was generally a meagre supply, with many days, and sometimes weeks absolutely without flesh foods. Of garden produce cooking bananas and an inferior type of maize were the most important. Manioc was a staple food in some sections, but its culture had not penetrated to any large degree into the remote villages of the equatorial country. The rich, oily palm nuts were a most important article of diet. Several varieties of yams were sparsely grown. An inferior type of sweet potato was everywhere. Several varieties of tasty greens were eaten, and a red pepper of a fiery quality was consumed in inordinate quantities. Wild fruits of many varieties were eaten, but were not considered an important part of the diet. Manioc and rice are the only important additions lately made to this diet, and manioc was already rapidly penetrating into the interior before the advent of the white. Manioc is rapidly taking the place of first importance. Beans and improved sweet potatoes and Indian corn promise to become important articles of diet.

The blacksmith was the most honored craftsman of the ancient system. Some scientific authorities believe that the Negro was the inventor of smelting iron, and forging iron tools. At any rate tools of a high degree of utility are found throughout Black Africa. Some smiths became so expert in tempering these tools as to make the metal approximate steel.

Close after the blacksmith in honor and importance was the hewer. He hewed out dugout canoes in which white men have not been able to make worthwhile improvement. The wooden call drums are second only to the canoes in importance and in the difficulty of manufacture. Chairs, stools, mortars and other household articles were fashioned by the hewer.

All men were hunters or fishers. The importance of men in securing the family food supply has been greatly under-estimated by some writers. It is not true that Congo men led an indolent life. They did not, indeed, labor strenuously; neither did the average woman. But there were few days of good weather when a man did not spend several hours in the hunt, in putting his game fences in order in clearing ground for a garden, in building, or in some other worthwhile employment.

The rapid commercial development of the Congo has had at least two outstanding social effects: (1) The rapid changing of village life, and the development of an absolutely new type of native social order in the great commercial centers.

There is no village so remote that foreign produce does not penetrate there. At least salt, cheap cotton goods, work knives, and iron bars for conversion by the native smiths into the ancient type of tools go everywhere. The iron smelter has disappeared.

It is cheaper and much easier to buy iron bars of a better quality of iron from Europe. As the people become more sophisticated more and more of the externals of civilization appear. But it is not simply the appearance of these articles among them that denotes a changing life. These social changes are of deeper significance.

Some villages have been practically wiped out by the commercial advance. That is the inhabitants have left their original villages and have gone away to work for white men or their black clerks. Since the village is the primary unit of society in the settlement of the people, it being based on family organization, this disruption of the village means that the old familial organization is being broken up, or badly shaken. It has not yet yielded to individualism, but rebellion against it is more and more apparent on the part of ambitious individuals. Individual acquisition as against family acquisition, is ultimately to create a society that is either individualistic or familial in the narrow American sense of a man and his own children. The present tendency is decidedly toward the individualistic.

The influence of the European centers on the future life of the colony is bound to be great. In view of the chaotic moral, social and religious conditions there existent, these centers are the source of gravest concern to the country. All classes realize this, but the State alone of the foreign elements has attempted to grapple with the problem with determination. It does not claim to have done more than to have curbed the license of the dislocated social life by a close police supervision. In his recent book, *L'Empire Colonial Belge*, M. Pierre Daye describes these centers as follows; "The civilized quarter is the black whom we have .(1)

(1) Daye, Pierre : *L'Empire Colonial Belge*, p. 297

snatched from his surroundings, of whom we have made an uprooted person; who, without having been able to assimilate our civilization has nevertheless adopted and more or less digested parcels of it, and who, a distinctive sign, considers himself infinitely superior to the 'native' the 'bosehji'. " Mr. Daye then proceeds to depict some of the menacing traits characteristic of these agglomerations. He declares, "Thieves men and women, prostitutes, traffickers in prostitution, and their sustainers, parasites of every kind, hide themselves easily with their friends. They are the open sore of Kinshasa, . Thefts are constant. Venereal diseases develop increasingly. The number of births is infinitesimal. " He also thinks rightly that these centers furnish fertile soil for pan-Negro propaganda. Evil as are these centers they are absolutely essential to the commercial development of the country.

Coquilhatville, the chief center of the Equator District, is the largest primary shipper of gum copal in all the world. Its shipments of palm products are also large, and may eventually take a pre-eminent place.

It is becoming very difficult to gather food to supply the native workers in these centers. This is a real problem at Coquilhatville, and at Kinshasa it has reached a very acute stage.

By energetic policing, strict law enforcement, improved sanitary conditions, and other active measures, the State is trying to meet its obligations to these centers.

Catholic churches of real cathedral type hold frequent services. Catholic missions do little else in these places, so their influence is not as great as it outwardly appears. Protestant missions appear insignificant, and their influence is in accordance with their outward appearance.



CHAPTER FIVE

Faith of the Fathers .....

Most Bantu people have no clearly defined conception of a single, supreme God. Yet one feels that this conception is constantly in their sub-conscious thinking, and that occasionally it almost breaks thru to a clear, life-shaping faith. Le Roy says; "When one has lived a long time with our primitives, so that one is able to be accredited as one of them, and that entering into their life and mentality, one becomes proficient in their language, their practices and their beliefs, one soon comes to this conclusion, that back of all one calls their nature worship, their animism, their fetishism, there runs everywhere, real and living, tho often more or less veiled, the notion of a superior God, superior to men, to ghosts, to spirits, and to all the forces of nature. The other beliefs are, indeed, variable, like the ceremonies which accompany them; but this one is universal and fundamental." (1)

Most writers on the Bantu attest the same faith in various parts of the country. (2)

Among the Mongo-Nkundo tribesmen the name "Nzakomba" is universal. If a group of the rawest heathen are asked who created the earth, the answer is instant and unanimous "Nzakomba". The same answer is secured to any question as to the origin of any of the detailed features of the world. But if asked to define their idea as to the nature of God "Nzakomba", the results are usually negative. They do not know what he is like. He is not a man and is not like man. He is not worshipt nor feared. He is not loved nor hated.

(1) Le Roy, A. : *La Religion des Primitifs*. p.171

(2) Collé des Peres Blancs : *La Notion de Dieu chez les Bashi*. V- in Congo for June 1925.

What is he and what does he do? There is no intelligible answer. Native Christian leaders frankly admit that their ancestors were entirely ignorant of the existence of God. And certainly in the definite sense of a loving, watchful Father, as the Christian conceives Him, the Congolese did not and do not know God aside from those who have accepted the gospel. Since no worship was paid to god he was non-existent in their religious life. But it seems only fair to acknowledge that in a vague, unformulated, non-religious and non-philosophic way, there was a recognition of a supreme, a creator God. K (1)

What is the religion of the Mongo-Nkundo? The answer will depend largely on one's conception of what constitutes religion. Le Roy defines religion as the "Sum total of beliefs, obligations and practices by which man recognizes the supernatural world, performs his duties toward it and asks its assistance." (2) He recognizes that this definition does not cover magic, superstition, fetishism, etc., but he says that these are not religion. He makes up religion of these four things;

1. Dogma - the belief in and the inspiration by the supernatural.
2. Morality - commands and prohibitions of conduct, thru the supernatural
3. Worship - the ritualistic expression of attitude toward the divinity or supernatural.
4. Sacerdotalism - the organization of worship.

(1) Tanghe, Pere Basile : La Culte de Dieu chez les Nganbdi . in Congo for October, 1925.

Fraser, Donald : Winning a Primitive People , p. 129 ff.

Livre d'Or de la Mission du Lessouto, p. 136 ff.

Overbergh, Cyr, Van : Les Bangala , 277-279.

Among the Mongo-Nkundo the first three of these features of religion are found, and the rudiments of the fourth, tho there is no developed sacerdotalism. Tho worship was not organized it followed somewhat defined lines. And no further thing is needed to constitute religion in worship.

In this thesis the lines between religious and practices and magical beliefs and practices will not be closely drawn. For the two are so interwoven that they are not altogether separable. Besides the moral and spiritual reaction to each line of that is so similar that for ordinary purposes it would seem logical to treat magical beliefs and practices as religious.

One of the first names encountered in the study of the spiritual conceptions is "nzakomba". This name has already been treated as the name for the Creator Deity. But this is the occasional use of the term, and seems to be a magnified conception of the same term as used in every day life. In this workaday use of the term there are as many "nzakomba" as there are people. That is, each individual has his "nzakomba". It does not seem that they associate this being with the spirit of the person. This nzakomba is apparently a spirit. They do not worship him. His office is to take care of his creature, his human being. If a man has a successful hunt he attributes his success to his nzakomba, and openly flatters this guardian angel, exclaiming, "My, I have a good god!" But if his hunt for some time is rewarded with meagre or no success, he becomes peeved with his god, and publicly complains of his laziness, his thoughtlessness, and general worthlessness. In all these relations there seems never to be a direct address of worship to this being. If he does well he has been



simply fulfilling his natural functions. But when he fails to help it is but right to scold him for failing to do what one has a right to expect of him. All one's successes or failures in life, are therefore, rated as successes or failures of one's personal *nzakomba*. To praise him may stir him up to greater activity that praise of his greatness may continue. To scold him for negligence should stir him to action lest his divine reputation be irreparably lowered.

There appears to be no tradition as to inter-relations between these personal deities. Nor is there any clear doctrine as to the fate of a man's *nzakomba* when the man dies. Perhaps the thought is that each man's *nzakomba* occupies the same relation to his disembodied spirit that it held to the living man.

We now come to the consideration of spirit worship, a spiritual experience of the primitive universally recognized as religious. Among the Congolese there are the two kinds of spirits, ancestral ghosts, and the free spirits peopling forests, streams, gardens, etc.

Ancestral ghosts are universally revered. (1) When anyone dies the relatives are expected to mourn in heart-broken fashion. Failure to do so shows lack of sorrow and honor of the dead, but worse still, subjects the living relatives to great danger. For should the ghost of the departed be displeased at lack of due honor it may come back and visit trouble on any or all the relatives, not necessarily on the one failing to show proper respect. At

(1) J unod, Henri : Les Ba-Ronga , in Bulletin de la Societe Neuchateloise - Tome X. p. 379

Overbergh, Cyr. : Les Bangala , p. 271  
 Le Roy, A. : La Religion des Primitifs , p. 275  
 Milligan, R.H. : The Jungle Folk of Africa , 252-259  
 Livre d'Or de la Mission du Lessouto , p. 136  
 Fraser , Donald : Winning a Primitive People , p. 120  
 Bantu Beliefs and Magic , pp. 27-31

Lotumbe a young man was drowned. His family insisted that his wife should fast (abstaining from all the more palatable foods for some time.) They also insisted that she should say certain prayers and chants for the dead, should wear mourning, and should not bathe for a specified time. These were the customary marks of honor shown to the dead. Refusal to conform to this custom subjects the family as well as the guilty person to danger of vengeance from the ghost. Sickness, financial reverses, or even death might result. Moreover failure to conform to custom would be taken to indicate that the wife had willed her husband's death, and had possibly accomplished it by means of magic. Besides the wife was the property of the family and refusal to mourn was a sort of intolerable insubordination.

Some people mourn for the dead for about a year after the death. Since relatives ghosts are likely to avenge lack of reverence various calamities are attributed to them. Sickness is generally believed to be due to ghosts or other spirits or sorcery. In times of epidemics many sacrifices and prayers are offered to the ghosts. When the influenza epidemic was raging in 1910-19 so many chickens were offered to the ghosts that it was difficult to buy them afterwards, tho they had been plentiful before. Numerous cases of such offerings come to mind, but they cannot be recounted here.

Ghosts of men of outstanding position naturally hold pre-eminent places in the ghost world, so far as the worship of the living is concerned. When a chief dies not only his family, but all his subjects join in honoring him. Even neighboring chiefs and their subjects take an active part in the ceremonies. This averts suspicion of secret disposal of a rival, and prevents the dead chief from stirring up his kinsmen successors in office to magic efforts against these neighboring rulers.

The most important possessions of the dead are often buried with them, or broken up and laid on the grave. It is customary, when the owner of a house dies, to burn the house, and cut down the banana plants in the rear. If asked why this is done the answer usually is, "It is our custom." But it is certain that ghost worship is the basic reason for it. The ghost is jealous of any one else enjoying his property and may avenge its appropriation.

Ghost worship is often carried on at the grave of the dead. When sacrifices are made, usually of whole or parts of animals, the flesh is placed on the grave. The offerer then shouts to the ghost that there is an offering, to come get it and see how he is being honored, then to trouble his relatives no more, since they are properly mindful of his honor.

