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A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIGENOUS CHURCH
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SIERRA LEONE AND NIGERIA

By

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

A. The Statement and Justification of the Problem

It is the purpose of this thesis to investigate the need and best method for building an indigenous church, especially among the natives of Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

A vital subject in Christian Missions everywhere in the Indigenous Church, which has long been the goal of every ideal missionary program. Although much has been done to establish indigenous church principles, increased effort must be made in training thousands of African Christians in ministerial, educational and lay tasks. Accompanying this training must come responsibility for real expansion and leadership. The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. expressed the aim of missions thus:

"The supreme and controlling aim of Foreign Missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all men as their Divine Savior and to persuade them to become His disciples; to gather these disciples into Churches which shall be self-propagating, self-supporting, self-governing; to cooperate, so long as necessary, with the Churches in the evangelization of their countrymen, and in bringing to bear on all the human life the spirit and principles of Christ."¹

Among the natives of West Africa, missionaries are in various stages of building a native church. Be-

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1. Machen, J. Gresham, Modernism and the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1933, p. 9.

cause of the foresight and outstanding missionary leadership, some mission churches are nearly indigenous; that is, they have developed naturally in their own surrounding conditions and are not a hybrid product of Western Christianity forced upon them. Some other mission churches are at the present time transferring from the home church to the native church. But in many other places indigenous ideals have touched but a fringe of the vast population. Missionaries on the whole are just beginning to awaken to the problem and to see the necessity of permitting Christianity to become indigenous to the people to whom the Gospel is preached. Ultimate top control is still held by missionaries, either through administration of finances or both, and African Christians react accordingly.

The problem is a very real one. Today it is considered self-evident that nations can be effectively evangelized only by their own nationals. The unhappy or only partial results which have developed under African church leadership seem to be in part due to past lack of really trained and qualified leaders and to shortcomings in the spiritual and personal relationships of missionaries with African leaders. This study will attempt to discover better methods of cooperation with nationals to achieve the lasting results of a truly indigenous church among these brothers in Christ.

B. Definition of Terms and Delimitation of the
Problem.

"What is really meant....is that to be indigenous, Christianity shall become so rooted among a people that they shall feel it to be their own, and not something alien."¹

"Indigenous" means "native-born". In this study the term "native church" will be defined as that organization whose goal is to meet the spiritual needs of the people. "Indigenous Church" implies a self-propagating, self-governing, and self-supporting church. The term "self-support" has several definitions that may lead to misunderstandings: the ideal meaning, of course, is the church's assumption of the complete support of the whole mission program.

"The church" will have reference to the body of African believers, and "the mission" will connote the organization with which the Western Churches nurture the native church. The terms "younger" and "older" churches mean respectfully, the church being established on the mission field, and that one which sends the personnel and means to establish it.

Because of the wide scope of the field, it is

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1. Latourette, K. S., "Indigenous Christianity in the Light of History", International Review of Missions, 1940, p. 429

necessary to limit this study to a particular group. The peoples chosen are those living in Sierra Leone and in Nigeria, where the Evangelical United Brethren Church has established mission work. General aspects of the indigenous church in Africa and elsewhere will naturally be discussed; however, definite conclusions will apply mainly to the two above-mentioned countries of West Africa.

C. Method of Procedure

As a background for this study of developing an indigenous church in West Africa, the first chapter will be a study of the historical development of the indigenous church principles and goals used by Jesus Christ and Saint Paul in the New Testament accounts as well as by twentieth century missionaries. The purpose of the second chapter will be to discover the present practices of indigenous church principles on various mission fields, concentrating on Sierra Leone and Nigeria, Africa. The third chapter will deal with the potentialities of the future indigenous church with special references to Sierra Leone and Nigeria. The last chapter will be a summary of this study, in which recommendations will be suggested for the further development of an indigenous church among the peoples of Sierra Leone and Nigeria, Africa.

D. Sources of Data

The sources for this study are varied.

Information will be gained from numerous magazine articles, reports of various investigation commissions, the Jerusalem Meeting and Madras reports, the Evangelical United Brethren Church reports of its work in West Africa, background books, and personal interviews with recently returned missionaries from the field for current problems and possible solutions.

CHAPTER I
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIGENOUS CHURCH
ON THE MISSION FIELD

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A. Introduction

In order to apprehend better the indigenous movement, it is necessary to gain a knowledge of its historical background. This chapter will begin with the New Testament period and will briefly treat the history of indigenous church principles to the present day modern missions. Thus the foundation of indigenous ideals will be understood, so that the present practices in African native churches can be intelligently studied.

B. New Testament Indigenous Principles

The New Testament sets forth definite missionary and indigenous principles which have proved to be essential guides in the development of native churches. The two main factors in the growth and extension of the Christian Church are those servants of God who seek to win souls to Christ and those believers who form a local community church. Both of these human factors are necessary to each other and to the desired native church. The missionary is deeply concerned that the churches of Christ be true churches firmly established and possessed

of His spirit. And the believers in turn have a responsibility as an evangelizing center.¹.

1. Indigenous Principles Used by Jesus

The four gospels continually perpetuate the idea of trained workers going forth with the gospel. The Master Himself incorporated this indigenous ideal into His method of teaching, for He trained twelve disciples to go out with His message that they might bear fruit in His name. Matthew and Mark both give detailed accounts of Jesus' methods in training the twelve. He spent three intensive years with them, during which He gave them the great theme, the great invitation, the great commandment, and the great commission. Furthermore, He not only gave them a message to preach but also authority to preach that message to all who would hear it. Their duty was to preach Him as the Risen Christ, and in so doing, they would establish and extend His kingdom on earth. Finally, He gave them a Counsellor to take His place after His ascension. "But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you." (John 14:26)

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1. Ritchie, John, Indigenous Church Principles in Theory and Practice, p.5.

Jesus also gave Himself to the evangelization of the masses of people; however, the training of the twelve, though almost inconspicuous, was much more intensive and far more important. "The coming of the Son of God to earth to redeem mankind is the matchless missionary enterprise."¹.

2. Indigenous Principles Used by St. Paul

"Paul was the first and foremost missionary of the Christian Church and, as such, the greatest individual human force in foreign missions."². The importance of his life and work cannot be overestimated. Because of his unceasing missionary zeal, work and experiences, he became the pioneer organizer of the life, activity and government of the early Christian Church. "He was undoubtedly next to Christ, the greatest benefactor of the human race."³. As one looks into the heart of Paul, one sees his loyalty in love, his great anxieties, his keen disappointments, his triumphant hopes, his unparalleled success.⁴.

Paul continually encouraged the new converts to lead consistent Christian lives despite all the luring

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1. Drach, George, Forces in Foreign Missions, p.20.
2. Bliss, E. M. , The Missionary Enterprise, p. 38.
3. Drach, George, op. cit., p. 37.
4. Drach, George, Ibid.

temptations of surrounding heathenism. The two principles which seemed to underlie all his practice were: (1) that he must convert individuals to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and (2) that he must also in every place establish an organized congregation with common Christian life and activity, thereby making the Christian Church a permanent and living body. Paul inculcated principles, encouraging the Christians to do things for themselves. When he had carefully and thoroughly instructed them in the fundamentals, he willingly left them in order to give place for Christ. He had faith that the Holy Spirit would teach them to follow the example he had given them and would inspire them to deeper love for Christ.

The essential principles of Paul's methods are excellently summed up by Alex R. Hay: (1) The Holy Spirit must be given His proper place. (2) He gave work to the converts immediately, so that they would feel their responsibility to evangelizing the neighboring areas. (3) A Church when organized was given complete power to establish other churches independent from his sanction. (4) The missionary should be an evangelist rather than a pastor, staying long enough to organize and establish a church according to the fundamental doctrine. (5) He did not leave the churches and lose contact with them, but personally wrote letters to them and

revisited them. (6) His training to the converts was nearly always practical and strongly emphasized evangelism.¹.

Church history through the centuries discloses the indigenous principles as they have been developed. This study cannot attempt to trace that development in detail; therefore, only the period of modern missions will be studied.

C. The Rise and Growth of the Indigenous Church Movement

The indigenous church principles or ideals were first adopted by individual missionaries in different world mission fields without any formulated theory or plan, but under the leading of the Holy Spirit.².

1. Advantages of Indigenous Church Principles

a. William Carey, one of the greatest of modern missionaries, wrote in 1816, nearly one hundred and thirty-two years ago:

"I conceive that the work of preparing as large a body as possible of Christian natives in India for the work of Christian pastors and itinerates is of immense importance. English missionaries will never be able to instruct the whole of IndiaIndia will never be turned from the grossness

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1. Hay, Alex R., Practicing New Testament Methods in South America, pp. 5-7.
2. Ritchie, John, Indigenous Church Principles in Theory and Practice, p. 13.

of her idolatry to serve the true and living God unless the grace of God rest abundantly on converted natives to qualify them for mission work, and unless, by the instrumentality of those who care for India, they be sent forth to the field. In my judgment, therefore, it is on the native evangelists that the weight of the great work ultimately must rest."¹.

William Carey had strongly felt the need of new missionary principles along indigenous ideals. Therefore, he focused his attention upon the training of native Indian leaders. Bishop Nylne later said, "Subsequent missions have proved to be successful, or the opposite, in a proportion fairly exact to their adoption of Carey's methods."².

b. John L. Nevius, a missionary to China, in 1862 formulated in a letter his new ideas of a change in the policy of missionary church principles and sent that important letter to the Executive Committee of the Board of Foreign Missions. He stated the need for a new policy and suggested the establishment of a theological school in China for the training of natives for the ministry. He further suggested that the few missionaries dedicate themselves to that specific task of training native ministerial candidates, for in the long run this method would save time, labor and expense and would produce in

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1. Ranson, C.W., "An Imperative Indigenous Need", World Dominion, September-October, 1946, p. 285.
2. Ranson, Ibid., p. 287.

the course of time unmeasurable good for the cause of missions.¹.

