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A HISTORY OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS
IN
FRENCH CAMEROUN

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

A. The Scope of this History

The history of Protestant Missions in French Cameroun began in 1843 when Alfred Saker began missionary work among the Douala people. However, certain significant events preceded the establishment of the mission. Therefore, this history will include these events and the development down to the present time. After a brief sketch of the background of the mission which includes the work of the outstanding mission boards and prominent missionaries, attention will be largely confined to the efforts of the American Presbyterian Mission which began in 1889 under the German Protectorate and continues today under French authority.

Various phases of missionary activity, present-day problems, and governmental influence will be included for the purpose of considering the future development of Protestant Missions in this area.

B. The Purpose and Value of this History

The purpose of this history is to bring together the accessible materials which relate to the development of Protestant Missions in the French Cameroun in order to reveal their beginning, continued development, problems, and possible future outlook.

The value of this undertaking lies in the fact

that all these factors in the development of the Cameroun mission have never been synthesized in one document. It is felt that such a study will prove helpful and valuable to those who are interested in Protestant Missions in this particular field. Furthermore, this study is of value to the writer who has a great interest in French Cameroun and views it as a possible future field for life work.

C. The Method of Procedure

After a brief history of the events preceding the establishment of the first mission, the beginning missionary activities will be considered. These will include the efforts of the Baptist Missionary Society on Fernando Po Island and Ambas Bay, and the work of Alfred Saker and Joseph Merrick. The study will also describe the missionary activity during the German Protectorate.

Following the establishment of missions, great consideration will be given to the years of growth and expansion. The outstanding mission stations will be discussed and the areas of development including evangelism, education, medical work, industrial work, and literary progression.

In the last chapter, the present governmental attitude and threatening outside influences towards missions will be discussed. Present-day problems will be considered, including social, economic, educational and indigenous problems. All these factors will be viewed in relation to the

future development of Protestant Missions in French Cameroun.

D. The Sources of Data

The principal sources of this history will be the Annual Reports of Mission Boards, the official quarterly of the West Africa Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., reports found in missionary magazine articles, books written by missionaries, letters, and documents or books written by French authorities.

Other sources include books written on the history of missionary activity in this country and articles describing the development of Christianity among the natives of French Cameroun.

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATION AND BEGINNINGS OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS
IN FRENCH CAMEROUN

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IN FRENCH CAMEROUN

A. Introduction

Years of sacrificial living and difficult work by missionaries and mission boards serve as the foundation of Protestant Missions in French Cameroun. In order to fully understand and appreciate the development of Protestantism in this country, a description of the first exploration, pioneer missionaries, and initial efforts of mission boards is necessary.

B. The Discovery of the Cameroun

There is no record of the first discoverer of the Cameroun although the Carthaginian Hanno may have touched the coast. The Cameroun was first described by a German geographer who accompanied an expedition which discovered the mouth of the Congo River in 1846.¹

In the fifteenth or sixteenth century the large bay in the Gulf of Guinea was christened Rio dos Camaroes by Portuguese navigators. The English confined this term, the Cameroons, to the mountain range, but the Germans extended the use of the name, Kamerun, to the whole Protectorate.

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1. West Africa Mission, 1937, pp. 5-6.

With great eagerness to establish trading firms and factories at various places on the West African Coast, the Germans took possession of the lower reaches of the Wurri River through a compact made with the Douala chiefs at the city of Douala. In 1885 a treaty was concluded in which all British claims were waived in favour of Germany. The French exchanged Batanga and the island West of Kwakwa-Kriek for the German possession of Konakry. These treaties made Germany the sole possessor of the Cameroun, and Baron von Goden became the Governor.¹ German explorers, Dorth, Nachtigal and Glegel set out from Douala and between 1855 and 1880 they prospected the entire hinterland as far as Chad and Benové.²