There is a kind of altar consecrated by famous hunters, or by poor hunters for that matter. It seems to be connected either with ghost worship or with something like worship for one's tutelary deity. However when questioned about it natives declare that it is simply a kind of memorial dedicated by the hunter to his own prowess. It is called an "nkinda". It is usually at the foot of a tree tho it may be at the base of a banana stalk. The hunter builds a light fence about this altar. He then places the skulls of all the large animals he kills there. It is customary to throw bits of meat into the nkinda fence when the hunter has been successful in hunting. This nkinda is apparently more than a museum. It seems certain that the hunter expects that scrupulous care of it will insure future success in the hunt.

In the sealing of pacts of great solemnity and importance between villages or clans, as at the conclusion of peace parleys,

it was customary to offer a human sacrifice called 'mbeka'. Usually a slave of no kin to the participants was chosen for the mbeka. But one of the clansmen might be chosen, especially one mutually conceded to have been the cause of an unnecessary war. It seems that a goat or dog might sometimes be substituted, but in a treaty of importance this was not common. Generally the mbeka was more of a hostage than a sacrifice. In such cases there might be even two mbeka. These usual practice with these living sacrifices was to build a crude domicile high up in the branches of a tree about midway between the two villages, or the territory of the clans. The hostage, or hostages then took up abode there, not being permitted even to come down. Food and water were brot and hoisted by means of a rope tied to the house of the hostage. Violation of the treaty would usually be avenged first by the death of the hostage, then war would likely follow. Selection as an mbeka was practically condemnation to death, as the exposure, inertia and lack of suitable food so lowered the resistance as to cause fatal disease in a short time. Peace pacts sealed with a human mbeka were of the utmost solemnity and the party that violated such a treaty was worse than the violator of a "scrap of paper."

While ghosts of recently deceased relatives are the most feared of spirits, they are not so numerous as the roaming spirits that of as resident everywhere. These are not interested any particular individuals, but one never knows when some caprice may lead one of them to take a malicious delight in tormenting some poor human. This spiritual persecution may take the form of illness or of defeating any of the cherished enterprises of life. It may mean death. A School boy at Lotumbe was blind in one eye. When asked the cause of this defect he solemnly answered,

"A spirit came up out of the swamp, entered into my eye, and put it out." The doctor was called out to see a woman nearly dead of pneumonia. She had a long cord with frequent knots on it, wrapped round and round her wrist. As he entered she was feeling the knots on this cord one after the other and mumbling. When asked the reason for this her husband said she was praying to the spirit to spare her life. Whether the ancestral spirits or the irresponsible, wandering spirits is uncertain, but most probably the latter. Ancestral spirits visit sickness upon relatives, but these malicious spirits actually enter into their victims and possess them. They take up their abode in the body of the victims. This is why a large part of the therapeutics of the medicine man is the casting out of the spirits. There are multitudinous ways in which the casting out of spirits is accomplished. Some of these are stereotyped methods, but the professional medicine man enjoys much freedom in initiating new practices, which he claims, and his clients hope, will prove more effective than the conventional procedures. Without enumerating any of these it may be borne in mind that they fall into the two general categories:

- a. Actual medicinal remedies, and
- b. Magical practices.

Besides ordinary illnesses caused by residence of spirits within one there is a distinct demon possession. This is generally known as "bongoji" but in the New Testament is translated as "bokali wa linyamo" or "bokali wa mbindo". Native Christians believe this parallel to the demon possession of the New Testament. Those possessed are usually harmless. They are characterized by two desires; the insatiable desire to run away to the forest, and there patiently to dig a grave with their bare hands, and by the



incessant singing of a song not previously known to them, but which is known and sung in a very similar way by all demoniacs. The only way to handle such demoniacs is to paint them all over with white clay, leaving no spot uncovered. The demoniac will then remain quietly at home, harming no one, and will provide a lot of popular amusement by dancing a weird dance and singing his ghost song. But let him see but a small patch of his skin unwhitened, and he immediately makes a break for the forest to resume his gravedigging.

From this brief account of the Nkundo's conception of the spirit world these conclusions naturally follow;

1. Ghosts of the dead remain near their former human habitat.
2. They are capable of doing good or bad to living people, especially their own kinfolks.
  - a. Therefore sacrifices and prayers, incantations and fasts are observed in their honor.
  3. Miscellaneous spirits exist everywhere.
    - a. There is no general cult of these.
    - b. They are capable of afflicting humans with sickness, or of possessing them and thus causing illness, misfortune or even death.
    - c. Their exorcism is usually accomplished by magical means tho it may be done by actual medicines. Some people seem to pray to them, tho this is not usual.
4. There is no nature worship. That is trees, lakes, rivers, etc. are not sacred because of spirit possession.

It can be seen in the foregoing that there is belief in the continued existence, after death, of the human soul. It seems

magical power by contact with some thing that has great magical power of itself, and imparts this quality to



sure, however, that the living human was believed to be in a happier state than his ghost would be after his death.

In the practical life of the people magic fills even a larger place than animism. Some practices and beliefs are both animistic and magical, and some practices are magical for one group or individual while they are animistic for other groups or individuals. So far as my observation has gone fetishism is chiefly magical, but other careful observers in other sections have found it chiefly animistic.

Magic as practised in the central Congo, is of three classes; a. Witchcraft, b. Fetishism, c. Verbal formulae. The third is not widely practiced independently of the other two, so will not be discussed separately.

Fetishism is every man's magic, so will be discussed first. What is the Nkundo's conception of the nature of his fetish? The particular answer for any fetish will have to be formulated for that fetish only. All fetishes are believed to possess inherent magical power for the accomplishment of specific things. This specific thing may be good or desirable, or bad.

How does the fetish acquire this magical quality? The answer to this question will vary with different fetishes. For some fetishes are made of substances that are inherently magical. Others are made of things that become magical because of their combination, that is the components are non-magical, but they become magical by virtue of the combination, just as hydrogen and oxygen form water by virtue of their combination. Others are made magical by virtue of the repetition of magical formulae over them. Still others derive magical power by contact with some thing that has great magical power of itself, and imparts this quality to

whatever inanimate thing it touches. Rather it imparts it to inanimate objects of such nature as to be readily imbued with magical power. Others appear to come to possess magical qualities because of the manner in which they are made. Anyone can make this type, and so, of course, it is less likely to be powerful than some other types which require adepts to produce them.

This non-specialist fetish has various offices, such as protection of gardens and other property, protection of health and life, infliction or even death, success to love affairs or alienation of lovers; in short, almost the whole course of life may be affected by them.

The "nseka" is the most common of this type of fetish. The "nseka" is the taboo either spoken or willed. A woman plants a garden in a place where theft is likely. To prevent thieving she drives up a stick at a place where it is likely to be seen by anyone passing. On the end of this she fastens some leaves, an eggshell, a few wisps of grass, or most likely of all, a mixture of powdered charcoal, leaves dirt, animal hair, etc., tied up in a leaf, a rag, or a small piece of fur. She may or may not utter an incantation over this. Sometimes a specific curse on the violator of the fetish is pronounced at its erection. Few raw heathen are bold enough to violate such a fetish. Why do they fear such a thing? Because it is magic, and magical things have the power of inflicting certain results. Why does fire burn? It is its nature. Why does opium cause sleep. We only know that it possesses this inherent power. Why does the nseka kill? It is its inherent magical nature. It simply has that property. Some think that the nseka is supposed to derive its power the intervention of one's tutelary or other

or other spirit. But I am convinced that the general feeling of the natives I have known is that it derives its potency from its inherent quality, which quality is derived from the nature of the components of the fetish, from magical incantations, from the will of its maker, or more likely still, from the general recognition of the magical virtue of anything so set apart, especially if its aim is punishment of its violator. To the last supposition it may be objected that such an idea is wholly irrational, hence can't be true. But we are not seeking the rational in Congo beliefs but the facts, and this is one of the apparent facts.

All fetishes and charms are called bote, plural bete. The same term is used of actual medicine. In native usage there is much overlapping of charms and medicines. Bete are the cure-all and the kill-all.

A common use of a malignant charm or fetish is to place it about a man's house, his garden or some other place where he is likely to come into contact with it or unwittingly step over it. If one does the latter he suddenly becomes ill and soon dies. He may never know the murderous trick of his enemy, but his death proves its efficacy. Toward the end of 1912 some evangelists brot word to Lotumbe of the death of one of their fellow evangelists one hundred and fifty miles away. They were sure it was due to bote- the murderous use of a charm, tho neither he nor any one else had seen the charm. A young man recently came to the missionary complaining that someone had put a fetish on his house. He dared not enter his house till it was removed, and naturally he dared not remove it. The missionary went out to lift the charm and found it nothing but a worn out belt.

Two missionaries spent the night in a village where there was only one Christian. They slept in a house built for itinerant white traders. In the morning the Christian brot them a small chicken as a present. Shortly afterwards an older man was heard in violent dispute with the Christian. It developed that the disputant had placed a fetish at the front of his yard which joined that of the white men's house. By virtue of this fetish he had the right to levy a tax of half a franc against every one who passed with a chicken. The Christian refused to pay the tax, hence the quarrel. But it was interesting to note that the Christian did not refuse on the ground of the falsity of the fetish claim, but by virtue of the fact that he was a Christian, hence no longer under the law of the fetish's operation.

There are fetishes that possess the power of producing rain or storms. Missionaries could recount many stories of the use of such fetishes, many of which would formerly have precipitated bitter inter-clan or inter-village wars.

The purposes of fetishes are protection of property or life or enterprises, and the infliction of hurt on enemies.

There are a few people who have very effective fetishes for acquiring riches. Such charms are either lucky acquisitions or are due to the possession of some type of sorcerial power. Therefore rich men are often suspected of witchcraft .

The two man destroying animals of the country, the leopard and the crocodile, are believed to be directed in their killing of humans by the charm of some wizard or witch. Therefore when anyone is killed by such animals an effort is made to find the sorcerer who has employed him. Under the old regime such people were tried by poison ordeals

The medicine man enjoys various functions in Congo society. Seldom are these all united in one man, and frequently one possesses only one of these prerogatives. These offices are:

1. Cure of disease by the use of actual medicines. Some of these medicines have real virtue, as their purges, etc., but they are administered with neither anatomical nor chemical knowledge and so overdoses sometimes do harm, and occasionally cause death.
2. The magical power of discovering those guilty of sorcery, especially when disease or death have resulted.
3. Sorcery itself. This includes the manufacture and sale of fetishes, and the accomplishment by magic of their will, usually some devilry for which they have been paid; the magical employ of animals or even the metamorphosis of themselves into animals for the accomplishment of some ulterior design.

These are the outstanding functions of the whole profession of medicine men. Numerous stories of men of the various types or of combinations of two or more of the types might be recounted. As with the fetish so with the medicine man, the secret is in the possession of magical secrets, not usually in collusion with spirits. The medicine man is aided and abetted by his personal *nzakomba*, but this aid is not, to the native mind, a contradiction of the purely magical character of the medicine man's tricks. Without his possession of possession of magical secrets his tutelary deity would not help him. And these secrets were not in the power and keeping of his tutelary deity, and might be wholly unknown to him.



CHAPTER SIX . .

CHRISTIANITY , A SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION

From the foregoing recital of social customs obtaining among the Congolese, and of their religious practises and beliefs the conclusion seems to me inevitable that most of the practical part of the old religious life must go . The church must not start on its career fettered by the chains of superstition and degenerate social customs. It is true that the animistic conceptions underlying their beliefs are based <sup>on</sup> a fundamental fact of Christianity and every other religion, namely the actuality and predominant importance of spiritual existence. It will always furnish a means of approach, and will aid in the establishment of the Christian doctrine to acknowledge this . But the Christian propagandist must never allow himself to be misled into acknowledging the possibility of reconciling the details, or parts of the details of the superstitious superstructure erected by the Congo religionist on the true base of spiritual reality. This superstructure is all "wood , hay, stubble "and is due to be consumed in the fire that shall "prove every man's work."

There is the vague belief in God as the creator. It is easy to build up on this the sound faith in the one , supreme God, personally interested in each of his created children, and so displace the multitudinous personal and powerless personal nzakomba. In this one is able to commend them for their spiritual acuteness in sensing the basic fact of all true faith, while showing them that circumstances over which they had no control led them into false practises and beliefs that almsot nullified the spiritual benefits



of their grand basic faith. Christianity's mission is to take them back of their impotent personal deities, spirits and magic, to the great, majestic God, Creator of their own innate faith.