A summary of the Nevius principles is as follows: (1) Missionaries to itinerate widely, thereby doing much personal evangelism. (2) The "layering method" to be used; that is, every believer to learn from someone better trained as well as to teach someone else. (3) Every church to be under its own unpaid leader from the very first day of organization. (self-government) (4) Each local church to pay towards the financial obligations as much as possible; no pastors to be supported by foreign funds. (self-support) (5) The Bible to be central in all phases of the mission work. (6) Strict Biblical discipline to be enforced. (7) Cooperation with other Christian organizations to be promoted. (9) General helpfulness of the local church to be encouraged as much as possible in the economic life problems of the people.².

A group of missionaries in Korea heard of the "Nevius Methods", and invited the senior Presbyterian minister to explain these methods and to help them establish a new Christian Church in Korea. In this manner

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1. Nevius, Helen C., The Life of John Livingstone Nevius, p. 235.
2. Clark, Charles Allan, The Korean Church and the Nevius Methods, pp. 33-34.

the "Nevius Methods" were identified with the Korean Church. In spite of the many imperfections in these principles, they marked a trend toward the building of the present-day indigenous church ideal.

c. Sidney J. W. Clark began the modern indigenous church movement when he retired as a successful business man to follow his interest in missions and their methods. After investigating for seventeen years through traveling in the Orient and discovering indigenous problems, he wrote in 1913 his conclusions in a pamphlet "The Country Church and Indigenous Christianity", which later entitled "The Indigenous Church", was widely circulated by the World Dominion Press.

In his pamphlet Mr. Clark tried to solve the problem of reaching the masses. His investigations showed that eighty percent of the world's population lived in villages, while a bishop in India stated that eighty percent of the missionaries were located in cities.¹ Mr. Clark wrote that the only way to evangelize the masses was to establish churches "which from the first day on which they are planted, may be made self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating."² He stated the magni-

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1. Ritchie, John, Indigenous Church Principles in Theory and Practice, pp. 14-15.
2. Clark, S.J.W., The Indigenous Church, p. 12.

tude of the task of reaching these numerous villages and the utter hopelessness of successful world evangelization by the then present methods. The proposed method he set forth in "The Indigenous Church" had as its core the essential principle that the newly organized Christian group he left to its own resources and dependence on God. Two other principles were reiterated: (1) The foreign missionary devote his energies to pioneer evangelism; and that neither he nor any worker paid from the mission funds should conduct pastoral duties in any certain congregation. (2) No institution should be started on the mission field which could not be maintained and conducted by the native church.¹ To illustrate his principles of indigenous mission work, he suggested the following six methods to be used consecutively:

- (1) First, a teacher with several native workers would visit each village and would teach interested people to read. They in turn would be able to help their fellow-men to read, thus enlarging the number of literates.
- (2) Following these first teachers a colporteur or distributor would circulate appropriate literature to these literate natives and in this way stimulate the already aroused interest. They could read to others in the

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1. Ritchie, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

community and spread the gospel message. This colporteur would make a list of the names of sick persons and give this list to the doctor upon arriving back at the main station. (3) Then the doctor and perhaps several nurses would follow the same route as the teacher and colporteur and would aid the listed sick. Undoubtedly some of the patients would need to be sent back to the headquarters hospital. There they would receive not only medical treatment, but also the Gospel in a simple and direct way. (4) With these three methods of preparation, the native would likely be receptive to spiritual truths. Therefore, the clerical missionaries and native pastors would follow and would give the "Good News" to these people. (5) The lady missionaries and native Christian women could get next to the women by visiting in the homes, observing their family needs as much as possible. Realizing the importance of educating children, those interested or outstanding might be encouraged to attend the mission school. (6) Lastly, an intensive and concentrated evangelistic effort would be made in each village, an invitation being given to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and to form an organized group of Christians which would be basic in developing a native church.

"The twos and threes thus gathered out would be formed into little churches, dependent on God

and their own local resources for future growth, while the missionary team moved on to another chosen group of villages."¹.

Mr. Clark believed the missionary to be a transitory factor who should work to build up a strong native church with its own leaders, in case he would have no successor. However, some missionaries have considered themselves indispensable to their work, and history has proved that most missionaries do have successors, thus indigenous efforts have been weakened. But the successful missionary does not need a successor. During World War II many missionaries were forced to leave their stations or were killed, especially in the Orient. Yet, native leaders and Christians took the burden on their own shoulders and went forward together with Christ!

2. Difficulty of Devolution

Devolution is the process of turning over the mission work to the native congregation for its own propagation, government and support.² If the principle of self-sufficiency is to be accepted as Mr. Clark suggests, it should be adopted and put to use in the very beginning of the indigenous organization. But some doubt if the little group of new Christians without experience and complete knowledge of a Christian life and its ethics

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1. Ibid., p. 16

2. Ibid., p. 21

are able to go forward on their own with only the Holy Word and the Holy Spirit. The missionary usually deems it necessary to remain with them for a time to guide them. In the meantime these Christians depend upon him. The problem is a very real one to be faced squarely. "Next, therefore, to dependence on God, Christian interdependence must take precedence over dependence on a missionary or a mission-paid helper."¹.

History has proved that it is more difficult to apply the indigenous principle to a congregation accustomed to a foreign-paid pastor than to apply it to new believers in the very beginning. The recognition of this fact is imperative in the development of an indigenous church. Its success will depend upon immediate and proper organization, adaptable to the growing congregation and movement.².

After Carey expressed his conviction and ideas concerning native training, missionaries began to use his methods. Christianity was then taken to many more people and transformed more cultures in those next years than in all preceding centuries. The rapid geographical expansion was matched by a widening range of missionary activity. Educational, medical and industrial training were

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1. Ibid., p. 27.

2. Ibid., p. 22.

begun, agricultural experiments were made, new and varied tasks and complex responsibilities demanded attention, and the organization of missions became more elaborate.

"It is not surprising that long range strategy was sometimes obscured or that the job of training a competent, devoted and responsible indigenous leadership came to be regarded merely as one among many equally important tasks."¹.

Growing young churches called for widened use of indigenous agents, and facilities for the training of such agents became more extensive as the church grew. Yet the training of the ministry was often neglected. "From every field has come the conviction that a highly-trained ministry is necessary for the well-being of the church."².

3. Essential Christian Reason for Indigenous Church

Principles

Although the emphasis of the indigenous principles has been mainly on self-support, that is not the fundamental reason for adopting the principles which govern the missionary program nor for applying them. The Biblical missionary method as shown in the lives of Jesus Christ and St. Paul is also valuable for present day servants of God. ".....The viewpoint from which missionary principles should be developed is the final purpose of

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1. Ranson, C.W., "An Imperative Indigenous Need", World Dominion Press, September-October, 1946, p. 286.
2. Ranson, Ibid., p. 286.

the Gospel and the highest welfare of the converts."¹.

"The purpose of Christian missions is not to make converts to a church or denomination, but to make them disciples of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."².

D. Summary

The historical development of indigenous church principles has been considered as a background for the present discussion of the immediate situation of the indigenous church. First the methods and principles of the Lord Himself and of Paul as recorded in the New Testament were examined. Then the rise and growth of the indigenous church movement were discussed, considering the principles of Carey, Nevius and Clark. The difficulty of devolution from missionary-dominated churches to purely native churches has been recognized, and the essential Christian basis for indigenous principles has been stated.

It has been necessary to study this background history in order to more fully understand the problems of the indigenous church in general. Now the present practices as developed in the native church on various mission fields, especially in Sierra Leone and Nigeria, will be considered.

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1. Ritchie, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

2. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER II

PRESENT INDIGENOUS PRACTICES ON VARIOUS MISSION
FIELDS, ESPECIALLY SIERRA LEONE AND NIGERIA

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PRESENT INDIGENOUS PRACTICES ON VARIOUS MISSION
FIELDS, ESPECIALLY SIERRA LEONE AND NIGERIA

A. Introduction

Long before indigenous principles were defined, David Livingstone expressed his belief that when churches were founded, native leadership should be trained, self-support developed, and the missionary, upon completing his part of the task, move on to repeat the process in new areas.¹

This chapter will deal with those very stages of developing native churches. It will commence with the need for indigenous principles and the ways in which they are being practiced in Peru and Korea. Next, the indigenous history, problems and growth of the two Evangelical United Brethren missions in Sierra Leone and Nigeria will be considered, in order to discover the principles upon which these churches have been founded and how native leadership is being developed. Special emphasis will be in the evangelistic, educational and medical fields of work, through which indigenous principles are practiced.

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1. Cf. Latourette, K. S., A History of the Expansion of Christianity, Vol. V, p. 346.

Then the difficulties of developing indigenous churches will be discussed. Finally, the character of the African people will be summarized, for besides the historical and social background of the Africans, it is also necessary to become acquainted with their sociological relationships as they figure in the ideals for an indigenous church. These studies will lay the proper foundation for evaluating the present native churches and for making suggestions for improvement and further indigenous development.

B. The Present Critical Period in the Development
of the Indigenous Church

In spite of energy and sacrifice,... "we have Churches whose spiritual life is becoming impoverished, which lack power to develop their own form of life, which have not yet comprehended their missionary task and which are in danger of isolating themselves and of being isolated from the intellectual, social and political life of the people in whose midst they exist."¹

Grave doubts have been expressed over and over again about present indigenous methods and out of these doubts has arisen the demand for a truly indigenous Church, rooted in the soil. This demand was raised repeatedly at the Madras Conference but the goal was not clearly defined. Some considered the indigenous church as simply a younger church without foreign leadership. Others visualized it to include all types of nationals who should be united in the Church. Still others understood it to be a Church

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1. Freytag, Walter, "The Critical Period in the Development of an Indigenous Church", International Review of Missions, 1940, p. 204.

which it would be easy for the masses to join. Finally, one group demanded an indigenous Church not to gain the masses, but to satisfy the Christians.