This territory, now known as French Cameroun is bounded on the north and west by French Equatorial Africa, on the east by Nigeria, and on the south by French Equatorial Africa and Spanish Guinea. It is nearly three times the size of the state of Illinois, or more than eleven times the size of Switzerland, having approximately 166,489 square miles. The principal rivers are the Sanga, the source of the Benue, major tributary of the Niger, the Nyong and the Wurri. The climate varies with the elevation, the south is equatorial and the northern part of the territory is tropical, warm and dry. There is annually one rainy and one dry

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1. Albert F. Calvert: The Cameroons, p. 3.
2. George Edmund Haynes: Africa, Continent of the Future, p. 293.

season in the north and two rainy and two dry seasons in the south, except at Douala and Edea which have only one rainy and one dry season.¹ The main products of this agricultural country are cocoa, coffee, rubber, palm-oil kernels, logs, and ivory.²

The largest and most important of the Cameroun natives are those of the Bantu tribe from the east and south. Another prominent group is the Negro, Sudanese from Northern Africa. Bulu is the language spoken in the south and center, while the Northern Sudan negroes speak dissimilar languages.³

C. First Missionary Activities

1. Baptist Missionary Society

The Baptist Missionary Society was instrumental in establishing Protestant missions which eventually spread to French Cameroun.

a. Fernando Po Island Missions

Without the history of the Protestant endeavors on the Island of Fernando Po, the story of Christian missions in the Cameroun would be incomplete because the enterprise was a stepping-stone to the mainland.

In 1752 the first missionary to the West Coast of Africa was sent out to Cape Castle by the Society for the

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1. Haynes, op. cit., p. 294.
2. W. Reginald Wheeler: The Words of God in an African Forest, p. 187.
3. Paul Dean Votaw: The Nevius Missionary Method and Its Application in the Cameroun Mission, p. 24.

Propagation of the Gospel. The Moravians and Scottish Societies made some brave attempts but failed in their battle against West Coast fevers and discouragement. The Baptist Society in England later responded to calls of freed Christian slaves of Jamaica who expressed their desire to help their own people in Africa. Two messengers were sent out by the Home Committee to find a suitable place for a missionary beginning. The Island of Fernando Po was chosen, which is about twenty miles from the African coast and eight hundred miles North of the mouth of the Congo River. The work was begun among the aborigines of the island.¹ Soon five natives were baptized, and many were being taught in classes. The two men, Rev. John Clarke and Doctor Prince returned to England to report the concrete results and to urge the Society to establish a mission in Africa. The appeal was answered when four men and their wives were accepted for this field.

In 1845, Spain claimed possession of the Island of Fernando Po and by 1858 Protestant mission work became impossible. E. M. Saker described the period:

The missionaries therefore turned to the mainland of Cameroons, to seek on unoccupied territory a homeland for the more than two hundred Christian families, where they might worship God according to the teaching of our Lord and His Holy Word.²

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1. E. M. Saker: Alfred Saker, pp. 9-10.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.

b. Alfred Saker at Bethel

"O for the zeal of an apostle! to spend my days in cheerful labour to spread the knowledge of the great salvation."¹ These are the words of Alfred Saker, one of the missionaries who sailed to Africa in 1843, in answer to the request presented to the Society in England. After settling at Bethel in the Camerouns, as requested by the King, the great tasks before him were those of building homes for missionaries, continuing church services and teaching sessions, learning to speak the language, and reducing it to writing. The Sakers suffered from fever and destructive wood ants. Possessions were stolen until a system of night watching had to be employed. In his great attempt to learn the native language, he suddenly discovered that the natives were purposely falsifying their language so the distrusted white man could not learn it. Through all these hardships Saker was known as "the man who could not be daunted."

The ceaseless efforts soon brought favorable results. Chief Angwa, who had endangered the life of the missionary, became a Christian. Later, he became a deacon of the Christian Church in Bethel and maintained high Christian ideals during the remaining years of his life.