Again one finds them agitated about the everyday occurrences of life, especially those of a sudden or tragic nature. Having first directed attention to the supreme deity, one must undertake to demonstrate that this God alone, by his ordered universe, can account for the facts of this life. Malicious spirits cannot do it for he would not make his universe and then find himself impotent to prevent its spoliation by insignificant spiritual enemies. Nor would he surrender his power to evil-minded men, and allow them, by over-reaching him, to really rob him of his supernatural powers for the accomplishment of their dastardly purposes. The arguments here presented against belief in malignant spirits and black magic as facts in life, are not so easily grasped by primitive minds as the facts about the one God. Most converts from heathenism confidently trust in the one God, and pray to him to protect them from the eminent peril of evil spirits and the charms of the enemy and the spells of the sorcerer. These superstitions are as real as ever, only the Christian has a panacea, if his faith but prove adequate, against their nefarious influence. Possibly this is as far as ninety nine out of every hundred converts get in their grasp of spiritual truth. But the reason is not inability to grasp the fuller truth, but the powerful back-pull of mental and spiritual inertia and decay which heathen conditions have fostered and still surround the convert with, make it extraordinarily difficult for him to entirely free himself.

The universal belief in at least a temporary continuation of life

The gospel to be presented to a primitive people should be life after death in the ghosts of the deceased makes an easy point of departure for the inculcation of the Christian doctrine of immortality. Ghost cult presents the danger of the growth of the spiritually deadening doctrine of the invocation of saints. Protestantism must not allow its re-instatement of the divine sonship of all believers to be nullified by the barren doctrine of the mediation of the saints, thus re-opening the gulf between the believer and God which Jesus bridged.

The doctrines that need to be presented to these people are the simple, basic truths of the gospel concerning God and Jesus as the savior of men. These might be partially summarized as;

1. Of God;

a. His unity.

b. His personal qualities,

Power,

Goodness

Wisdom,

Love

Fatherhood,

Kingship

Creator,

Omnipresence

2. Jesus;

Son of God

Man

Revealer of God's will

Savior

Head of the Church

Friend of Believer

Victor over death

Life-giver

Any complicated philosophy built up on these doctrines will be out of place. A simple, practical presentation of these truths somewhat as they are presented in the New Testament is what is needed.

Success will require that Jesus shall constantly be presented as the apex of all religious truth. Every truth taught must find its confirmation in Him.

The gospel to be presented to a primitive people should be Christo-centric, but it should be strictly non-sectarian. It is safe to say that there is not a doctrine that is peculiar to any one religious body in America that is in any sense a fundamental truth of the teaching of Jesus. There is enough Catholic truth without dragging in sectarian shibboleths to confuse the minds and souls of simple folk. The Congo church will find itself under the necessity of emphasizing ethics as did Jesus. The life of men toward their fellows must be a demonstration of the love of Christ in the life. Failure to re-incarnate Christ in daily life will mean failure of the church. "By their fruits ye shall know them". Native preachers and teachers must be drilled in the art of finding ever new guises under which to present this cardinal principle of the religion of Jesus.

But the emphasis on practical Christian living must not be allowed to breed a contemptuous or otherwise disloyal attitude toward the church as an institution. The organic existence of the church is a necessity for the propagation of the gospel, and if that is so the loyalty of its members to its work and worship is a duty. It is to be hoped that Congo Christians may never learn to minimize the importance and influence of the church, as so many American Christians do, and thus rob it of its dignity and glory in the eyes of the people. It is not intended to defend the sacredness of any particular church polity, nor even of the church as an organization, . But rather the sanctity of the bond uniting believers to Christ and in Christ, and the duty of making this bond the means of an organic effort that shall effectually the influence of this bond into their lives, and the lives of all others they may be able to influence.

There is a radical difference between a Christian and a typical heathen in his spiritual and ethical conceptions and conduct. The Christian is being transformed. The best Christian has experienced a real spiritual revolution. And this same process, permeating Congo society, will make of it a new creation.

Lindsay, Vachel, : The Congo , pp. 5-11

Fraser, Donald : Winning a Primitive People , 259-269

... a tedious task to eradicate superstitious spiritual and moral beliefs and practices. It may be argued that a society that does not take intellectual growth has not fully received the gospel of Christ, so its clinging to superstitions is not due to a failure in educating itself, but to a failure to receive in its fullest richness the intellectual and moral values of Christ. Whether education is a natural fruit of the gospel, or whether the gospel is more fully understood because of the intellectual and moral little differences, either position requires that an impact should be a heathen society devote itself seriously to its mental cultivation, and either position admits that the western world are at an advantage in the dissemination of the fullest import of the gospel, and in the cultivation of those spiritual values from their hearts.

However one must not lose sight of the local importance of intellectual development alone to eradicate other spiritual values or to free from superstitions. ... superstitions, they were less so than their (civilized) counterparts, yet deeply superstitious. China, Japan and India at times have their highly civilized classes which are yet very superstitious. There are scientists who believe that modern physical

CHAPTER SEVEN

EDUCATION FOR THE CHURCH .....

The gospel of Christ has proven the most effective weapon ever employed for the uprooting of superstition as well as of sin in general. No society has become even fairly free from superstitions where the gospel was not generally believed. But the gospel, unaccompanied by education, finds it a much longer and more tedious task to eradicate subversive spiritual and magical beliefs and practices. It may be argued that a society that does not make intellectual growth has not fully received the gospel of Christ, so its clinging to superstitions is not due to a failure in educating itself, but to a failure to receive in its fulness falsehood's inveterate foe, the gospel, the Truth of Christ. Whether education is a natural fruit of the gospel, or that the gospel is more fully comprehended because of the trained mind makes little difference. Either position requires that an infant church in a heathen society devote itself assiduously to its mental cultivation. And either position admits that the mentally alert are at an advantage in the comprehension of the fullest import of the gospel, and in the elimination of false spiritual values from their hearts.

However one must not lose sight of the usual impotence of intellectual development alone to eradicate false spiritual values or to free from superstitions. Paul found the learned Athenians superstitious. They were less so than their intellectual inferiors, yet deeply superstitious. China, Japan and India of today have their highly civilized classes which are yet very superstitious. There are scientists who believe that modern physical

science can accomplish the eradication of false spiritual values. But likewise, science, unaccompanied by the gospel, would just as surely rule out the spiritual facts of life as well as the superstitions, and thus rob man of the sublimest truths he has ever laid hold of.

So while a primitive church must educate itself or stagnate quickly, it must be saved from the peril of materialism by coupling with its educational program a thoroly fervent religious activity that will guarantee a spiritual growth commensurate with its intellectual progress. And it is to be hoped that missions and the other creative forces at work in Congo may succeed in constructing what has not yet been accomplished among any people, namely a society that is neither religiously, educationally nor industrially top-heavy.

To this end all Congo missions are seeking to maintain Christian education. It seems that none of these missions has completed the planning of its educational program. However the broadest features of this plan are somewhat well defined, and the details are beginning to fit in. The Disciples of Christ Congo Mission has just been making a survey of its needs, and while not all the results are yet available, it will certainly contain these three basic institutions :

1. Village schools - to be taught in native billages by native teachers.
2. Mission Station Boarding Schools to be conducted on each resident station for boys and girls.
3. A Central Training School , to be devoted chiefly to vocational training .



## THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

The most difficult educational problem of Equatorial Congo is the village school. Its problems are many and very aggravated. The station schools are a financial problem only, as the personnel and equipment to properly conduct these schools can be secured if the money is available. The same is true of the Central Training School. But the village school has financial, familial, social, industrial, political and personnel problems involved, and all of them in an aggravated form. The solving of these problems for the village school will mean the success of the higher educational institutions, for the village school is the feeder of the station school, which in turn feeds the central School. Moreover they give these trained in the higher schools a co-operative group in native society that will make successful effort in village churches much more probable. They mena the difference between a literate and an illiterate church, between a society actuated by idealism and a society incapable of grasping the finer things of life to a sufficient degree to stir them up to earnest effort.

Village schools have seldom had hearty co-operation of the village themselves. In some cases the local attitude has been actually hostile to them. Such distinct opposition to the religious teaching always imparted in the schools, or it may be solely against the civiligatory purpose of the schools. If the natives can be convinced that it is to their interest to become educated this primary difficulty will be solved. Once it is solved the problems of attendance, supply of teachers, equipment, curricula, etc. will be successfully worked out with the passage of time. In other words if the primary difficulty of hostility or indifference is overcome, and a genuine

appreciation of the value of education to the Congo race is grasped by the Congolese themselves, time will see the solving of the other problems involved either by Church effort, or by a combined effort of the church and the State.

The solving of this primary problem - namely the securing of the hearty co-operation of the villagers - involves two things; a. The finding and presenting of a motive for participation in popular education that is of popular appeal, and b. The securing of the legal co-operation of the village rulers. If the popular motive is found most of the village chiefs will lend their support to the success of the school, to even then some of them will continue to resist it.

What are some motives that may be presented? and what are their merits? As already pointed out these motives, to secure the necessary popular support, must appeal to the self-interest of the villagers. We have then, first of all, the motive of increased earning power. This has been one of the most widely considered motives for seeking education. But it has not and will not popularize education. For it will not increase the immediate earning power of numbers of people in the way that was once believed by many young men; and the mass of the people have already become aware of its ineffectiveness to so increase their earning power. It is only fair to missionaries to say that they have not, as a general rule, stressed this motive. But they have often neglected to point out its fallacy, and this failure has led some bright young men to feel that missionaries have beguiled them into tedious and worthless educational effort. Of course it is true that popular education will increase the average earning power, but the progressive increase

crease will not be rapid enough to justify this motive as the central one in a popular appeal for education. Persistent demonstration of the fact that production will increase with more intelligent effort, and that thus gradually a higher plane can be reached by education, will have some influence, however, in popularizing educational effort. But this is not the motive that is to play the chief role in gaining popular support.

If Christians alone were to be considered, the church could make considerable progress by requiring that all parents should send their children to school, and that children should not be accepted as candidates for membership till they are able to read and write. Many missions have long enforced this rule as to the reading and writing of candidates, and it is possible that the time will soon come when it will be wise to put it into force in most cases in Equator District. It is a justifiable rule where instruction is generally available. The church must protect itself against ignorance. And the Christian's community's right to propagate its moral standards in society, and to insist on the obligation of others to accept it, will gain a larger support when re-inforced by a higher general intelligence on the part of the Christian community. It may be that the obligation of Christian parents to educate their children will be the means by which primary education will eventually win popular support. But so far Christian parents have not shown themselves thoroly alive to this obligation to their children. Such a requirement can only be enforced by disciplining the parents. And some good Christian parents would accept discipline rather than yield to what they believe to be so unjust a perversion of the spiritual prerogatives of the church. And it would also

often happen that willing parents would be unable to enforce the attendance of their children, because heathen relatives, who often have as much legal control over children as their actual parents, would resist their education. So the impossibility of enforcing a rule for the education of children of Christians will make this attack on the problem of general education a slow one. But with a better educated ministry and teaching staff in the villages, this motive will gain a more popular support of the Christian parents. Should the church generally accept compulsory education for its children, many heathen parents will be moved to secure like privileges for their children lest they be found at a disadvantage in social and world affairs. And the child playmates of Christian children in school will often insist on the privilege of school attendance enjoyed by their friends in the Christian community.

However a more popular appeal yet is needed if the attendance of all the village children is to be secured in the schools. Does such an appeal exist? It is doubtful if there exists one that can be so presented as to gain a quick acceptance. But if so it is most likely that of race. This motive has dangerous as well as legitimate avenues of approach. The Black man might be taught that he must gain the white man's education in order to successfully combat his encroachments, and eventually to expel the intruder. This motive, so presented, has a powerful appeal. It is almost certain that if the Black could be convinced that the expulsion of the White could be accomplished at a reasonably early date by means of self-education he would devote himself assiduously to such education. But while missionaries generally believe that the eventual control of Equatorial Africa by its indigenous races is just and desirable,

they were not present such a doctrine to the natives lest it bring them into conflict with the government, and lest it also inspire false and hurtful political stirrings on the part of the blacks. The church must be taught to throw all the weight of its influence against the ruinous process of political insurrection. It may concede eventually that the native peoples may hope for the gradual recovery of political autonomy by the process of legally rights, but at the present such teaching is not advisable. It would certainly be interpreted in a more radical way than intended, and if acted on would result in political intrigue instead of legitimate effort at self-cultivation. So the motive of political independence is not only foreign to the missionary spirit, but is the most dangerously inflammatory doctrine that could be brot to bear on the native mind. Missionaries and the native leaders trained by them should always act as a much-needed balance against the powerful weight of race prejudice.