"They recognized the deep suffering of those who yearned for a real Church of their own. They felt that such people were not much helped by merely external assimilations to national forms of life and that the demand for the indigenous character of the Church meant something deeper than what had been indicated in the former suggestions."¹

1. Results Arising from Indigenous Growth

It is necessary that deductions be made to establish a truly indigenous Church. Too often the missionaries have excessively led the Christian community instead of waiting until it was forced by its own conscience, faced by some problems to make its own decision. They issued a ruling, and the community naturally adopted it. If the young Church is to grow, it must stand on its own feet, and the missionaries must not hinder its growth.

"Genuine shepherding consists in enlightening the conscience, which never and nowhere decides things for the community, but leads it to spontaneous obedience to the Word. The shepherd has to hear with the ears of others, as it were. He does not build up the community along the lines of his own Church; he enters entirely into the needs, the sins, the hopes of the community. He watches for traces of God's leading with this community, and calls upon its members to fulfill the obedience of their own hearts, where in actual cases the Spirit of God can be plainly traced through His Word, His demand, His promise...If this road of keeping close to God's Word is followed, then the danger is averted of creating a so-called 'indigenous Church' which remains an alien structure, thereby becoming unresistingly first step of a new paganism."²

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1. Ibid., p. 205.
2. Ibid., pp. 214-215.

In a conference of Christian leaders in New Guinea was discussed the necessity of a future decrease in the number of missionaries and an increase of native church leadership. The Papuans were oppressed and overwhelmed at the immensity of the new task before them, which seemed beyond their powers. At the close of the conference one of them prayed:

"Lord Jesus, Thou didst send us the missionaries and with them the Gospel, and for that we thank Thee. Now Thou dost wish to take the missionaries from us and our heart is alarmed. But Thou dost deal justly with us. We have looked to the missionaries and not very much to Thyself. Now Thou takest them away so that we may look to Thee alone and go forward with Thee."¹

"That is the deciding step forward of an indigenous Church."²

2. Present Indigenous Fields Outside of Africa

a. Peru

(1) Methods of Evangelism

In the beginning stages of foreign mission effort the main emphasis is the conversion of natives by preaching and teaching. This work is called evangelization. Then the missionary chooses the most outstanding and suitable converts to help him in reaching others with the Gospel.

Mr. John Ritchie, a missionary to Peru in 1906, experimented with different indigenous principles according to the need of the field without attempting to apply a planned system of methods. The principles set forth in 'The Indigenous Church' were put into practice in central Peru without

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1. Ibid., p. 215

2. Ibid.

any knowledge of their having been propounded."¹ A few years later he learned that the World Dominion Press had formulated some publications on indigenous church principles.

Mr. Ritchie had long considered the very great task of evangelizing this country not in terms of a local congregation but of a nation-wide church. Following his language study he journeyed with a Bible Society colporteur through an isolated part of southern Peru. They visited each home in every village, reading and selling the Bible to the people, who in turn read it to others, for many had never heard of the Bible nor were able to read. The missionary continued his observations and practices until he discovered that probably the best way to evangelize the country was through the printed page, even though the illiteracy rate was very high. A monthly periodical "El Herald" was distributed to literates, and, consequently, letters came in requesting Bibles and spiritual help. These contacts were followed up by letters, tracts and personal visitation whenever possible and wherever there was interest.

"Thus the Gospel was brought into the people's life, and all the time there was being built up in them a desire to possess the Book which answered with such wisdom all their deepest questions."²

As a result, the believers of Christ united together in spiritual fellowship groups, which became the nuclei for

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1. Ritchie, John, Indigenous Church Principles in Theory and Practice, p. 31
2. Ibid., p. 36

future churches.

At the conclusion of each initial visit of the missionary, the people always asked for a teacher who could conduct regular services for them. The answer was that no such men were accessible, and that they did not really need any. They were urged to meet together daily for Bible reading and prayer.

Mr. Ritchie "was convinced that if congregations were to be founded all over the region they must carry on their life and activities on their own resources and under their own local leaders."¹

Finally, it was suggested that a committee of three or five of those most interested make arrangements for Sunday services and maintain correspondence with the missionary. Several churches grew out of these worship meetings. Those groups that were interested were kept in touch by periodicals, books and occasional visits from a native worker.²

(2) Growth and Organization

These small church groups were formed around an unpaid local leader and gradually grew both materially and spiritually. "Over one period of three years a new group was organized every month without interruption."³ A pamphlet "Evangelism by Pen, Press and Post", written in 1922, vividly described the activities of these local churches. As a result of this growth, churches were properly organ-

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1. Ibid., p. 37

2. Ibid

3. Ibid., p. 39

ized into Synods under the leadership of elders. All spiritual and financial matters were entirely handled by each local church. Services were first held in homes, then in a central meeting place rented or built. Later some congregations built their own churches. Representatives met annually to discuss their problems, to enrich their own spiritual lives and to provide incentives and goals for further growth.

(3) Theory and Practice Compared

The British Mission Board adopted the indigenous principles and instructed natives that workers being paid by the mission must do only evangelistic work. Native pastors then moved on to unevangelized districts. However, since the newly organized churches had no contact with these pastors, results were disappointing and largely unsuccessful. The young churches needed help and guidance until they were more experienced. Therefore, a modification of S. J. W. Clark's principle --- that a congregation should depend upon its own leaders and God without foreign aid --- was adopted as follows: "The true aim is not that the village church be bereft of help, but that the mission-paid worker should not become absorbed in the pastoral duties of one congregation."¹

(4) The Resultant Church in Theory and Practice

Upon evaluating local church growth it has been

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1. Ibid., p. 54

learned that both the theory and experiment of indigenous church principles have suffered from over-simplification or inadequate conception of a truly native Christian church. The Peruvian indigenous Church still has much advancement to make in reaching self-support ideals. "Tithing is rare among the native believers."¹ The most common faults of village churches is their failure to fulfill practical services in the communities. Any local initiative toward social outreach is very rare. This survey shows the necessity for expanding the indigenous church principles. The methods have been good as far as they have gone, but they need to go farther. Merely leading a native to Christ and depriving him of Christian nurture prevents him from becoming an effective Christian. "The restricted conception of the Gospel which sees no more than the forgiveness of sins and the new birth is inadequate to lead souls on to the life of service."²

However, on the other hand, there are encouraging signs. Sixty native-formed congregations have been organized, all of which are independent of foreign financial support except the congregation in the capital city, Lima.³ The answer to the whole indigenous problem seems to lie in the need for a trained foreign worker in every locality, not to supervise and control, but to encourage, counsel and inspire.

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1. Ibid., p. 61

2. Ibid., p. 66

b. Korea

(1) Early Beginnings and Methods

"The Korean Church is without a doubt, a modern miracle."¹ There was not one believer in 1885, and in 1938 there were 80,000 believers. This Church is the youngest of the larger churches in Asia. The field is well known for its speed of Christian progress, its intensity and singleness of purpose, the centrality of the Bible, and the unusual degree of church independence.²

The early spread of Christianity in Korea was due mainly to individual, voluntary preaching. Group leaders and missionary helpers sooner or later received special training. The "Nevius Method" was put into operation with amazing success. The central place of the Bible in the life of the church constituted the first step in training that Church. Lay workers were instructed in evangelism, group leadership and self-support, including church building and maintenance of church work.

(2) Native Evangelism

The Church stressed personal witness and evangelism as the privilege of every Christian.

"The great majority of the members of the Korean Church have been won not so much by the evangelism of the foreign missionary as by the personal witness and work of the rank and file of the Church members, whose transformed lives, as well as their words, have born testimony to the saving power of the Son of God."³

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1. International Religious Council, The Madras Series, The Growing Church, Vol. III, P. 145
2. Cf. The Madras Series, The Economical Basis of the Church, Vol. V., p. 585
3. Ibid., p. 587. (Report of The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Chosen Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.)

(3) Results of Indigenous Church Principles

The first pastors were ordained after twenty years of mission planting. Today large circuits are supervised by a paid ministry, and self-support is attained by seventy-five per cent of the Korean Churches. "The self-reliant spirit has not only gradually covered Korea with churches but has inspired generous giving for the current expenses and undertakings of a great Church."¹ Churches are growing in two-thirds of the Korean countries. Tithing under a "Systematic Giving" stewardship plan in which Christians give one-fifth of their income, has become a common but not yet a general practice among Christians. Three thousand out of three thousand eight hundred are advancing toward this goal. Many of them are yearly becoming independent and new congregations formed which are aided for a period of time.²

(4) Continuance of the Movement

Growth in any indigenous church can be noted in three ways: (1) nationals write their own creeds, (2) they frame their own form of organization and church polity, and (3) they organize their own expansion and methods of practical work, including the financial element. In most places the national church is developing in self-reliance and in independence.³

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1. Ibid., p. 588

2. Cf. Ibid., p. 589

3. Cf. McAfee, C.B., The Uncut Nerve of Missions, p. 123

3. Sierra Leone

a. Background History of the Church in West Africa

Next to South Africa the coastal regions of West Africa constitute the oldest field of evangelical missionary effort on the entire continent. But its past and present conditions have made it one of the hardest fields, mainly because of the slave trade, the curse of "civilized forces", the atrocious tribal customs and the most unhealthy climate.

"It is in the face of all the complications of this (nineteenth) century of advance of Europe into Africa that we must consider the efforts of the Christian churches, to bring about the spiritual redemption of Africa."¹

The British Government abolished the slave trade in 1807 in Sierra Leone, and thus prepared the way for several church groups to establish missions.

b. Indigenous Development of the United Brethren in Christ Church in Sierra Leone²

In 1884 the United Brethren in Christ Foreign Missionary Society set up a list of missionary purposes, two of which were:

"That this Missionary Board will make it a primary object to give the gospel of Christ to all men in all countries in its unmixed and original purity."³

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1. Carver, William Owen, The Course of Christian Missions p. 239
2. Note: The United Brethren Church in Christ merged with the Evangelical Church Nov. 16, 1946, but it will be mentioned under its former name since the material for this thesis is previous to 1946.
3. Young, Parker G., The Development of an Indigenous United Brethren in Christ Church in Sierra Leone, p.12

"That, while we believe it will be many years before our missions in heathen countries will become self-supporting, yet we will labor to produce this result as soon as possible."¹

(1) Establishment of the Mission - 1855-1856

In 1885 the first missionaries of the United Brethren in Christ Church to Sierra Leone arrived to begin initial missionary endeavors. They explored the country for three months and finally located at Mo-Kelli, about forty-five miles up the Jong River.² Soon, however, they moved to Sierra Leone, which seemed to be a better location, and there they established the mission. Although no real missionary work was done at this time, the building of a house was begun.