It does not follow, however that the motive of racial pride cannot be legitimately appealed to in order to secure a more general striving after education. There is a legitimate appeal here, which, if wisely presented, may prove of powerful appeal. The Black man knows that there is something about the white man's mental make-up which gives him, individually and racially, a tremendous advantage. Bluntly put, this means the inferiority of the Black race. Is this inferiority inherent or is it a purely cultural effect? Most missionaries will agree that it is chiefly cultural, and the Black man, of course thinks so, where he does not simply accept the inferior position of his race as a decree of fate. So the powerful motive of racial culture for the development of the race can be legitimately used by the missionary to inspire popular interest in education. Insistence on the fact that education



as the handmaid of Christianity, has been one of the very strongest factors in giving the White race its cultural superiority, should prove an effective argument for its adoption by the Black man. If care is taken to emphasize education as the means of securing for the Black race worthy cultural development, with the possibility of eventually equalling the White race in cultural attainment, native self-interest might be stirred to a much greater educational effort. The church must take care to keep political propaganda entirely out of its program. It is inevitable that Congo society shall eventually become permeated with anti-European propaganda. This will come with or without popular education. If Christian education prevails it is not likely to come as soon as it would otherwise. And it is not likely to come as early if village education is done by the Christian church as it would come were this education done by the State in village schools taught by State trained teachers. The Church, then, should offer its services for educational training in the villages as the most effective means whereby the Black man can secure the cultural advantages of other peoples. While many Blacks will resist this offer and claim superiority for the actual present culture of the Black race, the almost universal advantage gained by other races in dealing with the Blacks, coupled with the fact that natives who have secured a considerable degree of European culture usually prove superior to their heathen neighbors in their business success, will eventually convince the Black man that he can gain much by securing the White man's education.

Mutual co-operation of parents with the village chiefs and other village authorities, is needed to secure regularity and promptness of attendance at school by village children. If these accept as actual the advantages already presented, they will



evolve a system of co-operation to gain this end, or will accept such a plan as the Church or State shall present to secure attendance.

There are many grave difficulties to regular attendance at school besides opposition to education as such. Some of these are; a. frequent absence of children from home to visit relatives in other villages, sometimes for months at a time. b. frequent scattering of the village population for road work, commercial gathering of forest products, and temporary residence in fishing and hunting camps. These inconveniences do not render educational effort fruitless, as has been proved in several instances about every mission station.

We now seek a solution of the two remaining problems of the village school - teachers and their pay, and school equipment. In educational effort conducted by the church it is obvious that certain qualifications must be demanded of the teachers supported or even recommended. Of these the first genuine Christian character. A teacher of high scholastic qualifications and splendid teaching technique who lacks moral and spiritual rectitude, is a wholly incapable teacher in an educational effort directed by the church. The alternative of a poorly trained teacher but one of splendid Christian character, is incomparably preferable to that of one whose moral and spiritual influences are salacious. This point is vital. It is stressed here because there is a decided tendency on the part of native leaders to under-estimate its importance, and missionaries are so impatient with intellectual incompetence that they have sometimes favored a spiritual and moral weakling as against a genuine Christian teacher of inferior ability. Where such a choice is necessary the latter should always be chosen, or the

school in question dropped. It is not possible to conceive of a situation justifying the church in maintaining, as one of its propagandists, a person whose life is subversive of its primary principles. As long as the school is fostered by the church its teacher must be a Christian propagandist. The church should offer its educative efforts to all alike, whether its adherents or not, but it must, in a distinct way, make its schools contribute to its evangelistic effort. Education in itself is a worthwhile work but mental discipline alone, unaccompanied by religious teaching, is not the task of the church. In Congo there is not now any social or political situation that makes the open inculcation of religious teaching to all in the school impossible. When the state begins to exercise a supervisory right over the schools conducted by the missions it is highly probable that restrictions will be placed on religious teaching, inasmuch as rival Protestant and Catholic leaders will not likely agree on a line of Christian teaching agreeable to both.

As to state control of education, this will and should come in time. The church should desire its advent. Its educational program should be so arranged as to make the transfer of the leadership to the state or as little disruptive influence on its work as possible. If the state takes over the direction of educational work the Protestant church should be prepared to reel as little or less painful effect from the transfer as the Catholic church. If it is prepared to succeed in transferring to the state system a proportion of teachers commensurate with its numerical and intellectual prestige in the various communities, it should reel little or no check in its work from such a transfer. The church must foresee nationalization of the schools soon enough to inoffensively and effectively plan

the accomplishment of this end.

The most important move toward guaranteeing the leading place previous to and after the nationalization of the schools is to train and maintain teachers of as high qualifications as the situation will justify. Protestant teachers will have to be better trained and prove more effective workers than Catholic teachers in order to gain equal favor in the eyes of State officials, since the Catholic teachers will usually have been trained by Belgian missionaries. Protestant missionaries should more and more study Belgian character and educational methods in order to overcome this handicap as far as possible. Maybe by following lay educational methods in Belgium, they may even more closely approximate Belgian educational ideals than the past-serving Catholic fathers, and thus present a more nationalized teaching force than their rivals. They should strive to do this, however, for the good of the people rather than for the gaining of a victory for the Protestant type of Christianity. If such a view is unworthy, as sectarian, then the whole Protestant effort to win Africa, or practically any other field is sectarian and unworthy, for there are few fields where the Catholics are not contesting every bit of territory. Of course we do not believe such a surrender advisable, but rather believe it our duty to carry on our work just as zealously as if the Roman Church was not attempting a rival work.

To secure the needed teachers for the village schools it is necessary to give strict attention to the training of desirable young people for this work. This must be done along lines and with a thoroughness that will commend them to all as efficient in their duties. The curricula of the village schools must grow from the three Rs. to include a growing list of useful literary, industrial and

social subjects. For instance such subjects as primary agriculture, hygiene, geography, history, drawing, domestic science of a simple kind, oral botany and zoology, simple carpentry etc., such as opportunity and development of the school system may make possible. Of course not all these subjects would be possible in a single village school having only one teacher.

Assuming that all the inhabitants of a village co-operate in the securing and maintaining of a village school, there is an early possibility of the teacher's salary being provided entirely by the village. This might be done in various ways. This might be done in various ways, such as popular subscription, a tax on pupils, or by a head tax on all males of the village for the support of the school. Any of these methods will prove extremely difficult to initiate. A profound conviction of their need of the educator will be required to insure the success of any of these or other methods of educational self-support can be guaranteed. From the start the mission has provided the salary of the teacher, and the equipment, including that used by the pupils. In enterprises conducted by it the State is inclined to be even more generous. The mission has felt that to fail to grant such support would amount to a denial of education to village children. But the result has utterly beggared educational effort. Whether the villages would have supported educational work had such support been demanded of them at the start can never be known, but it is not at all likely that they would have done so. It is not likely that they will feel that they should assume such support after having had the bill paid for so long. But such support is absolutely essential to guarantee an educational effort wide enough to prove of general worth, whether it is under the auspices

of missionary organizations or of the state.

However tactful working therefor should secure the gradual assumption of the financial burden of schools. Possibly the provision of equipment will be the wisest initial move toward self-support. Some missions have insisted, from the start, on the erection of a suitable building before a teacher would be provided. In his Manual on School Management, Mr. Millman of the B.M.S. mission at Takusu, insists on this point. To this might be a charge for a part of the expense of black boards, slates, charts, books, pencils paper, etc. After some time the necessity of part support of the teacher might be accepted, especially by villages earnestly desiring the opening of schools. The local support of the work would grow as the appreciation of the value of the work done grew. When a popular motive for general education has been accepted by the masses such support will be practicable. For then attendance can be enforced thru legal and popular support, and the expense will be provided with fair willingness when the community feels that it is getting essential service for the expense. A few schools established by the mission to date are demonstrating slowly that those taught therein are gaining advantages not enjoyed by those not participating in the benefits therein offered.

Since village teachers will have to be supported largely by the mission for some time to come, it seems most likely that the village catechist or pastor will have to assume the additional duties of the teacher, as the mission will not be able to supply either the personnel or the money for separate workers for the two tasks. The evangelists wives may often be able to act as effective assistants in both tasks. But when this is true additional remuneration will be required.



There are many villages located so near together that a teacher living in one may conduct school in another. He could hold school in his resident village in the morning, and in a neighboring village in the afternoon, or vice versa. Such an arrangement will be easy to make when the villages come to support their own teachers, as the teacher will desire the added remuneration of the extra school and small villages will be glad to obtain teachers by combining when neither could meet the expense separately. If teachers are supported by the mission such additional schools may be rightly made the basis of additional pay for teachers who do commendable work in both.

#### STATION SCHOOLS.

For some time to come the biggest task of the mission stations will be that of education. In this is included the supervision of outstation schools, and the training of pupils for all professions including that of teachers, evangelists and medical assistants.

This means that thruout the mission there should be a clearly defined school program, as nearly identical in all the stations as varying conditions and personalities will permit. To this end a full curriculum should be worked out and text books covering the same prepared. Much of this work has been done, of course, but the larger part remains to be completed, if not to be undertaken from the beginning.

The time ought to soon come when all station boarding schools can demand certain entrance requirements, but at present all station schools are compelled to accept many beginners for the reason that there is no widely established system of village schools to provide for all children who might desire to take advantage of further

training at the station schools. Some of the stations are already establishing central outstation schools thru which it is hoped to have all pupils in the region to be covered by such schools pass before applying for entrance to the station schools. Since the establishment of schools in all the villages of Equator District within the immediate future is manifestly impossible, some such arrangement will evidently be the initial step in requiring entrance standards to the station schools.

More and more the station schools must give systematic instruction in Native and European handicrafts and in practical agriculture, in fundamental hygienic sanitation, and a few simple medical remedies and first aid remedies. Since the bulk of evangelistic and teaching workers will have to receive their whole training in the station schools for some years to come, until the central school is able to meet the need for such workers, the station schools must be so conducted as to mould effectively native life and conditions. Staff shortage makes the class of work needed extremely difficult.

There are some fine developments being definitely planned. Among these are the boarding schools for boys and girls on each station. The intention is to provide housing facilities for from a 100 to 150 boys and a like number of girls on each station. These are to be in neatly arranged and furnished houses in inclosures large enough to provide plenty play space as well as airiness between the cottages. The station will undertake the clothing, feeding and teaching of these, as well as their physical and moral supervision. The Lotumbe plan is to build two room cottages, the rooms being large enough to house four occupants each without danger to

health from crowding. These houses are to be built of brick with cement floors and galvanized iron roofs, and thin wood ceilings. They are to be furnished with small single beds, each bed with a good mosquito net and two good blankets, a table, four chairs, and four individual lockers. The whole compound is to be provided with running water, shower baths, thro sewage , and other sanitary requisites. There will be a home for an overseer and his family, a large dining and assembly room,with adequate simple furniture, and with good lighting, a model kitchen scientifically arranged, yet furnished in such a way that its essential features can be imitated by any ambitious pupil in his or her home. The work of the compound will be performed by those enjoying its hospitality. In addition they will raise a large part of the food they require in the mission plantations. In this way agricultural training will be made to play a practical part in providing food for those in training. It will be attempted to teach genuinely improved methods in this agricultural work.

The necessity of getting boys into school caused the mission to adopt initial measures on all the stations that need to be discontinued as soon as possible. The most outstanding of these practices is that of paying boys salaries and allowing them to find board and lodging among the people of the village. This practice has established the relation of employer and employee between the missionary and the boys he is educating. At times the natural strain that such a relation often brings about is felt on both sides. Boys weigh their treatment on the basis of just compensation for labor given. It is obvious that satisfactory effort in school work is not likely to be secured from most boys under such an arrangement.

it is highly desirable that the practice of paying boys cash shall be discontinued as soon as possible, and the idea of money compensation for their labor be eliminated from their minds. The relation between school boys and missionaries can then be established on the proper basis of pupil and teacher, rather than that of employer and employee. The pupil will then consider himself the debtor, and will consider the labor he performs as a partial discharge of his debt to his teacher and the institution he represents.

It is inevitable that the government shall finally take over the supervision of the educational efforts of the missions if these hope to be accredited in the system that the government shall seek to establish. The missions should seek to stamp the Colonial educational system with certain desirable characteristics. Among these should be good moral repute for the teachers, and the privilege of non-sectarian Christian instruction in the schools conducted by the government.

As long as the present keen competition between white employers of labor continues it will be difficult to retain some very promising boys in school. If the government will allow a three years contract, so executed as to properly safeguard the interests of both the mission and the pupil, a good deal can thus be done to overcome this difficulty. But the acceptance of such a contract will require acquiescence in State inspection of the schools, and possibly greater stress on technically industrial training than the mission will be prepared to give. While the mission desires to give every pupil going thru its schools sufficient industrial training to be of real value to him, and to increase his value to the Colony it cannot undertake to make industrial specialists of a very large group. Highly specialized industrial training is extremely

expensive of equipment and of teaching personnel. Therefore the expense will make the preparation of large numbers of such graduates impracticable. This fact must be clearly defined in any contractual educational agreements with the State. Every graduate of a station school should have such industrial training as will make him a more useful member of village society. But the Mission cannot make each one a finished artisan to be employed by white men at fancy wages. The Mission is more interested in making its contribution to the health, comfort and morality of the native communities than in aiding commercial development, tho it recognizes the importance of the latter in the civilization of the race. (1)

#### THE CENTRAL TRAINING SCHOOL.

The Central Training school has been rather fully dealt with in a brief submitted in its field survey to the U.C.M.S. by the African mission. Of course there will be vital alterations in the working out of those plans, but these are not easily predictable in a line of work that has not gone thru an experimental stage. But this school should play an outstanding part in the development of the Congo church. It need only be added that the establishment of this school is the strategic need of the Central African church. If the Mission allows needless delay in its initiation it will be guilty of a grievous error.

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(1) T.J. Jones of Phelps Stokes Comm.: Education in Africa. 16-94; 257-2

Livre d'Or de la Mission du Lessputo : pp. 693-648

Vandervelde, E. ; La Belgique et le Congo, 249-258



CHAPTER EIGHT

SELF-SUPPORT, SELF-RULE AND SELF-PROPAGATION.

The purpose of every foreign missionary enterprise is to establish self-supporting, self-ruling and self-propagating indigenous churches. This is the constant aim of the Disciples of Christ Congo Mission. It is self evident that the wise way to accomplish this aim is to surrender the direction of the church to native converts as rapidly as they are able to assume such duties. The missionary should not have to be forced by the native church to transfer direction to it. His sense of fitness and fairness should impel him to want to transfer to the native leader every bit of authority he can carry. And he should be able to sense any growth of discontent soon enough to take the initiative in adjusting the displeasing arrangement. It is easy to acquire the habit of supercilious criticism of the shortcomings of native leaders, and some missionaries mar their own happiness and lessen their influence in correcting such shortcomings by their unsympathetic attitude. Misdirected sympathy may lead to condonance of wrong things, but genuine sympathy is needed even when wrong is clearly evident. (1)

The aim in insisting on self-support and self-rule of the church is to develop a self-propagating church. This means a church that is both maintaining past gains and reaching out for others. New gains must be constant both in converts and in the fortifying of

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(1) Brown, A.J. : The Foreign Missionary , Chap. 15.

Brown, A.J. : Rising Churches in Non-Christian Lands, Chap. 5

Gardener, G. : Studies in the Evangelization of South A.  
Chaps. 4-7.

old believers. The church must constantly be learning how better to adapt itself to its surroundings. In view of the fact that Congo Society is now undergoing fundamental changes outside the influence of the church it will tax the utmost mental and spiritual resources of the best trained native leadership to safeguard the integrity of the church in its adaptations to the changing conditions. The evangelistic note must be made predominant in a society that is becoming as thoroly commercialized as any place in America or Europe. Organization and methods of work must be wrought out, which with the indwelling spirit of Christ, will make the Church the most potent element in society, industrialism not excepted. A church with such an influence will have to be an indigenous one. A church that depends on foreigners for support and direction will not have enough energy to meet such a situation. It is the indigenous church itself, not the foreign missionary organization, that must justify itself in the eyes of the native population before this population's wholehearted approval of its program can be won. In other words the church must prove wiser in its gaaration than even business. It must prove its claim that ,tho it is a movement brot in by foreigners, it is wholly for the sake of the inhabitants of the land, hence its conduct is turned over to them as rapidly as they have learned to live according to its precepts, and to govern their society accordingly. If the emerging church learns to project, without outside aid, its spiritual but practical teshings, into the surrounding soxiety, it will rapidly become a large if not dominating factor in the consciousness of the people.

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 native resources with a wise appropriation of foreign funds for  
 the work.

### SELF-SUPPORT

Foreign missions should always aim to have the salaries and other expenses of native religious workers paid by their own fellow Christian nationals. In the beginning, and in some new work undertaken late in the history of the mission, it may not be wise to make such a requirement. For the use of foreign money in such cases may lead to large expansion for which the church is ready, and the resultant gains may actually hasten self-support. But as soon as a body of Christians is large enough to be able to assume all the financial responsibility of its work it should be required to do so. Self-respect, growth both spiritual and numerical, and the fullest realization of the values of Christianity, require that it be thus received. A dependent child never reaches full self-development. Children of wealthy parents have their needs more entirely cared for without their own exertion than those of the common people, and consequently develop their inherent powers more slowly. There is every reason to believe that a national church will react to its treatment in the same way. A child must be wisely guided or it is likely to pervert its inherent powers, but it must actually decide much of its action. So with the church. If it is wisely guided in its childhood's learnings, both its support and direction ought to be willingly assumed by itself as rapidly as it can take them up.

Some Congo missions have required from the beginning that all the salary expense of native evangelistic effort be met by the native church. As a rule such missions have expanded their evangelistic efforts more slowly than those that have supplemented native resources with a wise appropriation of foreign funds for the work.

In the Disciples of Christ Congo Mission much stress has always been placed on the duty and privilege of supporting the work of evangelization. The mission has generally set forth tithing as the ideal to be reached by all givers. But the fact that the basis of Congo society makes the determination of a tithe impossible renders the tithe an impractical basis for the determination of the financial obligations of Christians to the church. Only those whose income is derived from a salary are able to tithe accurately. There are few whose total income is so derived. Salaried men almost always earn money in other ways, sometimes as much as their salaries. Their wives usually earn a good deal as well. But when they are definitely told that they should give a tithe, they usually consider that their financial obligations to the church are discharged when they have paid a tithe of their salaries. The result has been that the mission has as good as no tithers. The teaching of tithing has perhaps done good in inculcating the teaching of the duty of generous financial support of the church, but it is evident that a change is needed about the mission stations, either in the teaching of the degree of responsibility, or in the manner of collecting the offerings. Perhaps the substitution of the principle of individual responsibility in determining the amount to be given would yield larger results. Such a plan could follow the lines pursued in financing American churches. The every member canvass, followed by kindly but energetic insistence on the payment of subscriptions, ought to more than double offerings about all the mission stations. After its technique is worked out at the stations the same system could be effectively transferred to the wholly indigenous village Christian groups. It will not be difficult to make such modifica -

tions as varying communities may require.

The collection of offerings has never been based, even theoretically, on the tithe in the native villages. The reason is the obvious one already pointed out that no one knows how to determine what the tithe is in a society that does not put a commercial value on the food consumed and the shelter and other local comforts enjoyed. But it has been constantly stressed that the tithe standard would require a generous measure of giving. It is the obligation of supporting the preaching of the gospel that wins support.

At Lotumbe the following plan has been evolved, and its effectiveness has been growing as it has been perfected more and more. The year is divided into two six month terms. The evangelists spend about five of the six months in the villages where they are ministering, and one month at Lotumbe in school. When they return to Lotumbe from their work they bring the offerings of the Christians to whom they have been ministering. They seek an offering from each member of the church, unless physically incapacitated. Formerly the offerings were very small, there being almost no sense of responsibility on the part of the village Christians for the support of the work. When Mr. Eldred and I were at Tumba, on the upper Lokolo River in 1913 we asked each able-bodied man to give half a franc. Few gave that much. The evangelists were disgusted with our petty askings, and insisted that the men were able to give two francs each. Feeling the people's poverty so keenly we feared that such giving would be beyond them. Time has proved the correctness of the evangelists. About 1918 we began asking for definite amounts from each Christian or Christian couple each term. At first we suggested two francs for each couple, and other givers in proportion.



The declining value of the franc, with the consequent rise in the price of commodities, has made it necessary to constantly raise the offering suggested in the term pastoral letter relating to this subject. The last two terms I was at Lotumbe the amount suggested was six francs per able-bodied couple, four francs per single grown man, three francs for able-bodied women in harems, and two or three francs for children, with anything or nothing from the sick and decrepit. Some villages met these suggestions almost perfectly. The women fulfilled the suggestions better than the men. Some villages have done much better than others, and some districts have done decidedly better than others. But all in all the scheme has worked. The offerings of the villagers have risen from an average of two or three cents to about fifteen cents. But for the fluctuating value of the franc they would make a better showing still. If the every member canvass can be grafted onto a scheme like this, or rather supplant it, there is every reason to believe that a better average offering can be raised from village Christians. The giving which looks so little to us seems generous to them. Many of those who have always met the suggested offerings in full have never had a complete suit of clothes at one time, not even of the cheapest cotton cloth. The giving of such amounts has usually meant the spending of a week to three months a year in the swamp gathering gum copal to earn money for the offering. Some chiefs have become jealous and have sought to block the offerings. Such a situation requires much patient effort to show the chief that the church will cause no detraction from his dignity. Fear of unpleasant situations with the whites rather than sympathy with the Christians wins the acquiescence of some chiefs. State road work and the incessant

demands of chiefs for hunts, building, and other public work, have frequently made it difficult for Christians to do as well as they wish. I mention these difficulties because they will continue to operate in the future, and the native ministry will have to school itself to the most patient persistence to insure financial success in many communities. It is not to be thought, either, that all offerings have been given willingly. The evangelists have been roundly abused by many of their parishioners when they have called for their offerings. Much persistence has been required for success. The better trained young men have proven decidedly superior to the old men in this task, though some old men have made good collections.

It has been the practice of the mission to keep records of each individual's offerings in its roll books, where the church standing of each is kept up to date as well. Eventually these records may be transferred to the village church registers, but it will be some time before the mission ought to drop the semi-annual revision of its rolls, with offerings included in the individual records.

This rather lengthy account is given to show how the mission is trying to initiate self-support. It is evident that the native church is grasping the necessity of its assuming this burden. But the amounts given barely more than half cover the salaries of the village workers. A self-supporting native church is yet far from realization. The ideal of native workers paid by native offerings is making slow progress, because increased salaries and expansion have taken about all the increase in generosity of offerings. A truly self-supporting church takes care of its educational budget as well as its evangelistic. Missions should keep this fact in mind in building up their educational enterprises. We do not wish to bequeath

educational institutions to the Congo churches that will prove impossible burdens to them. Nor do we wish to delay unnecessarily the attainment of autonomy by the expensiveness of any institutions the mission may transfer to the native church.

The problem of self-support is also intimately bound up with the location of evangelists. Experience has proved that converts can be won more easily and more numerously by placing an evangelist in each village. Yet the average native village has only twenty to fifty able-bodied men; scarcely enough to guarantee the support of a pastor even if all of them were Christians. But there are few villages in which even a majority of the men are Christians. It is evident, then, that few villages are able to support a pastor by themselves. It would seem imperative, therefore, that a system be worked out whereby two or more villages may be ministered to by one pastor, thus making the ultimate realization of self-support a possibility. This has been attempted but usually with poor success. As a rule the village or villages not honored by the residence of the pastor make little progress, and sometimes retrogress. Sometimes this is due to the laziness of the pastor, but more often he is not to blame. For inter-village jealousy is usually so keen as to greatly hinder such efforts, and sometimes to render them wholly abortive. In many cases where a village has divided into two groups, an evangelist residing with one group has been persistently refused a hearing by all members of the other group. Seldom do Christians eradicate such old rivalries in their inter-village relations. In some cases missionaries on itineraries have deeply wounded the feelings of certain village groups of Christians by passing them by and spending the night in a nearby rival village. Possibly ultimately self-rule along

with self-support will help to solve this problem. When villages choose their own pastors, but are confronted with the financial necessity of co-operating with other to meet the expense, rivalry will be partly sunk in the desire to secure acceptable pastors. Naturally it is to be expected that the spirit of Christian love will count more and more toward the elimination of such un-Christian rivalry.

Self-support is vitally related to self-rule in many ways. In the first place a church that, extended over a considerable area, is able to meet all the expenses of its local and evangelistic efforts, is most likely to be mentally and spiritually capable of a large degree of self direction. Again the church must be constantly taught that self-support is a pre-requisite of self-rule. Missionary societies must, of course, hold their appointees responsible for the wise use of funds committed to their care. But missionaries will always find it difficult to see how such care can be exercised by them if they allow the disposition of the funds to be taken out of their hands. So a dependent church cannot demand complete autonomy.

A self-supporting church will be a witnessing church. The obligation of financial support of the church is not likely to be effectively impressed until the obligation of personally witnessing for Christ has first been accepted. "Why should a follower of Christ anywhere in the world, assume that he is under no obligation to witness for Christ unless somebody hires him to do so. We like to think that Christianity is adapted to every people. Then it ought to be able to live with them... No land will ever be evangelized until it has a self-supporting native church." (1)

(1) Brown, A.J. : *Rising Churches in non-Christian Lands* , 130, 131

SELF-RULE.