(2) The Period of Struggle - 1857-1871

This period was one of real difficulties, during which missionaries together attempted to establish a mission center. In the midst of all the trials and discouragements of settling, health and native acceptance which confront all beginning missionary efforts, they carried on commendably. During these fourteen years a day school, a Sabbath school of twenty-five members and an inquirer's class of ten were begun, and only two converts were made. However, the missionaries were not to be discouraged and so continued their work, applying the knowledge they had

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1. Ibid., p. 13

2. Ibid., p. 14

acquired from many painful but helpful lessons.

(3) The Period of Advance - 1871-1898

This encouraging period justified the faith of those missionaries who had persistently worked to sustain and expand the mission.¹ In the annual report to the Board in 1872 sixty-three nationals were reported baptized, and many more were interested.² In three and one-half years the work had expanded to nine stations, each including a mission school. The report in 1878 was encouraging, relating that the first national to be trained in America had been sent out with his wife. An industrial school was proving to be successful in training laymen, who were just as important as leaders. There were nineteen mission stations averaging seventy in Sunday School attendance. Also, the first mission district and training school were organized and showed the trend toward self-propagation. Eight years later there were two hundred and fifty-seven communicant members and four thousand thirty-nine seeker members. These figures indicate the popular movement toward Christianity. "Itinerating was done in the outlying territory, and there was a growing conviction that the work should be extended in that direction."³ Medical work was begun in 1891 with the system of self-support: out of penny fees charged, all expenses were paid except the salary of the

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 24
2. Cf. Ibid., pp. 24-25
3. Ibid., p. 32

doctor.¹ Church offerings were also encouraged.

It should be stated that there were grave hardships; consequently, the work suffered set-backs. Several missionaries passed away, leaving hard places to be filled. One of the missionaries well-stated the adjustments necessary for a missionary to face and to make on the African field when she wrote:

"A missionary, to keep well and happy here, must learn to possess his soul in patience, or he will soon be worn out by the cares and worries of everyday life. He must expect things to move slowly and his plans often to be disturbed. He must be willing to await results, for one of the greatest obstacles has been the total indifference to spiritual things, which the heathen everywhere evinces. It sometimes seems that the labor has been in vain, but He who has bidden us, 'go' will care for His own. It is ours but to be faithful to the task he has assigned us."²

Although there was not yet an indigenous church, there were strong tendencies toward it. Such was the spirit of advancement in the building of Christ's Church in West Africa at the end of that great missionary century.

(4) Attempted Insurrection - 1898

This very difficult interval greatly affected the work because of loss of missionaries' lives and mission property. The insurrection was the result of government restrictions on the slave trade and cannibalism, and an imposed

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 33

2. Ibid., pp. 33-34

hut tax to support the government. However, instead of discouraging the mission work, this uprising proved to the national the genuine sincerity of the missionaries.¹ The growing church was made stronger, for the faith of the native workers was severely tested and proved. Surely Tertullian's statment "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church", had verified itself once more.²

(5) Reconstruction and Expansion - 1898-1911

Naturally, the Church began to meet the immediate challenge to rebuild and enlarge the work. A small band of native leaders gathered the church members together, held services, itinerated and continued the school work.³ The mission stations at this time were scattered over an area of two hundred and twenty-five miles, and included four different tribes.⁴ Nineteen missionaries and an increasing African staff developed the work. The four phases of missionary endeavor -- education, industrial, medical and evangelical -- were all continually advanced. In the educational field student teaching and practical experience in itinerating proved to be valuable techniques in developing native responsibility. The industrial guidance taught different skills which helped in making a living: farming, carpentering and weaving for boys, and home making for girls.⁵

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 38
2. Schaff, Philip, History of the Christian Church, Vol. I., preface
3. Young, op. cit., p. 41
4. Cf. Ibid.
5. Cf. Ibid., p. 45

Medical service, which contributed greatly to the surrounding countryside, was self-supporting, except for doctors' salaries. Evangelistic groups, including women--a rare happening in Africa -- out two by two and visited over two hundred villages. Financially, the work of this period did not develop as it should have; however, the church at one station(Bonthe) under native leadership, raised fourteen thousand of the necessary fifteen thousand dollars for construction of the church building.¹ This is an excellent example of what a native church can do: Records show that African workers proved themselves to be trustworthy, capable of leadership and willing to support their churches whenever possible.

(6) Strengthening the Church - 1911-1919

It was during these years especially that evangelism and self-support were emphasized. "The period from 1911 to 1919 was probably the most creative period in the history of the United Brethren Church in Sierra Leone."² African leaders developed much individual initiative and showed their abilities and strong Christian characters. The greatest influence was through the educational work of the boarding schools and annual Teachers' Institutes. Industrial work was profitably promoted through the schools also, it being the only education for many boys. Medical

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 55

2. Ibid., p. 66

work continued to increase. But the greatest advance was made in the combined areas of evangelism and supervision. One of the requirements for church membership was to have won or at least to have honestly tried to win one soul to Christ.

Self-support was wisely connected with evangelism that the benefits of the latter would be conserved. Different committees were composed of both Africans and Americans at the ratio of two to one. "In 1911 the work had been divided into six districts, and in some of them African leaders were in charge,"¹ Several years later (1915) nineteen of the churches helped to support their own pastors with monthly contributions. The Conference voted that twenty-five per cent of the paid pledges go toward missions, and five per cent of the total missionary offerings go to the general church benevolences. It was voted the next year that a fourth of the money for self-support be apportioned to missions. A striking example of true missionary giving was evidenced in the years 1916-1918, when the five per cent from missionary offerings^{was} contributed to three institutions in America, namely, the Otterbein Home, Bonebrake Theological Seminary and Quincy Orphanage.² Also three African stations were supported by their fellow stations. "And so the young church has launched out -- conscious too of a vital power within, which is beginning to

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1. Ibid., p. 61

2. Cf. Ibid., p. 62

grip the whole communities and draws all men to the cross of Christ."¹

The results of this inspiring period are commendable, especially the consistency in the financial development, due to the active Conference policy. The African indigenous church had begun!

(7) The Post-War Church - 1919-1939

In spite of world conditions and World War I, educational and medical work was extended, and evangelism was emphasized in the churches, schools and in women's work. There was usually a steady advance in the enrollment of schools, so that at the end of this period they were filled to capacity and definitely needed to be expanded. A government scholarship together with Conference aid enabled two graduates of the Lillian Harford Girls' School to attend the Government Training School for Women.² The Albert Academy, with over one hundred students, became practically self-supporting, and its first native African Principal, Richard E. Caulker, began his duties. The Church co-operated with several other Societies and in 1941 sent eighteen men to the Union Normal College in the Protectorate. They attended school for a year, then taught a year somewhere, alternating until they finished the three-year course. In that same year four men attended Forah Bay College in Freetown and six men took specialized training in America.³

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1. Ibid., p. 63

2. Cf. Ibid., p. 69

3. Cf. Ibid., p. 70

The Academy press published the "Sierra Leone Outlook" as well as necessary mission materials, including vernacular literature.

There are now six main stations and sixty-two out-stations; the main stations are Bunumbu, Jaiama, Ratifunk, Freetown, Moyamba and Taiam. At present the central compound consists of a school house and church building combined, a hospital, two dormitories, kitchen and industrial barriers, three vernacular schools, and the homes of missionaries and teachers.¹ Since 1940 there are three hospitals in the entire mission, at Rotifunk, Tiama and Jaiama stations, all of which have regular native assistants. At Ratifunk the church is in charge of a native pastor who supervises class meetings, instruction classes and itinerating services. Three hundred and thirty students in the school are taught by Twelve African teachers.²

Evangelism is promoted through the Day schools, Albert Academy, Teachers' Reading Course and Bible extension work. "At least eighty per cent of the converts come from the schools."³ The Laubach method of teaching the vernacular is used considerably and helps greatly in evangelistic work, for by this system illiterates are supposed to learn to read their own language intelligently in several months.

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 71
2. Musselman, J. F., "Our Church's Mission," (Sierra Leone), Builders, Jan. 31, 1948, p. 8
3. Young, op. cit., p. 74

Women's work was first begun in 1922, and by 1928 twenty-one churches observed the first Sunday in May as Womens' Day. This was an important indigenous step, because evangelistic work among African women has been very slow.

Self-support has continued to increase in all phases of the work, although not always consistently. Church offerings decreased during the world depression between 1929-1935. The missionary and benevolence offerings reached a peak in 1921 and have gradually declined since.¹ A satisfactory explanation of this situation has not been given as yet, though several reasons have been given. However, in 1935 two churches were fully self-supporting, nine were fifty per cent self-supporting and twenty-six were twenty-five per cent self-supporting.²

In summarizing the growth of the native African church it can be seen that great forward steps have been and are being taken toward indigenous ideals. Supervision of churches by African workers is making a real contribution to the indigenous African Church.

"In 1937 nine ordained men were placed in supervisory positions in their districts where they hold the responsibility for conducting quarterly conferences. There they meet first hand the problems of self-government."³

The United Brethren Church in Africa co-operated with the United Christian Council, thus sharing outside interests with others. In 1932 the United Brethren Colleges

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1. Cf. Ibid., p. 77
2. Cf. Ibid., p. 78
3. Ibid.

and Bonebrake Theological Seminary in the United States sent out the first representative of the Student Friendship Project. The Church has probably made its greatest contribution in the educational field.

Excellent advance has been made in the evangelistic program. A constant increase in church membership is seen. Many are finding the Christian way to be the true way of life. However, there is still need for continued improvement in pastoral training. It seems that this Church was more nearly indigenous in 1921 than at the close of the last studied period in 1939, because of the depression and the various inevitable mistakes that are made in the process of growth on any mission field. In the closely united fields of self-support and evangelism the indigenous problem needs to be more carefully considered and worked out, and a sincere stimulus needs to further develop the West African Church, so that it may truly become indigenous Christianity.