The necessity of the Congo church eventually assuming the entire direction of its affairs ought to be conceded by all, and perhaps is. This question is rapidly assuming the place of first importance in many of the older mission fields of Asia and Africa. The native church will sometimes over-reach itself as it has done in the Ethiopian movement in South Africa, and as it has recently done in the Prophet movement in Congo. (1)

The reasons for the development self-rule have been often stated by able writers (2). I would sum these reasons up for the Congo church under three heads:

1. The Congo church must become self-directing if it is to be a strong, aggressive organization.

2. It must be self-directing in order to become a conquering church, both in winning converts and in overcoming evils.

3. It must be self-directing in order to perpetuate itself.

There is no guarantee that the foreign missionary can always be present to direct.

(1) Gardener, G. : Studies in the Evangelisation of South Africa, pp. 46-53

Lerrigo, P.J. : in International Review of Missions, 1922, p. 270, The Prophet Movement in Congo.

(2) Congo General Conference Missionary Report for 1924, 55-81

Brown, A.J. : The Foreign Missionary, Chap. 15

Brown, A.J. : Rising Churches in Non-Christian Lands, Chaps. 4-7



No institution can grow strong unless those to whom it is of primary interest are capable of guiding its development wisely. But at present the Congo Church is not capable of so guiding itself. But like a child this church must grow strong and learn to care for itself by doing. It will make mistakes. But churches that are making as bad mistakes as those in America at the present time should be very charitable toward the mistakes of the nascent African church. The Congo church must make its own trials, suffer its own mistakes, correct these itself, and learn better how to avoid new ones. Of course the missionary must be present in the early days counselling, advising, holding the hand of his toddling baby church, helping it to learn, but always allowing it to do as much as it will alone. With wise withdrawal of the sustaining hand its powers should rapidly develop.

A brief statement will show the development of the church in the field of the Disciples of Christ Congo Mission. Soon after the first converts were won the missionaries began advising with them about winning others. (1) In this way the wonderful initial evangelistic work grew up at Bolenge. This gradually took on certain organizational forms. At present the fields of the various stations are divided into districts. A man who has proved of especial merit is made head evangelist or district elder, and supervises the work of his fellow evangelists. He has the right to authorize a change of residence from one village to another when the situation seems to demand such change before the case can be referred to the missionary. He exercises disciplinary powers over the evangelists, and

(1) Dye, Mrs. Eva : Bolenge , Chap. 13.

can even remove one whose moral and spiritual life is known to be wrong. He is supposed to advise with his fellow evangelists, and does so, if there is opportunity. At the semi-annual gatherings he usually acts as chairman of his group of evangelists in their own meetings to discuss their problems, and is usually their spokesman in presenting their conclusions on any matter to the missionaries. He attempts to visit all his evangelists each term. He is expected to adjust legal difficulties between evangelists and their chiefs in matters relating to native common law. He settles difficulties between Christians which the local evangelists are unable to settle. In short the district elder is the advisor of his colleagues and their church members on any questions on which his advice is sought, or in which the situation demands his interposition. It must be frankly admitted that the district evangelist who proves most effective usually exercises greater authority than the missionaries intend that he shall. Congo people are used to despotic rule, and failure to emphasize authority often leads to contempt for the one exercising it. The district elder does not know the psychology of the situation, but he does know that his hand must hold firmly and be cast off, so he maintains a firm hold on affairs. Some prove unequal to the task, and then each evangelist becomes a law unto himself. Usually the work has proven much less satisfactory where no strong district leader was available.

Some of these district leaders have been ordained as elders. Most of the later ones have not been. There has been no apparent influential advantage to those who have been ordained. Influence has been due to two things, personality and the recognition of the missionaries of the status of the elder.

The mission has attempted at each of its stations to build up a local official board to handle the local problems of the church. The results have not been wholly satisfactory. This is partly due to the fact that most of the stronger men have been in the evangelistic work. The local board usually consists of one or more elders and a board of deacons and deaconesses. These elders and deacons meet regularly to adjust matters needing the attention of the church. Usually these meetings are presided over by the missionaries but some of them are held in the native village under the supervision of an elder. Missionaries seek frank discussion of the problems. This body, properly called the Church Council, decides matters of discipline, divorce, local regulations, time and manner of services, it chooses local candidates for evangelistic work, discusses and decides certain matters of finance, and often carries on discussions seeking better understandings between native Christians and the missionaries. The station elders and the district evangelists do most of the examination of candidates for baptism to determine their worthiness, and they usually assist the missionaries as baptizers.

As already indicated the native church has taken over practically all responsibility for the collection of offerings, and the payment of evangelists is largely in their hands. The plan is that native offerings shall never pass into the hands of the missionaries; but when the evangelists are to be paid the mission turns over to the native financial committee the amount of money it is prepared to add to the native offerings for the payment of evangelists and outstation school teachers' salaries. The native committee then decides what salaries are to be paid on the basis of the amount of money on hand and the number of places to be pro-

hand it is only the self-sustaining church that can grow strong enough

vided for. This plan was suggested by missionaries in order to develop native leadership, especially the sense of financial responsibility. So long as the missionaries paid the salaries of the evangelists there was a feeling that salaries could be raised if the missionaries only desired it. Now that this responsibility is squarely on native shoulders there ought to be some correction of two evil tendencies; a. the tendency to blame the parsimony of missionaries for low salaries, and b. the tendency to demand salaries for evangelists that make self-support wholly beyond a possibility of realization within the near future. Protestant missions have tended to develop salary demands by evangelists that correspond to the salaries received by the clerks of commercial concerns. This tends to deaden the spirit of sacrifice on the part of religious leaders. It may as well be understood from the start that the position of a religious leader is one of financial hardship. This is true in civilized lands, and will be even more true in a backward country like the Congo. Christian leaders should be led to feel that imparting the gospel to others, and the building up of the church are rewards that compensate richly for the luxuries that have been foregone. The handling of the funds by the native leaders, and the deciding of salaries ought to advance the spirit of sacrifice. Not often will workers be willing to advise the withdrawal of workers from villages just in order that their salaries may be increased. In some cases either reduced salaries will be voted or heroic giving will be resorted to to provide for the occupation of appealing territory.

It is only the church that is strong enough to direct itself that can really mould the life of a community. And on the other hand it is only the self-ruling church that can grow strong enough

to gain such an influential community position. Once the church has become thus strong it will have become a mighty, self-propagating force. It has taken root and will scatter its seeds far and wide.

The stressing of self-rule ought to lead to a wifer evangelism. It should make of every disciple an evangelist. If Mohammedans are all evangelists of their faith, how much more ought Christians to be so. Self-rule will most likely lead to more leniency in the admission of candidates to baptism and church membership. In fact there is room to fear that some missions have made it too hard to get into the church, the standards being such that intelligence rather than faith and love for the Lord was the feature that loomed big in the candidates mind. It seems fairer and more likely to gain satisfactory growth all round to require only intelligent faith in and love for the Lord as the pre-requisites for church membership.

Islam has been encroaching more and more on Pagan Africa. But where the missions have a strong work established Islam does not usually succeed in greatly disturbing it. Both East and West Africa have usually shown Christianity winning over Islam where they have been in fair conflict, tho there are cases where the opposite has been true, at least for a time. The firing of a self-ruling church with evangelistic zeal will make it impregnable to the assaults of Islam.



CHAPTER NINE

CONGO CHURCH POLITY .....

Jesus left no definite plan for the organization of his church. Certainly he expected his followers to organize. It seems right, therefore, to assume that it was his realization that no hard and fast organization plan could be laid down that would be adaptable to the varying societies to which his church was to go, that caused him to ignore entirely the polity his church was to follow. He apparently felt confident that his spirit and influence would prove an adequate guide to his disciples in all situations in this vital matter.

Nor can one believe that the apostles left a definite form of organization. The doctrines of the death and resurrection of Jesus received constant attention from them but they did not, according to the New Testament, pay any great attention to the form of organization the church was to assume. The elders and deacons spoken of by Paul in the churches which he founded were perhaps, to be found in the churches established by the other apostles and their disciples. But the manner of their organization and elevation to office, is largely conjecture. And the variation of their functions indicates that the apostles left no binding instructions as to the sacredness of the form of organization, but rather expected the church to adapt its polity to its social environment.

Apparently the apostles considered themselves in a position of ultimate authority in the church. But they did not employ this authority for the suppression of local initiative. One cannot be sure, whether the apostles expected official successors or not, but Paul's language in the Galatian letter implies that he did not,

since he claims to have laid down the full revelation of Christ in so far as the basic truths of the gospel were concerned. Apparently this was a general apostolic claim.

Yet Paul clearly indicates that he expects Timothy, Titus and others of his helpers to exercise a super-authority in the church, and even directs them in some of the details of this ministry. (1) Polycarp's outstanding position was due partly to the fact that he was considered as the successor to John. James's position as practical director of the Jerusalem church appears to have been secured either by apostolic appointment, or by the tacit recognition of his super-fitness for the place. (2) And he was apparently recognized as on an equal footing with the other apostles. Yet there is no indication in the New Testament that James had a counterpart in any other church of that time.

These remarks on the New Testament polity may seem irrelevant, but they are mentioned to demonstrate that the Congo church will be violating no New Testament precedent, but will rather be fulfilling its implied direction, in adapting the organization of the church to the social conditions of the Congo. It may be in point to remark further that the New Testament church polity was in a fluent state. As did the early church it is to be hoped that the Congo church will always have the inherent life to adapt itself in polity and policy to its social environment. Only dead bodies refuse to yield to

(1) I Tim. 1:3, 18 ; 5:9-10, 18-22 ; II. Tim. 1:6 ; 4:1 ; Titus 1:5

(2) Acts 15:13-21 ; 21:10 ; Gal. 1:19 ; 2:9

to organic adaptation. And in the humid atmosphere of the Congo a dead body rapidly disintegrates. Protestant Christianity foists an unchanging, quasi-sacred church organization on Congo believers, that church will either decay at the withdrawal of the embalming preservative of White missionary direction, or it will rebel, cast off its grave clothes, and adorn itself in suitable robes of national Christianity. The Holy Spirit is not so foolish as to assume that it has completed the task of guiding Christ's church since apostolic days, and has therefore gained perpetual rest. Let Protestant missionaries read the tragic story of Roman Catholic missions in Africa and take warning. Rome has built up flourishing missions in Africa but when the varying fortunes of national politics has forced the withdrawal of the missionaries, her church has died the death. Her converts have fallen back into the grossest heathenism. Rome has been absolutely forgotten by them. Why? Partly because she attempted to fetter African society with a church organization absolutely unsuited to it. A machine which always turned the believer from Christ to Rome. Let no one think that the usurpation by the Pope of the place of Christ was the cause of this. The cause is that Rome has made the church organization itself a holy thing. Any church organization that teaches that it is, in and of itself, a holy thing, has usurped the place of Christ, and is likely to have the same effect of turning the believers' faith from Christ to itself. And faith in an organization can save neither an individual nor society. It is not intended that the church should exercise no authority. The church needs to have an organization recognized as having authority. But it is to be remembered always that it is the church itself, as represented in its membership, that exercises the authority, not the purely mechanical machinery of its organization.

But any theory of the sanctity of a type of organization robs Christ and his Church of their authority, and vests that authority in the machine of the organization itself. Therefore whatever type of polity is offered the Congo Church should be presented with the understanding that Christ expects his believers to organize for purposes of propaganda and self-edification. Whatever polity will best enable the Congo Church to accomplish these aims has divine sanction. The polity recommended is therefore, suggested, because it is believed to be best fitted to the conditions in the Congo for the building up of a worthy Church of Christ.

No individual ought to determine what this polity shall be, even in the limited area of the D.C.C.M. field. And leaders of all Congo missions should bear in mind that a gradual coalescing of the various church groups should take place. If missionaries deliberately build up a system of polity or doctrine that they know will make the ultimate realization of church unity for the Congo difficult they will be guilty of a spiritual wrong to the emerging Congo church. The missionaries of the various societies ought to be courageous enough to discuss this problem in their general conference, and to agree to deliberately plan their local polity with the aim of easy harmonization with other mission groups when the native church finds itself ready for national organization. It is evident that such organization will possess these two characteristics: simplicity, and proved acceptability to native society.

What has already been accomplished in the D.C.C.M. field has been treated in the last chapter. An attempt will here be made to show what familiar models the emerging church has on which to base its organization, and to suggest possibilities of acceptable adapta-

tions that may be evolved from such models.

The religious life of the Congo, as such, was wholly unorganized. Religious traditions utilized the clan and village social organizations for their observance and perpetuation.