4. Nigeria

a. Background of the Country and People

In order to understand the many problems of the African people in building an indigenous church, it is necessary to know their particular history and prevailing conditions which influence their lives.

(1) Initial Beginnings

Nigeria with its population of twenty millions is, next to the United Kingdom, the largest population-unit in the British Empire. The first contacts with Europe date

from the fifteenth century. Indirect government, introduced by Sir Frederick Lugard in 1900, proved to be good form, as it acted through rightful native rulers and guaranteed possession of the soil by the people. Nigeria has been governed idealistically for the good of the people, but at the same time it has been retarded in political government. The first missionary expedition was that of the British Protectorate by Lugard. The government was against revolutionary teachings by the missionaries. They had access to pagan tribes, but it was difficult to get permission to do much evangelization on a large scale. However, with the passing years the governmental policy grew more favorable. Officials even invited missions into troublesome "unsettled" tribes.

(2) Health Conditions

West Africa has always been considered a very unhealthy country, and rightly so. Malaria, yellow fever, and dysentery have been responsible for most of the sickness and death among Europeans and Americans. Now, there is not the terror of black water fever that there used to be in the early twentieth century.

"Few countries have taken such a toll of civilian, army, commercial, and missionary life as Nigeria ...And still there is much work remaining to be done and to call forth self-sacrifice."¹

"Living in Nigeria is better now ...Nigeria will not be a healthy country for a long time, if ever; but I believe the day will come when many of the worst enemies will be laid low."²

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1. Miller, Walter, Yesterday and Tomorrow in Northern Nigeria, p. 25
2. Ibid., p. 30

(3) Social Changes

It is very difficult for "foreigners" to comprehend the drastically different circumstances. One must realize that political and economic conditions can only be fully understood by those living there. Those who know are painfully aware of the radical and quick changes that are taking place in Africa.

"Today the old simple life of the African peoples is disintegrating. Two new dangers in particular menace the Black Continent. The vagabond of Islam is sweeping down from the north; soulless industrialism is creeping up from the south."¹

Walter Miller says of Islam, "It is too weak itself to stem any measure of the tide, it is yet strong enough to block the way of any other arresting power."² Western influence has not always been good: it is causing a decline in morality which was never too high; consequently, a higher rate of theft, gambling and drinking is resulting. Miller further states, "There is a moral disintegration at work more completely than anything I had thought possible."³ More and more African people are leaving their forest homes for the industrial regions, including the great copper belt. The missionary feels the heartache when he knows and realizes the power of sin and the pain of suffering that lie beyond picturesque Africa.

(4) Missionary Beginnings

"With the opening of the twentieth century, the organized societies of considerable size numbered

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1. Mackay, John A., Our Mission World, p. 8
2. Miller, op. cit., p. 90
3. Ibid
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not far from one hundred, while all kinds of societies probably numbered not less than three hundred and fifty."¹

The development of the Church in Northern Nigeria has been slower than in some other parts of Africa, but because of its good beginnings, its growth has been rapid during the last several years.²

b. The Evangelical Church in Nigeria

This Church is officially known as the Sudan Mission because of its location in the Sudan area, "Land of the Blacks". It is the large area between the Niger River in West Africa and the Nile in the East, and between the Sahara Desert and the equatorial region. "At the beginning of this century it was one of the largest unreached missionary areas of the world."³ The Sudan Mission was the youngest foreign mission of the Evangelical Church prior to its merger with the United Brethren in Christ in 1946. It began under the British Protectorate in 1906 and became a full-fledge missionary adventure of the Evangelical Church in 1926.⁴

The area which this Church serves is nearly two thousand miles inland from the west coast of Africa in what is known as the "bush country". This specific district called Workumland brings healing to the bodies, enlightenment to the minds and cleansing to the hearts of approximately sixty thousand people.

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1. Bliss, Edwin M., The Missionary Enterprise, p. 79
2. Cf., Farrent, H. G., "Advance in Nigeria", World Dominion, June, 1941, p. 178
3. McBride, Ira E., "Our Church's Mission", (Sudan Area) Builders, Jan. 31, 1948, p. 9
4. Cf. Pamphlet, Program for Evangelical Missions, 1946 p. 4

(1) Resumé of Past Missionary Activities

It was during the early years of the last recorded history of the Sierra Leone Church (1919-1939) that the Sudan Mission Church was begun. Therefore, since the Workumland development is so relatively new as compared with that of Sierra Leone, no history of it has as yet been written. But in 1946 this statement was published:

"This work has been carried on through the years with a minimum staff and in the presence of discouraging obstacles, but with encouraging success for the Kingdom of God. A good foundation has been laid for the development of this work which has for its goal the establishment of an African Church supported by the African people and served by African leaders."¹

It is known that the entire Sudan Mission Church has been built upon indigenous principles. One of the present missionaries very recently wrote,

"The Mission of the Evangelical Church in Nigeria has always worked on the indigenous principle in co-operation with most of the missions in Northern Nigeria. This system puts the responsibility of the church and the evangelization of the people on the shoulders of the native Christians, showing them from the start that the missionary is there to guide and help them, but that the work of building an African Christian Church is essentially theirs."²

(2) Present Sudan Mission Church and Conditions

Affecting It

There are at present four main stations, Bambur, Kerum, Pero and Bambuka, established in that respective order, and five out--stations, Lissa, Gwomo and three classes in the Djen community.³

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1. Ibid.
2. Kuglin, Mrs. Karl, "The Bambuka Church as a Symbol", The World Evangel, April, 1948, p. 106
3. Pamphlet, Program for Evangelical Missions, p. 6

Mention has been made of the many differences of late years in Africa. Even in these backward areas profound changes are taking place. Industrialism has rapidly increased, especially since World War II, because of the vast material wealth which Africa possesses. Also, transportation and communication facilities are constantly improving, binding all of Africa closer together. Then, too, there is in the African-people themselves a growing self-consciousness, which is causing a restlessness for a more rapid progress toward self-government. "All of these factors will affect the life of the people in the years to come and must be reckoned with by Christian Missions."¹

(3) Present Indigenous Practices

"From the very beginning of the modern missionary movement efforts have been made to use Africans as missionaries in Africa."² With the increased religious experiences and the improvement of surrounding conditions the natives are proving themselves to be very capable of leadership in the rising indigenous Church in Africa. The present time is undoubtedly a transitional period when directing control of Christian work is passing from the missionaries to the nationals. As in parts of China, Japan and India, the missionaries to Africa may perhaps someday sit at the feet of nationals.

(2) Evangelistic Work

Each of the four main stations has regular ser-

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1. Pamphlet, Program for Evangelical Missions, p. 6
2. Carver, W. O., The Course in Christian Missions, p. 241

vices: daily prayer services in the church just after sunrise, mid-week prayer meetings every Wednesday evening and Sunday services, including Sunday Schools mostly taught by African workers, Enquirer and Catechism classes. These services and classes continue even in the absence of missionaries on furlough, because the African leaders and teachers have been trained to assist and to carry on alone. This is one of the most encouraging promises of the indigenous African Church. The leaders only lack experience and are gaining that with the years.

The students of the Bible Training School spend a week annually in preaching tours through the district villages and tribes. As a result, there are usually always requests for regular services. On Christmas Day the Christian leaders and people of Pero and some of the other stations divide into groups and go through near-by villages singing carols and telling the meaning of the Day to those interested. Some eighty services were held on this past Christmas Day.¹ Such a practice both strengthens the native Christians and brings many new believers into the Church.

The women of Kerum have an organization called the "Zummuntan Matta", which is for Christian women only. They also divide into groups of ten or twelve each and go out to surrounding villages early each Sunday morning before their own church service. Through their songs, pray-

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1. Foust, Dr. and Mrs. A. J., form letter, January, 1948.

ers and personal testimonies they win other women to Christ. Upon their return to the Kerum service they give brief reports of their work and make special prayer requests.¹

Each Sunday afternoon the Christians of Bambuka, (who built their own church in 1945) go into other villages also to hold public services. The response and progress has been very encouraging the last several years. The Pero Church, which burned down a few years ago, was rebuilt and dedicated by the people themselves in 1947.² Some of the Christians from the out-stations visit the Sunday services of the main stations once a month, thus being strengthened in their own duties of witnessing and teaching. The leaders of these out-stations near Pero recently met for two weeks of intensive study and training. There were classes also for their families, so that all were inspired with new truths and ideas and a greater zeal to be more effective co-workers in their Lord's work. So, though the Christians are new in their faith at these out-stations leaders have arisen even there and have gone to other villages that would not otherwise be touched as yet. "Thus the work spreads when the Christians are brought to realize the need about them and their own responsibility in filling that need."³

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1. Cf. Arnold, Mrs. J. J., "African Christian Women as Witnesses", The World Evangel, March, 1948, p. 73
2. Cf. Foust, loc. cit.
3. Kuglin, Mrs. Karl, "The Bambuka Church as a Symbol", The World Evangel, April, 1948, p. 106

Missionaries encourage these evangelistic practices of both lay people and leaders alike, for they know that if Africa is to be won for Christ, it must be done by African Christians themselves. "We have noticed that in many ways the African evangelist is more effective than we in getting the Truth down into the hearts of their people."¹ Native witnessing is probably the greatest evangelistic aid today in putting indigenous church principles into practice in the Sudan Church.

(b) Educational Work

Since the Sudan Mission Church is the only one in this area, it is the sole agency for supplying educational opportunities. These "bush" people were one hundred per cent illiterate at the time the mission was first begun. Now there are schools at each main station and Christian Religious Instruction classes at the out-stations at certain times during the year. The pagan vernaculars have been reduced to writing, school books have been printed and the Scripture has been translated.

In 1945 the Bible Training School opened with nine students, five men and four women. Because of war restrictions and lack of materials, it was impossible to erect proper buildings for the School, so those at Kerum were used. Educational interest is at last being shown in Workumland. Both Bambur and Kerum instituted small school fees, which were paid promptly and helped to pay salaries of the African

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1. Kuglin, Karl, form letter, January, 1948

teachers. This School is one of the greatest helps in developing the native Church. Additional training for evangelists and teachers can be secured at the Sudan United Mission union training center at Gindiri approximately two hundred miles from Bambur. Although no men from the Evangelical United Brethren Mission have been ordained as yet, a few years ago three men were trained in leadership and five men are now receiving special training. "The development of our evangelistic work depends now on the thorough training of our African evangelists."¹ There is also a Government school in the district. This, of course, is a secular school, but several of the Workum men have taken teacher training there.

Native leaders go to the out-stations from Friday to Sunday mornings each week to teach reading, writing, and the Bible. As a result of these contacts made on evangelistic tours, there come earnest desires from the young people to have a school in their own villages. Therefore, it is urgent to train more Africans to be leaders so that these villages may have schools of their own.

1. Pamphlet, Evangelicals Are Serving World Needs, p. 6

(c) Medical Work

Through the years the medical program has developed and expanded greatly. At first, of course, the natives were skeptical of the "white man's medicine", but gradually they realized its healing power. One day a week at each main station was principally devoted to medical work; however, while needy people were gathered for medical treatment, the missionaries preached the Word of God, thus ministering to their souls as well as to their bodies. These people would walk and bring others from many miles away to be treated for colds, burns, wounds, snake bites, infected teeth, infancy and childhood sicknesses, intestinal worms, dysentery, yaws, sleeping sickness, tropical ulcers and cataracts. The missionaries have to pass special examinations in order to acquire the Government permit to do medical work. In one year one of the missionaries performed over thirty eye operations, thus saving that many people from blindness. This vital program has also been built upon indigenous principles, training native men to give injections and to help in all treatments possible. The fees paid by the people have met all medical expenses.¹

At present there is a full-time doctor and four nurses. The new modern hospital is in the process of being built by a special building supervisor at Bambur, the Medical Center. "Soon the concrete block walls will be an actual

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1. Ibid., p. 7

fact."¹ Government officials have taken a real interest in this project and have promised to assist with communications. "Altogether we feel that a new day of hope has dawned for the afflicted of Workum land."²

5. Difficulties of Developing an Indigenous African Church

As the younger churches make their contributions to the evangelization of the Africans, the latent powers of a truly indigenous church are being realized. It must be recognized that these spiritual offsprings have often been hindered in their advancement because they were not encouraged to give full expression to their own soul. They were not always given opportunity to develop their God-given abilities. Consequently, they have been unable to respond to the call of the thousands of their unreached fellow-men. It is not easy to introduce and develop indigenous principles. There are many difficulties to be considered and overcome.

a. In the Mission

(1) The Power of Precedent

Missions that were established before the comparatively new development of indigenous principles have used other policies which now necessitate changing. It will require much tact and diplomacy to change the existing order. Precedent means even more to the African than it does to the

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1. Foust, A. J., form letter, January, 1948
2. Pamphlet, Evangelicals Are Serving World Needs, p. 8

missionary; in fact, it is almost a basis law.

"The entire mission staff must catch the vision of a self-supporting church. The individual missionary is usually the key to this problem, and one dissenting member can spoil an entire program."¹

Therefore, missionaries, natives and even home supporters of the mission work must be convinced of the necessity of an indigenous church.

(2) Desire to Control

Another difficulty is the fact that the Mission desires to control the work it supports, especially its property, which often represents large investments. When the schools and churches were built, the ability of the native church to maintain and support them was not realized. Now the Mission does not desire to relinquish its control, even though the native church should be on its own.

(3) Lack of Trust

Closely connected with this problem is the lack of trust in the native church. Some missionaries may be afraid of doctrinal changes creeping in if the natives are put in charge of the church program.

(4) Desire for Immediate Results

This difficulty is probably one of the larger factors in establishing a work supported financially by the Mission.

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1. McBride, Ira E., The Development of the Principles of Self-support, p. 5

A missionary is sent to win converts, and the Mission is desirous of seeing them won. Too often the success of a Mission is judged by the number of converts recorded. Instead of strong, long-range foundations, superficial work results. The missionary is urged by required statistical reports and his own desire to employ more native workers to win the lost and to pay them higher wages than the ordinary native standard. There may enter the temptation for natives to depend upon the missionary for employment, food or clothing, thus becoming "Rice Christians". The missionary must learn to be patient in all things.

(b) In the Native Church

(1) Desire for Dependency

The continued policy of dependency fails to develop initiative and sense of responsibility in the native leaders. If precaution is not taken, their interest will be in working for the missionary rather than for their own church. Little creative spirit is developed and the vision is dimmed. Also, self-respect, which is so necessary for progress, is injured, because the natives have neither enough pride in their work nor the joy of seeing their own plans become realities.

"The chief cause of the retardation of growth is the 'Baby-policy' of the Missions toward the Chinese Church. The missionaries are kind and patient. When they first began to establish churches, they always carried their baby churches on their backs. Now, although many churches are from ten to twenty-five or thirty or even forty years old, those good motherly missionaries still are carrying them on their backs. They don't let the grown-up babies walk a little bit. Every action of the native church must be under the

supervision of the missionaries, no matter whether they are old or young."¹

Also, a mercenary spirit is developed in native workers who are supported by the Mission. This inevitably leads to strained relations between the younger churches and the Mission. But the greatest tragedy in the policy of dependence is the lack of spiritual life. Too often the process is one of all receiving and no giving, and to have life, one must give it away. By not sharing responsibility, native Christians shrink from duty, becoming passive and spiritually dead.

(2) Absence of a True Giving Spirit

The natives have been used to giving to their former religion because of compulsion and fear. It is not easy to acquire the new incentive for voluntary giving. Some have even been heard to urge their fellow-men to adopt Christianity, for to them it seemed to be a more economical religion than their old pagan faith.² This idea will continue to hinder self-support unless definite methods of true giving are taught.

(3) Native Poverty

Still another difficulty is the real poverty which exists among many heathen peoples. In some places the problem of keeping the Sabbath is complicated because even the loss of that day's income means hunger to that Christian.

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1. Chuen-Tsuen Chang, How to Shorten the Infancy of the Mission Church in China, p. 3
2. Ibid., p. 7

Missions do not dare to establish their work on the same scale as in the older churches, for the younger churches simply cannot support it. This poverty is a real problem to the advance of an indigenous church program.

(4) Lack of Stewardship Training

Often no proper training in stewardship has been given on the Mission field. After natives have accepted Christ, they settle down in a passive state of receiving. The high ideals of Christian giving are not always regularly and continuously stressed.

All these difficulties must be frankly faced and overcome with practical solutions. Although discouraging many times, these problems can be worked out with much thought, patience, time and prayer.

C. Character of the African People

The Great Commission is to go, tell and preach. Therefore, the missionary must have an adequate understanding of the people to whom he goes so he can adapt his message to their needs, that it will bear fruit.¹ He must know, too, their language and mode of thought. The African soul is filled with great potentialities, which need to be recognized and developed.

1. Qualities of Native Character

a. Positive Qualities

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1. Cooper, Herbert J., "Indigenous Principles in Practice in Nigeria", World Dominion, April, 1928, p. 184

The African is not lazy as too many Europeans and Americans think he is. Because his background of living in the "bush" has not made many demands upon him intellectually nor socially, his progress has not been rapid. He is patient, long-suffering and self-controlled. These fruits of the Spirit(Gal. 5:22-23) the African can rightly claim as large a share as the American, if not more so, for many times when the latter is often irritated and discontented because of minor problems, the African is calm in adversity. He is generous, hospitable and unpretentious. His faithfulness to those who have won his friendship and love is more in evidence than in any other race probably. He will take hard knocks well when given honestly and in sincere friendship. In spite of racial slavery, he has a steady determination through all to rise. Above all, his quality of forgiveness and readiness to forget accumulated wrongs inflicted on him are to be praised. "Such qualities provoke respect and an ever greater desire to work for the overcoming of the admittedly evil tendencies which so seriously mar a most lovable people."¹

b. Negative Qualities

Naturally, the African possesses some characteristics which harm his personality and hinder his ad-

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1. Miller, Walter, Yesterday and Tomorrow in Nigeria, p. 60.

vancement. Because of the extent of double-crossing among his people, he has little mutual trust. Consequently, he lacks a co-operative spirit, which is so necessary in the building of an indigenous church. There has been and still is a large criminal class in the Hausa Provinces, especially near Kano, which is close to the Sudan Mission. Also, it is hard to awaken the idea of sacrificing anything to save another from harm, either moral or physical.¹ Then, too, sometimes his faithfulness is lacking in his Christian life, for it is so easy for him to backslide when temptations arise. These are some of the qualities which cause problems to the missionary, but he must take the trouble to try to understand the African and to help him to greater and higher living.

2. Potentialities of the African People

In spite of these unpleasant characteristics, yet one sees something in process of growth. Greater mutual understanding is leading to a realization of African citizenship, where the intelligence of the Africans and the will to advance work together for a better and fuller life. These people, made of flesh and blood like everyone else, have the same aspirations and desires in their own native way.

There are very great possibilities for the future of African women and girls, "...for the Hausa and Fulani girls have abilities, and are not lacking in ambition once

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1. Ibid., p. 80

their minds are open to think."¹ From many sections of Africa reports come of how the native converts are standing and working for the Lord.² Among the natives who in spirit and capacity are becoming the equals of the missionaries who have been sent to them. While few in number as yet, these Christian leaders are often great influences and are becoming powerful factors in re-shaping national life, not only through their faith and character, but also through their social life and ideals. Thus, the indigenous church principles in Africa, as they are constantly applied, become living realities in the building of Christ's Kingdom.

D. Summary

It has been shown in this study that the practical application of indigenous church principles has indeed been profitable in the development of native churches. The present indigenous fields, specifically Peru and Korea, were considered in order to discover how indigenous church principles were used. Early methods, growth and present results show that the indigenous movement is bearing good fruit on mission fields.