The powerful secret societies of the country had liturgical features, but the organization of the societies was on social rather than religious lines. It is perhaps fortunate for Christianity that religion was not organized, for if it had been the new church would find it difficult not to yield to one of two temptations; the adoption of the old organic forms of religion with the consequent temptation of taking over some of its pernicious practices, as the early church in Europe and Western Asia did; or the alternate extreme of refusing to tolerate anything in church polity that resembled the old organic forms, with the consequent blunder of organizing the church wholly along foreign, and illy adapted lines. This does not mean that Western organic forms must be rejected in toto by the Congo church. Western church, social and governmental organization should be of infinite value to the Congo Church in shaping its polity. It is probable that the African Church should and will borrow its polity largely from Western organic models. But if it does it must be allowed the privilege of breathing the breath of life into them by adapting them to its own life.

It will be well to reconsider briefly the political, religious and commercial organic models with which Congo Christians are acquainted. The super-imposed Belgian government consists: (1) of the King, with his actual functions being performed by parliament and the Minister of Colonies; (2) a governor general; (3) four provincial governors; (4) twenty two district commissaires; (5)



more than a hundred territorial administrators; (6) a judicial department wholly independent of local administrative authorities. The native political organization is as follows (1) clan head; (2) ranking village chief, often having several villages under him; (3) the head of the larger, or non-intermarrying family; (4) the head of the smaller or closely akin family; (5) the head or father of the immediate family; (6) the elders, a non-official judicial body, consisting of all the old men, without legal authority, but the possessors, and usually the executors of the real moral authority of society. The commercial organization is very autocratic in style. There is the directorate in Europe, the Congo director, often a sectional director, and the local white agent. These last have native agents completely under their authority.

In the D.C.C.M. field an effort has always been made to follow as closely as possible the organizational forms of the constituent churches in the home land. Some elders and deacons have been appointed over local congregations. This type of organization has not yet proved its practical value in Congo society. In out-station churches it is usually the evangelist-pastor who is the real leader of the church, tho in a few villages local leaders, usually young fellows, have done good work, sometimes overshadowing the evangelist.

The mission organization offers a few possible suggestions for the eventual polity of the church. This is especially true in its two governing bodies, the Biennial Convention and the Field Advisory Committee. The convention is a legislative and judicial assembly of all the missionaries. It studies the problems the mission is facing, and thru committees or individual initiative, puts forward proposals for the adoption of the mission. The Convention controls

and directs the work of the various members of the mission.

The field Advisory Committee is the executive body of the mission. It exercises a very limited legislative and judicial authority, subject to revision by the Convention.

The officers of the mission, who administer its general affairs are under the direction of the Convention during its sessions, and of the Field Advisory Committee during the long intervals between convention sessions.

The indigenous church will need to organize itself for the performance of functions similar to those found in the mission administration. Would therefore, the organization of the mission prove adaptable to the native church? This question will be considered in the following pages.

The Roman Catholic church has a very autocratic government. It appears that its adherents prove fully as loyal to the church as do Protestant converts to theirs. Over the Congo as a whole the Roman Catholics have won larger numbers than Protestants. Is this greater success due to their autocratic polity? Neither this nor the contrary position can be effectively proven. But I believe the success of the Roman Catholics has been chiefly due to these facts; (1) the prestige gained from being the semi-national religion of the governing power; (2) fear - violation of prescriptions is taught to bring certain punishments; (3) Magic - There is virtue in certain things in and of themselves irrespective of the life led by the individual; (4) Authority - the hierarchy exercises its functions by divine right, acquired in some magic way in its consecration to office.

These doctrines are drilled into converts. It is easier to

to win converts to such a system from a magic fearing people than to Protestantism. For Protestantism eliminates much of fear from its system, entirely repudiates the magical interpretation of liturgy and ordinances, and teaches that authority is not inherent in the holders of office in the church, nor even in the church itself, but only in Christ. And that the effort of the church to exercise authority is only its attempt, not by any means always successful, to approximate its rulings to the mind of the great Head of the Church. But these doctrines of Protestantism are fundamental truths, and the Church must not sacrifice them for temporary numerical gain.

What are the objects sought in the organization of the church? As I understand it the chief of these are; a Propaganda for the conversion of non-believers, b the maintenance and strengthening of the spiritual bond between Christ and the believer; c Building up the body of believers in spiritual knowledge and power; d the enlistment of the church in every service whereby it may hope to effect the betterment of society. Whatever polity is adopted must be such as will aid the church in accomplishing these ideals.

My personal feeling is that the Congo church should adopt a democratic form of government. The individual should always feel that he is free to express himself and to develop his spiritual powers in the church. It is true that Bantu organization is familial rather than individualistic. But the individual has considerable opportunity to express himself therein, and often his efforts win decided advantages to him. I believe that any church government that fails to allow this scope for individual freedom of self-expression will prove unsatisfactory. Possibly this has been one of the causes that has prevented the permanent success of the Roman Catholic church in Africa.

Some might think that the clan organization of the Bantu would furnish the most natural system of church organization for the Bantu however this system has two characteristics that cannot pertain to the government of the church. These are blood relationship and inheritance of rank. But it is well to consider the closest analogy possible without the incorporation of these two traits of the clan system. Such an analogy is well revealed by an arrangement like this: Divide the territory covered by the evangelistic activities of the church into districts corresponding to the divisions secured by the present political divisions into chefferies, remembering that these chefferies correspond roughly to the ancient clan divisions. The territorial blocs in the church would be much larger at first than the chefferie divisions, but as Christians become more numerous these original sectors might be subdivided. Over each of these district units place an overseer of the congregations in that district, and of the leaders thereof. Then divide these district units into pastoral sectors, over each of which a pastor is placed. Have the district overseer and the local pastor, in conjunction with the congregations, set up village or congregational assistants, called elders, deacons, or any other name tant seemed to properly designate their functions. These four grades of officers would then correspond roughly with the clan leaders and the leaders of the various clan subdivisions, as follows: (1) District overseer to clan head; (2) Pastor to ranking chief; (3) Elder to family head; (4) deacon to still smaller family head. In addition the group of village or congregational elders would find its counterpart in the local assemblies of village elders. Most of the elders and deacons would be found in

we are going for the unifying and consolidation of the church all over the country. A national organization will be required to coordinate

in this group.

Since these officers cannot be hereditary in the church some plan for the selection of incumbents must be worked out if such a system is adopted. Here European and American methods of election might be adapted. It would seem that success would most probably be by an elective system to cover each of the divisions involved. That is, for the selection of the overseer of the district unit elected delegates from the pastoral units in the district might convene and choose an incumbent. Such delegates might be the pastors of the district together with lay delegates from each parish. It might be advisable to include in such an important assembly as advisors, the officers, or at least a representative of the executives of the national church organization.

Annual conferences might be held. In these conferences the district overseer and the pastors would be delegates by reason of their official position in the church. There would be lay delegates from each parish. These conferences should consider such affairs as demand attention in the district. These might be matters of mutual instruction, settlement of local questions of procedure, planning of evangelistic and teaching efforts, some especially aggravating cases of discipline or other local disputes, decisions on divorces, divisions of pastoral sectors and placing of new pastors, or rather the opening of new preaching places with a view to establishing independent congregations therein.

Leaders of the national church have been mentioned. It does not seem possible that the church could function to the fullest of its strength if its organization terminated with the district, and there was no plan for the unifying and collaboration of the church all over the country. A national organization will be required to secure the



unity of the church and guarantee its effectiveness. The unbrotherly conception of a local congregation, or even a district unit, having no organic connection with, owing no allegiance to, and acknowledging no controlling authority of a more general, central church government, uniting in itself the various congregational and district units, should never be allowed to take root in Congo. Congregational autonomy should be secured, it is true, but congregational autonomy does not deny the right to organic relations with the national church. Refusal of the right to any control of the local church by the national church in matters that are of vital concern to the general church, is logical the same as the denial of the existence of such a church. For the axiom "The whole is greater than any of its parts" is as true of the church as of geometrical demonstrations. And it applies to authority in the church as well as to its organism. A denial of the right of the general or national church to any control over local congregations amounts to the erection of each such congregation into a separate denomination. Such an extreme has, perhaps, never been sought on the mission field, but it is being advocated by some Disciples in America, and is here mentioned only as a reminder that such unreasonable and such unbrotherly ideas must be kept from the Congo if the church is to be saved the bitterness of many factional disputes, and the defeatism of in-coordinated efforts. A common chaotic likeness will not effect unity.

What type of central control should then be established. The following is suggested as a possible plan:

(1) There should be an assembly of chosen representatives from designated district units, meeting at stated periods, say annually or bi-ennially.

a. The assembly members might be the district overseers plus one pastoral and at least two lay members from each district.

(2) This assembly should have at least these duties:

Such legislative authority as is absolutely necessary to secure uniformity on questions that might destroy the unity of the church - Provided also that actions taken by the assembly may be revised or revoked at later sessions of the assembly when experience proves such revision or revocation advisable .

b Judicial authority to settle local difficulties that seem impossible of settlement by local leaders.

c The selection by ballot of an executive staff to administer the general affairs of the church. This staff should consist of at a secretary and treasurer, and as the church grows, should be increased in size to meet the administrative needs of the church.

d Selection of an executive committee to counsel with and guide the executive staff in its work. This committee would be the business head of the church between meetings of the general assembly or conference, and would look after all general business of the church which it would not be wise to the executive staff alone.

(3) Some constitutional definition of the rights, limits and powers of the general assembly, the executive committee, the district units and all individuals functioning officially in any capacity in the church should be adopted. Terms of office of executive officers, excepting the treasurer, should be limited to periods short enough to guarantee against dictatorships, oligarchies, or a self-perpetuating officialdom. Efficiency can be secured without self-perpetu-

ating officers. Democracy may not always be as immediately efficient as an autocracy, but over a long period of time its accomplishments will prove vastly superior. This contention might be supported by illustrations from both current political and religious conditions but it seems to possess sufficient self-evidence to make such argument unnecessary.

It may be objected that the plan outlined here is for a church among a well developed people, versed in self-government of a complex nature. It must be granted that there is much truth in this objection. But the plan is about as simple as can be evolved that will guarantee an effective government of a wide-spread church. So this plan is a suggestion is a plan to work toward, and to train native leadership to fit into as rapidly as possible. No one would claim that the native church is capable of self-government of even a simple, local nature at the present time, much less the complex organization that such a general fusion of the churches requires. Only a very few leaders in the D.C.C.M. field are capable of leading even a local congregation without missionary assistance. But in training up native leadership there ought to be as definite a goal as possible to work toward, and the leadership should be directly trained to fit into the system aimed at. Of course the polity outlined here is only suggestive. And whatever type of polity is offered by missionaries, they ought to freely grant the native church the right to modify it, or even reject it and substitute an entirely different plan, when it has become self-supporting and capable of entire self-government.

Since the indigenous church cannot now adopt a definite church polity, it would be well for missionaries to more fully formulate, in council with the best native leaders, plans for local and

district organizations that can function in the present state of development of the church. The district plan already suggested is only an enlargement and systematization of the plan already in operation in the D.C.C.M. field. It was here sought to define more clearly the duties and rights of district overseers, pastor-evangelists and the local lay leaders. It is freely granted that the native church cannot yet, by itself, carry all the administrative burden of this district organization, much less the more comprehensive central organization, designed to weld all these districts into a single general church organization. But if there is to eventually be such a general organization, it is important that it, or some corresponding organization, shall function early so as to prevent opposition to it, and to avoid territorial exclusiveness when the leadership becomes capable of directing a more general organization. In the meantime the central administration should continue in the hands of missionaries, aided by native counsellors. Gradually the organization may be worked into its desired final form, with missionaries temporarily holding the offices. Gradually, as capable native leaders arose, the leadership and official administration would be handed over to them, the missionaries continuing as long as needed as counsellors, but finally dropping out even in this capacity, thus leaving the whole direction of the church to national leaders.