The brief background of West Africa gave insight into existing conditions there. "To meet the present urgent situation in Africa the great factor must be the es-

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1. Ibid., p. 170.
2. Cf. Indigenous Church Series, "The Permanent Value of Evangelistic Work", World Dominion, January, 1936, p. 99.

tablishing of a strong self-governing native church."¹
The two Evangelical United Brethren Mission Churches were studied from their early beginnings through the trying periods of struggle and growth to present indigenous practices in areas of evangelism, education and medicine.

The problem of the native church resolves itself to the question of leadership. Too often missions have failed to provide for the raising up of a more capable leadership among the Africans themselves. In the majority of mission fields leadership long remained in the hands of missionaries, but through years of experience they have come to realize that the most effective work can only be done through the native church and its trained leadership. The present problem in the training of young Christian workers is preparing them for this leadership. They are being put on equal terms with the missionary and are being given more share in the responsibilities of the mission. Those with some experience are learning to replace the missionary and to carry on a considerably large portion of the work themselves, thus sharing in a world-wide Christian fellowship. Although they will need assistance for some years yet, they have shown increasingly rapid progress toward indigenous ideals. "Without indigenous leadership there can be no indigenous church, no indigenous self-support for the church, no self-government and no self-propagation."²

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1. Cooper, Herbert J., "Indigenous Principles in Practice in Nigeria", World Dominion, April, 1928, p. 195
2. Allan, Roland, "The Essentials of an Indigenous Church", The Chinese Recorder, August, 1925, p. 500

In addition to much zeal, sacrifice and devotion there have also been difficulties, misunderstandings and mistakes. On the part of the missions there is power of precedent, the control of property, the lack of trust in natives and the desire for immediate results. In the native church there is a harmful dependency upon the missionary, the failure to catch the true spirit of giving, the real poverty and the lack of training in stewardship. These difficulties must be overcome. The young church must learn to walk, for it cannot be carried forever.

The character of the African people is such that as its potentialities are being proved, they are integrated into the indigenous church program. In churches managed and financed by the African Christians, they have shown themselves to be just as capable and devoted as other Christians in sharing the Gospel.¹ It is only when the younger churches feel their responsibility to evangelize their own people, and are given a larger share in this task, that the indigenous Church of Africa emerges.

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1. Ennis, Merlin W., "An African Church for Africans", Missionary Herald, September, 1939, p. 32

CHAPTER III

POTENTIALITIES OF THE FUTURE INDIGENOUS CHURCH
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SIERRA LEONE AND NIGERIA

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THE POTENTIALITIES OF THE FUTURE INDIGENOUS CHURCH
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SIERRA LEONE AND NIGERIA

A. Introduction

"From the very beginning the Church has had a most honorable record in seeking to make Christianity an indigenous movement."¹ Efforts of devolution thus far have been bent towards making the indigenous Church of Africa the type that best expresses African life. It is recognized that no devolution of responsibility upon the African Church will get rid of sin and prevent mistakes, but indigenous church history has proved that the strongest church is the people's church, which is theirs and whose they are.² Africa continues to be a vast missionary field with a wide variety of languages and racial customs, which still need to be studied and mastered. However, there is a bright hope for the future of the indigenous African Church.

This chapter will deal with those factors which it is believed will strengthen the indigenous Church of Africa in the future. Since the missionary plays such a vital role in the development of a native church, this chapter will

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1. International Missionary Council, Madras Series, The Growing Church, Vol. II, p. 127.
2. Ross, Emery, Africa in Crisis, p. 174. (Address delivered at the fifty-third Annual Meeting of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1947.)

commence with the qualifications of the missionary; his personal character, position, responsibilities and the true recognition of his calling. Lastly, some suggestions will be made for the further development of the indigenous African Church, especially in Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

B. Qualifications of the Missionary in the Indigenous Church

The foreign missionary today, like Paul, the first missionary, is a winner of Christian disciples, a builder of the Christian Church and a promoter of the Kingdom of God on earth.¹ With the preceeding emphasis on leadership by the natives, the question naturally arises, "What of the missionary?" In developing an indigenous church, the missionary to Africa is faced with a different task than the missionary to Oriental fields. Africa has no culture, no literature, nor civilization of its own upon which to build.

"The missionary has had to reduce languages to writing, establish social customs and institutions, formulate moral codes and introduce the first rudiments of education. The problems involved in such a program are many and great, and they challenge the brightest mind and highest statesmanship."²

It is positively essential that the missionary know the theory and application of indigenous church principles. He must have the character and spirituality to

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1. Drach, op. cit., p. 45
2. Glover, op. cit., p. 250

instill effectively the indigenous ideals within the hearts of those Christian natives with whom he works. In the final analysis, his own philosophy of life and motives determine the success of the indigenous methods on the field. The indispensable gifts and graces of the missionary are:

"...a mind in harmony with the mind of the Master, a clear vision of the missionary calling, a deliberate renunciation of every base method for its fulfillment, a will to ensure the autonomous life of the native church, and a reasonable faith in the Holy Spirit."¹

1. Personal Character

Since it is mainly through the contacts and impressions he makes that his life, character and personality are revealed, he must possess those qualities which will help him to be most efficient in his work. He needs to exercise infinite patience, for the American is usually too impatient to let the African accomplish a task himself. He must realize the results will be slow, but that they will be more sure if he allows ample time for them. The example of friendliness, kindness, truth, justice and trust will help greatly to win souls for Christ. The missionary must have courage and steadiness of purpose to face difficulties and discouragements.

Three outstanding characteristics which he should possess are Christian humility, tolerance and love. Even

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1. Ritchie, op. cit., p. 88

as Christ played the role of a loving servant, so must the servant of Christ and man follow that example. He is not a "boss" but a co-laborer with the native and so needs to seek and understand the native's point of view. Even though his ideas are inferior, they should be utilized. The missionary also must exercise a tolerance that will recognize the ability of the native to do the work just as effectively, no matter if differently. It sobers one to know that "The native worker and pastor tend to reflect the stature of the missionary with whom they work."¹ This humility and tolerance should be carried over into his economic life, in that he should be willing to live as simply as is possible and yet maintain a reasonably high standard of living.

Other helpful qualifications of the missionary's personal character are familiarity with church life and activity, linguistic and teaching abilities, adaptability to new surroundings and people, sympathetic understanding of human nature, common sense, good judgment and willingness to work harmoniously with others.²

Above all, he must have an abiding love for his people, so that he will always have their best interests at heart and will serve them at all times. Without this self-effacing love he would be a failure in his work.

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1. Davis, J. Merle, New Buildings on Old Foundations, p. 212
2. Drach, op. cit., pp. 48-49

There are some human traits which obviously are harmful and therefore need to be curbed. These are temper, hastiness of manner, domineerance and a fault-finding disposition. He must guard against narrow and selfish ideas and must avoid crushing native personality. God has of necessity to work through the human being, and it is comforting to know that He can strengthen human weaknesses.

2. Spirit of Self-Sacrifice

To urge a spirit of self-sacrifice upon the native leaders, missionaries must evidence it in their own lives. A tradition of the spirit of sacrifice on the part of missionaries has caused them to be less concerned about the worthiness of their reputation. Home influences, high salaries, gifts from well-meaning friends, radios, refrigerators and cars all make it difficult for missionaries to live up to their reputation. It is equally hard for natives to see a sacrificial spirit in them. "It is still absolutely essential if the missionary is to instill a spirit of sacrificial giving, that he have it himself."¹

3. Recognition of His True Calling

The full meaning of his mission is not only to bring men to know Christ as their personal Savior, but

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1. McBride, op. cit., p. 9

also to gather the converts into a Christian Church, and train them to lead their fellow-men to Christ. Davis forcefully states, "He should never forget that the basic purpose of the mission is to found and develop the indigenous church."¹ The only way to perpetuate the gospel is to organize churches in which converts can grow spiritually.

A sincere comprehension of his calling will lead him to secure a wide variety of educational experience for his work will require a good knowledge of the native language, anthropology, Christian education, translation work, and some carpentering, medicine, law, and economics. On the field he will not settle down permanently in a local church but will supervise from perhaps a home base all the work in his area as it requires his aid. "When and how to leave is the missionary's constant problem."² He will multiply himself by stimulating interest, evangelizing and planting churches. "He is an efficient and successful missionary who is able to multiply himself in an ever-increasing number of increasingly efficient and zealous native workers."³

4. Ability to Train and Organize Converts

There is a critical need for the development of a national leadership, especially a lay leadership, which can some day be independent of foreign support or reliance.⁴

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1. Davis, loc. cit.
2. Indigenous Church Series, "New Testament Principles and Modern Missions," World Dominion, July, 1936, p. 28
3. Drack, op. cit., p. 125
4. McAfee, The Uncut Nerve of Missions, p. 144

This should be foremost in the mind of every missionary when he commences to build a new church. It is his duty to provide the type of leadership which will train workers in all departments of service for their Lord. The importance of the lay ministry is great in Africa because the native is more easily approached by one of his own race, and the example of a true Christian among his fellow-men living the same common life carries more weight than the example of a missionary, fine though it be.¹ The strength of a true church is in its laity, and the missionary who fails to train his converts in all that makes for independence is exposing his work to failure. Therein lies the proof that the missionary is largely responsible for shaping the future of the indigenous church.

Every group of people having a common objective should organize themselves in order to attain the highest results from their unity. Therefore, the missionary should be convinced of the necessity for organizing his converts into a church fellowship of service in the Kingdom. He should, however, constantly keep in mind that his position is to advise and encourage, and not to check the desire for or the efforts to attain independence.²

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1. Lundren, Manne, Abundant Life in Changing Africa, Report of West Central Africa Regional Conference, Presbyterian Board, 1946
2. Box, Earnest, "The Place of the Missionary in the Self-governing Church," The Chinese Recorder, Dec., 1920, p. 853

5. Restraint in Introducing Foreign Patterns

The Mission must be careful about introducing foreign forms and patterns, believing that they are essential to Christianity. An indigenous church can only be developed when the buildings, customs, vernacular and forms of worship and evangelization are native. It is not necessary to denationalize Africa to make it Christian.¹

"It is not enough that the church be Christian; it should be Indian, or Japanese, or African. Otherwise the church would be an exotic, transplanted movement lacking real depth and distinctive character. It must be suited to the mentality, genius and spirit of its people."²

6. A Genuine Faith in the Holy Spirit

One of the most essential qualifications of the missionary is a genuine and intelligent faith in the Holy Spirit. This faith can neither be a vague inherited idea from his forefathers nor a fanatical mysticism. It must be a sane Biblical faith in the leading of the Holy Spirit. The missionary who relies upon and is yielded to the Holy Spirit and makes use of all accessible means, will be confident that He can work in the lives of the converts of the indigenous church.

- C. Suggestions for Further Development of the Indigenous Church, Especially in Sierra Leone and Nigeria

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1. Fraser, Donald, "The Building of the Church in Africa", Church Missionary Review, 1926, p. 123
2. Fleming, Daniel J., Whither Bound in Missions, p. 155

It is of utmost importance to develop continuously the mission work upon the foundations which have been laid so that the future needs of the people will be met. Therefore, definite suggestions and plans with a forward look must be formulated. These annual mission conferences give much time and stress to planning for the future indigenous church. The Evangelical United Brethern Church in Sierra Leone has been established for over a half century now, and that Church in Nigeria is celebrating its silver anniversary this year. The suggestions made here are for the future indigenous growth of these Churches as well as for the indigenous church in general.

1. Vision of the Goal and Task

The converts must also have a vision of their goal and task, that they will be able to look by faith down through the years and see their indigenous church. They must have faith in the Holy Spirit, that He can teach them as He taught the early Church.

The Evangelical United Brethern Mission Churches in Africa, although far removed from each other, should now be able to collaborate somewhat because of the recent Church merger and rapidly improving communication and transportation facilities.¹ The Sudan Mission Church can continue its present affiliation with the

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1. Cf. Pamphlet, Program for Evangelical Missions, 1946, p.9.

Sudan United Mission, for the developing "Church in the Sudan" will offer greater opportunities for cooperative service. The Evangelical United Brethren Board has just recently voted that the Sudan Mission take over the Mumuye tribe of one-hundred thousand pagans¹. Also, Bam-
bur, the center station, is to^{be} made the medical center of the Mission. Truly these visions will enlarge the Church's program.

2. Self-government

As soon as the converts are organized into a Church, they should desire to share in its privileges and responsibilities, for it is their Church. They should appoint their own pastor, who will administer the Sacraments and baptize new converts. They must witness to others and help to create other churches like theirs. The first established church is more or less the offspring of some church which is not native, but the indigenous church will likely be the offspring of a native church.²

In the actual development of a certain church group, the converts should not be left entirely at first to their own meager resources in the belief that they are now an indigenous church. Steps must be taken to nurture, instruct and inspire them to high endeavors through re-

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1. McBride, personal letter, Nov., 1947
2. Allan, op. cit., p. 496

sources of divine strength for service. Newly organized churches will require several years to get into the stride as help is given to them through experience, counsel and prayer. However, the members must be encouraged constantly to conduct their own church life in simple dependence upon the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. For only then will there be a rapid increase of Christian witness in places where none exist.

3. Self-support

Every mission should have a definite program of training in stewardship, for the proper incentive to Christian giving must be taught, not only in the use of money, but in all of life. Only such teaching will bring the highest ideals and blessings into the young churches. Some of the greater difficulties will be resolved as the Africans become more and more conscious of their stewardship over the things that God has given them.¹

Voluntary service in financial matters will test the sincerity of the workers. They should be given pay only after they have had the best possible training in their particular work. This system will raise the standard of preparation. Then the need and demand for

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1. International Missionary Council, Madras Series, The Growing Church, Vol. II, p. 22

their services will evidence their proper time for employment, and the responsibility for their support can be placed upon the Christian groups requesting the aid. When the mission supports native workers in the early years, the standard of pay must be exactly on the level of the economic life of people in the community.¹

4. Self-propagation

The best guarantee of holding to indigenous principles is to keep the church thoroughly evangelistic.² The fact that so many regions in Africa are unfit for white residences enhance the responsibility of the native church to evangelize that country. It is because of this necessity for evangelization that training schools for native workers are so important.

The Sudan Mission Church needs to further develop its present Bible Training School, so that increasing numbers of African leaders can be trained and enlisted for evangelistic, educational and medical work. Also, the elementary educational program should be continued and developed in correlation with the general educational program of the Nigerian government.³ Through evangelistic efforts that reach out to other villages and tribes indigenous schools and churches will be established. Publi-

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1. McBride, The Development of the Principles of Self-support in the Younger Churches, p. 11
2. McBride, op. cit., p. 13
3. The Missionary Society of the Evangelical Church, Program for Evangelical Missions, p. 7

cation of literature for the Africans by the Mission Church would be a great aid in the indigenous program.

The native evangelizational program should include conducting prayer meetings, leading public worship in the local churches, teaching Sunday School and young people's classes, helping illiterates to learn to read and write and, lastly, bringing the Gospel to non-Christians through personal interviews. Such native leadership would bring quickly to the front the real workers of God's Kingdom, and would give a new impetus to the missionary spirit, so that the Church of West Africa could become a great missionary Church. Africa must be evangelized by her own people!

D. Summary

In order to build an African Church which is thoroughly indigenous, it is essential that the missionary possess those qualities which will be of help to the natives and to the building of the indigenous church. His personal character must be one of highest example, especially expressing Christian humility, tolerance and love. The missionary should exercise a true spirit of self-sacrifice in these days of modern conveniences and luxuries. He must have a definite vision of his task and goal and must be willing to assume the role of co-laborer with the African. This servant of God and man should recognize that the full meaning of his calling is both to bring men to Christ and to perpetuate the Gospel by

training converts and organizing native churches. Care must be taken not to introduce foreign patterns and forms which would hinder indigenous progress in the churches. Above all, the missionary must have a genuine and intelligent faith in the Holy Spirit that will guide him through difficult problems and trials on the field.

The foundations of an indigenous church must be strengthened continually with plans for its future growth. The Evangelical United Brethren Mission Churches will profit by closer cooperation with each other and with the Sudan United Mission. The Sudan Mission Church especially will expand its vision and program by including permanent buildings, a medical center and the evangelization of the Mumuye Tribe. New converts should be encouraged to give voluntary service and to practice honest stewardship in all phases of their lives. One of the most important steps in the development of the indigenous church is its program of evangelism. In this field the Sudan Mission Church needs to continue further its Bible Training School program, that many more natives might be trained to win their fellow-men. "They will be far more effective missionaries, if they are given a training somewhat comparable to that of a missionary, and put in responsible positions with genuine freedom of

action."¹ This is the very genius of Christianity,
that it should be self-governing, self-supporting
and self-propagating.

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1. Fleming, op. cit., p. 174

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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A. Restatement of the Problem

The aim of every missionary enterprise is to produce in its particular field a native church which will be truly indigenous, that is, self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. Yet it is evident that such a church has not taken shape in Sierra Leone and Nigeria. However, the present practices reveal the possibility for developing a strong indigenous church. Missionaries are awakening to the necessity for Christianity to become indigenous to the people with whom they work. The problem is to discover and to apply those methods which will effectively enable the African natives to evangelize their own peoples, thereby making their churches indigenous in every sense of the word.

B. Summary and Conclusions

The history of the indigenous church principles first begun by Jesus and Paul, continued in Peru and Korea, then in Sierra Leone and Nigeria, show the progress that has been made toward this goal.

Self-support is possible in nearly every mission. The Christian Church in West Africa can become more self-supporting if, first of all, the present indigenous practices on its mission fields are built on solid foundations. The work in both the Evangelical United Brethren Mission Churches was established upon indigenous principles from

the first, and is progressing today toward a vital indigenous program, particularly in the areas of evangelism, education and medicine. The vision is broadening to include more plans for advancement in the near future.

There are naturally some difficulties involved which hinder the growth of the indigenous church in West Africa. In the mission itself it is easy to desire control, while in the native church there is the tendency to depend upon foreign help. These obstacles must be recognized and overcome with leadership training and other aids for the converts if the West African Church expects to make much progress toward indigenous ideals.

It is important to analyze the character of the African people in order to determine how they can best propagate themselves. They have been found to be capable, trustworthy and sincere in their efforts to evangelize their brothers and to organize churches. Native converts should be employed, not only because they are needed, but also because they are to become ultimately the successors of the missionaries in the future indigenous church.

The qualifications of the effective missionary are many. He should possess a personal character of high esteem and one that is distinguished by Christian humility, tolerance, love and self-sacrifice. He must realize that his first task is evangelization and his second is to train the most available and suitable converts to help him in

reaching others with the gospel, for this is the only way to win Africa for Christ. One of his most important qualifications is a genuine and intelligent faith in the Holy Spirit. The missionary must be a Spirit-filled man, for spiritual work should be done by spiritual men. He must learn how and when to leave a field on its own resources. A church will not become indigenous unless the missionary permits and persuades its members to assume their rightful responsibilities. Thus, it is of vital importance that he be educated in the indigenous principles. The final outcome of the church will depend largely upon his interest and efforts in making it independent.

A church is self-supporting when it is able to finance its whole program and staff all departments of its activities with well trained native workers.¹ Therefore, it is imperative that the church of Sierra Leone and Nigeria be indigenous in order to meet its future needs and growth. Its converts will do well to have a clear vision of the essential characteristics of their own native church, its self-government, self-support and self-propagation. They will desire to see it develop and reach out to serve the spiritual needs of all their people. Then will the church be filled with spiritual

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1. Cf. Wei, Francis, C.-M., "The Institutional Work of Christian Missions in China," International Review of Missions, July, 1938, pp. 386-388

dynamic. Instead of being a weak, foreign-supported organization, it will emerge a strong, growing church, firmly established, supporting itself, leading others and finding its place in the Universal Church.

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