The elevation of nationals to positions of first rank in the church is not new in Africa. Bishop Crowther is an example that comes to the mind of all familiar with the history of the West African Church. (1) The Uganda mission of the C.M.S. has done

(1) The Black Bishop, especially Chap. 6.

a good deal in this line. From the start it has consistently followed the policy of developing native leadership. (1) A splendid example in a democratically organized mission and native church is that of the Paris Evangelical Society's mission to the Basuto. (2) This mission first attempted a synod fashioned after that of the Reformed churches of France. But it was found that the delegates were generally incapable of adequately weighing the problems of the church. The D.C.C.M. mission has attempted joint conferences with native leaders the last three years and has likewise found them incapable of weighing the problems of the church in an adequate way. Mark Mjosi, of Bolenge, did deal with them in a satisfactory way, but no other leaders stood out with any prominence. The Basuto mission has continued the Synod with very limited powers, and its usefulness has grown with the passage of time. But there was a feeling of the need of a closer participation of the abler native leaders in the administration of the church. So in 1890 a new administrative body for the church was formed called the Seboka. This was composed of the missionaries and the ordained native pastors. There were eight of these pastors at the time of the formation of the Seboka. They were men who, after having had enough schooling to make them, with their inherent ability and fidelity, outstanding leaders in the church, were given a further course of three years in the mission's "School of Theology". This school was conducted from time to time when suitable candidates were available, and the needs of the mission demanded their preparation. For the most part these pastors have been placed in charge of districts which cannot

(1) Tucker, A.N. : Eighteen Years in Uganda and East Africa, 109-112

(2) Maison des Mission Evangeliques : Livre d'Or de la Mission



we often reached by the missionaries. Some of them have, all alone, opened and developed evangelistic and village educational work in large but remote sections of the tribe. (1) In 1900 there were thirteen of these native pastors. The number has been considerably increased since then.

As already noted the Seboka is an assembly composed of the missionaries and the native pastors. They deliberate as absolutely equal members of this assembly. The mission retains absolute direction of all its affairs not having to do directly with the native church. But all matters having to do with the native church are decided by the Seboka. (2) The Seboka has jurisdiction over all "that which concerns the church, properly speaking, its discipline, its laws, its finances, the creation of new parishes, and of new preaching posts, the placing or displacement of native pastors, the discipline to be exercised over them, the consecration of new candidates, the reception of new students at the School of Theology. All which concerns the primary schools of the mission and the financial questions pertaining to them is equally under its direction. This mixed conference, then, is the directing head of the church."

The Swiss Protestant mission (La Mission Romande) in the northern Transvaal and the Lorenzo Marques sector of the Portuguese colony of Mozambique, or Portuguese East Africa, has followed the same lines of development as the Basuto mission. In fact this mission owes its origin to the French Basuto mission, and has always maintained a close alliance with it. (3)

(1) Maison des Missions Evangeliques, Paris : Livre d'Or de la

(1) Mission du Lessouto, 390-394, 414

(2) Ibid : 414-420 ; 550-560

(3) La Mission Romande, 124-133

One other regulation adopted by this mission in 1894 was very helpful in uniting the church in its work and interests. This was the establishment of a central treasury. (1) Prior to this the offerings of each native congregation had been locally used under its own direction, nearby outposts being opened when the local congregation supplied the money for the expenses. The result was that the better evangelized central portion of the tribe, where Christians were numerous, paid their evangelists well, and occupied all the villages about, while to the north, where Christians were few, the evangelists were poorly paid and there were few outposts where it was being sought to build up new congregations. The central arrangement provided that all collections should be turned in to it; from the funds then available the evangelists were to be paid specified salaries irrespective of location or local collections, and on the decision of the mission and the synod new preaching places were opened where they seemed to be most needed, not nearest to where the most money for their support was given.

These three institutions are now acting as a unifying and centralizing force in the Basuto church: the Synod, the Central Treasury, and the Seboka. It is expected that eventually the general ability of native leaders will rise to such a point that the synod will be able to take over the full direction of the church. Then the Seboka, along with the foreign mission, will disappear, and the Central Treasury, doubtless with considerable curtailment of its functions, will become the missionary and philanthropic treasury of the general church.

(1) Maison des Missions Evangeliques, Paris: Livre d'Or de la Mission du Lessouto, 597-400.

This mission has gone far in its development of an African church polity. It evidently aims to eventually establish the French Reformed type of church government, perhaps considerably modified to fit African conditions. The missionaries constantly profess their realization of the necessity of allowing considerable latitude to the native church in determining its polity. Examination will show that the organization suggested for the D.C.C.M. Congo church corresponds in a large degree to this which has been developed in the Basuto mission. The plan here suggested is fuller, and somewhat more systematic. But as in the Basuto church it provides for a growing co-operation in the direction of the church between the missionaries and the native leaders, with a central organization gradually developing, and passing into the hands of the native leaders as these become capable of assuming these responsibilities.

If the D.C. C.M. and the other Protestant missions of the Congo eventually develop self-governing churches in their respective spheres, how might these be welded into one great church when advancement in civilization and spiritual power make such a consummation theoretically possible? This is a most serious question. For if Protestant missions are not able to link their churches together into one organic whole, they will simply have established a large number of regional denominations. And even the territorial barriers will gradually break down as movements of people for work, etc. lead to the introduction of the varying denominations into each others territories. In fact this movement of people is already in progress and has become a serious problem of missions in such centers as Kinshasa, Matadi and Elisabethville. Denominational churches, existing side by side, would doubtless soon adopt proselytizing

programs, with attendant bitterness and strife.

Such a condition should by all means be averted. The present general conference of Congo Missionaries along with its executive intermission body, the "Conseil Protestant du Congo" has been obviating intermission difficulties and promoting unity of effort and of spirit. When the leaders of the Congo churches become sufficiently proficient to make the participation of national leaders practicable in the higher councils of the church, doubtless a national Christiania of Congo will be organized. (1)

It is to be hoped that when this is done, both the missionaries and the national leaders will be bold enough to declare that one purpose of this organization is to act as the vehicle of the various regional churches in seeking a basis of organic unity, and in securing the adoption of such unity. It is to be hoped that the past spirit of mutual esteem and co-operation existing between the missions may gain the acceptance of such local modifications of polity and even of denominational doctrinal peculiarities, as may be necessary for the securing of such unity. The formation of such a united church would not require the local abandonment of particular organizational peculiarities, nor of doctrinal practices not found in other regions, but it would require the acceptance without question of Christians of any church into the fellowship of any other

(1) Congo Missionary report, for 1924, 42-43; 55-61

Oldham, J.H., in International Review of Missions: The Church in the Mission Field, Vol. 1924, 66 ff.

Brown, A.J.: The Foreign Missionary. Chap. 15

Brown, A. J. : Raising Churches in Non-Christian Lands, 155-210

congregation upon presentation of the proper credentials of membership in good standing.

The missionaries of the different societies must be led to espouse the cause of unity if such a program is to win. To this end it is to be hoped that those who believe such a program essential to the ultimate success of the church in Congo will constantly keep this idea to the front in the General Conference meetings, and in articles in the official quarterly publication of that conference, the "Congo Mission News" or "Nouvelles Missionnaires du Congo". Past expressions of various missionaries would confirm one in the belief that the great majority of the missionaries in nearly all the missions of Congo are heartily in favor of such a consummation. Mutual conference and effort during the years of the development of the local organizations ought to enable those who have a desire for ultimate unity to develop simple polities that can be easily united when the time for union comes.

One must face the fact that the episcopal polity of the Methodists, and the controversy over the form of baptism, among other things, are likely to prove formidable obstacles to unity. But they are not insuperable, and with genuine Christian love acting as the controlling influence ways should be found of overcoming these difficulties without violence to the consciences of any.



CHAPTER TENA FORWARD LOOK.

Protestant missionaries have now been working in the Belgian Congo fifty years less two. It is in order to examine the past to see what mistakes need correction, and to look forward with a view to building yet more effectively and securely the future.

Statistics reveal the fact that there are now about five hundred Protestant missionaries in the Congo. And a native church of about 125,000 has been won from heathenism. This sounds like a good record till compared with that of the Roman Catholics. These entered the field a little later, and already have fifty percent more missionaries, and claim a native church of at least 250,000 bonafide members. One must be honest in accounting for this difference in results. It can be honestly claimed that the teaching of Roman Catholicism requires less of a break with the past than that of Protestantism, and this has doubtless had much to do with their winning of superior numbers. But it must also be admitted that their methods and life are accounts in their favor. Especially is the celibacy of the clergy, with the consequent ease and frequency of itineraries strong aids to their propaganda. Protestants need to find a way for improving their superintendence of their village work to something on a par with that of the Catholics.

In industrial education it is generally admitted that the Roman Catholics have excelled Protestants. But it must be admitted in favor of Protestants, that their industrial programs have generally been purely philanthropic, whereas the Catholic schools have often sought to support both the scholars and the missionaries conducting the schools from the sale of industrial products.

It is probable that missionaries have often emphasized industrial education because of the feeling that the Negro is incapable of the mental culture required of more purely esthetic disciplines. Industrial education should be promoted in order to raise the living conditions of the people to a standard that makes better social, mental and spiritual ideals easy of attainment. But to assume that the black is fit only for a laborer, and should therefore be trained to labor skilfully is an insult to a great race, and is not worthy of a missionary. It is probable that many missionaries need to re-adjust their views on this matter. One needs to have a real appreciation of the past and present attainments of the Negro race to secure the sympathetic response to educational and religious efforts that should be won.

Missionaries need to do a closer pastoral work than they have been doing. The rapid growth of their work, with the multitudinous tasks devolving on wholly inadequate staffs, has often led to neglect of the personal contacts needed for the formation of leaders. And native pastors need the example of genuine missionary pastors to teach them how to shepherd their own churches.

Mission medical work has done wonders in relieving suffering. Its first task was obviously to relieve the cases of most crying need. This has led to regional diminution, and sometimes the almost total elimination of certain diseases, such as yaws. But the more difficult task of imbuing the Christian community with with hygienic instruction, and of freeing it from subversive medical practices, is only beginning. This task can be considered as having been fairly started only when a native medical force of genuine competence has been trained. The medical staff of the D.C.C.M. realizes this

fact and is making real effort along this line, and is planning large things for the future. Thru combined mission and State effort there is just ground for hoping that genuine improvement in the care of the sick may soon be seen. Also that true medical science, practised by natives in the native villages, may exert a large influence in breaking the hold of baneful magic and spiritualistic superstitions. (1)

In considering the native church one naturally asks whether the record of that church justifies the belief that a self-directing indigenous church can be expected to arise in the Congo. In chapters one to five the environment in which the church has won its converts was briefly surveyed. Has the church done enough to warrant one in believing that it will be an effective agent in overcoming the evil of this environment? Are the evils of the old society to be found in as large a degree in the church as outside? Is a conscience against them really gaining ground? Are false spiritual conceptions coming to be regarded as really false?

Polygyny, as an institution, does not exist in the church. The proportion of converts returning to heathenism in order to enjoy polygenous privileges, is perhaps smaller than ever, tho there is a considerable number of such men, among them men who were of undoubted integrity of Christian character. But it seems that

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(1) Hensey, A.F. : My children of the forest, Chaps.

Dye, Mrs. R.J. : Bolenge, Chap.

Gardner, G.B.A. : Studies in the Evangelisation of South Africa, Chap. 4.

industrial as well as moral reasons, will soon be militating against polygyny. There is real cause, then for believing that the church will win in its fight against polygyny.

There is also undoubtedly a higher sense of sexual morality in the church than in the non-Christian community. But this is not yet strong enough to justify one in the belief that Christians of either sex come to the marriage altar with bodies unpolluted by illicit sexual relations. But there is general acceptance in the church of the teaching that such relations are wrong, and the resistance to passion is growing. Also changing social conditions will doubtless soon favor social purity. The official position of the church is squarely against sexual immorality. This position will more and more become one of the moral assets of the church, for a real effort is made to enforce it.

Most Christians have abandoned the practice of magical and false spiritual beliefs and practices. But they have not abjured the belief that there is truth in these things for the non-Christian. Both spirit worship and magic were thoroughly ingrained in their consciousness of the unseen world, and Christianity will require considerable time to thoroughly eradicate them. But it is great gain to recognize the wrongness of the practices and abandon them, even though one still believes in the power of the power of that which the practices inculcate. To the Congo Christian traffic with wicked spiritual and magical powers is un-Christian, hence must be discontinued. But one does not therefore deny the existence of these wicked spiritual and magical powers any more than one denies the existence of wicked men, whose company and practices must be avoided. Along with this negative idea there runs the positive one that God is able, and often does protect his believers from the malevolent

actions of wicked spiritual and magical forces. The stronger one's faith and devotion, the larger his protection. This faith will eventually cast out fear by revealing the falseness of the spirit and magic cults, along with the power of increasing scientific and spiritual education, just as these processes have been eliminating these same misconceptions among civilized peoples.

There is every reason to believe that the gradual emancipation from inimical social and religious transmissions will result in growth in genuine spiritual power. Left, after being thoroly drilled in basic Christian ideas, with a comparatively free hand in developing a liturgy and church polity that will properly express its spiritual yearnings and ideas, there is genuine reason for believing that the emerging Congo Church will bring real honor to the great head of the Church, under whose inspiration and direction it will carry on as a cleansing, saving power in African society.



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and many articles in S.P.M. and  
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