Saker, with the help of a converted native, John-

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1. Saker, op. cit., p. 38.

son, began itineration at Bassa, Mungo, Bimbia, and other towns. On November 5, 1849, the first convert of the Cameroun, Smith, was baptized. After seven years of this strenuous work, Saker returned to England. He was forced to go back to the Cameroun the same year as a result of the death of Dr. Newbegin, who had assumed the responsibility in Saker's absence. Saker's following report of the work in the Cameroun indicates the progress of the mission at that time:

In ten years there have been about one hundred conversions, 8 native teachers engaged, the wilderness is being transformed into the garden of the Lord. The price has been great in lives, but bloodless victories are not common. Conclude I ought to return immediately.¹

Saker described the natives as a people who "seek a hand to lead them." After conversion there was great desire for instruction. In 1853 there were twenty church members, twenty-five inquirers, and a school at Clarence and at Bethel. "Labour, lessons, singing, and prayer form the life at Cameroons," wrote the active missionary, Alfred Saker.²

During the year 1851 Saker had printed three Douala class-books of twenty-four pages, a small hymn-book, and had completed the twenty-third chapter of Matthew in his edition of the New Testament. The Book of Psalms was begun. Saker was a man of great ambition and ingenuity.

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1. Walter Sinclair Stewart: Early Baptist Missionaries and Prisoners, p. 137.
2. Saker, op. cit., p. 123.

He believed all natives should work although they protested that work was confined to the tasks of slaves and refused employment until they became Christians. Converts were taught the skills of carpentry, smithing, and brick-laying.

In 1858, the Spanish Government proclaimed the Roman Catholic faith to be the sole religion of Fernando Po Island. It was necessary to found a new settlement where the adherents of the mission on the mainland could enjoy full religious and civil liberty. This new settlement became the Amba Bay Mission which will be discussed later.

Saker's last years were harassed by many troubles, including bereavement of children, fierce intertribal conflicts in which his life was often endangered, and finally, differences of opinion and of policy between Saker and the younger members of the Mission. This became so acute that in 1869 the secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, Dr. Edward Bean Underhill, was deputed to investigate and if possible restore harmony.¹ Saker was accused of devoting too much time and attention to temporal interests, industrial work, brickmaking and printing. His defence of these methods is significant in revealing his attitude towards pioneer missionary methods:

The work of a missionary is not, it seems to me, to stand book in hand under a tree here and a shed there, and preach to the people; but to visit the man in his

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1. J. Du Plessis: The Evangelisation of Pagan Africa, p. 163.

home, to sympathise with his sorrows and cares, and thus to get at the heart of the individual: for so the Master wrought.¹

Underhill closed his report to the directors by affirming:

He (Saker) has exhibited an endurance, a devotedness in the Master's service, an heroic struggle with perils and difficulties on every hand, which few missionaries are called to exercise, and which his successors will not have to encounter. I should be unfaithful to my convictions if I were not anew to commend Mr. Saker to the fullest confidence of the Committee, or to speak of him as among the greatest of modern missionaries of the Cross.²

Saker continued in the work until three stations had arisen, including Bethel, Belltown, and Hickory. The New Testament translation was completed in 1862 and the Old Testament in 1872. After this arduous toil, Alfred Saker returned to England in 1876, a worn and emaciated man. He died less than four years afterwards, with the hopes that the work in the Cameroun would not be overlooked in the great movement of Protestant missions in the Congo.

c. Joseph Merrick at Bimbia

Another missionary who was responsible for the success of these early efforts in Cameroun, was a Jamaican Christian, Joseph Merrick. He began his labor at Bimbia among the Isubu people at the mouth of the Bimbia River. His work consisted of preaching, translating, and printing.

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1. Du Plessis; op. cit., p. 164.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.

He has been credited with the printing of a dictionary in the English and Dualla languages, the translations of portions of the Bible, a hymn-book, school books, and lessons.¹

From the Bimbia station, inland villages were visited with glad tidings of great joy; chiefs were taught; natives in the market places, fishermen, and slaves in the villages received the Word of Life.

Alfred Saker co-operated with Merrick in the printing and in laboring for the welfare of the Bimbians. This may account for the fact that some believe the tribute to Saker for his translation work should be ascribed to Merrick instead.²

d. Ambas Bay Mission

While the work in the Cameroun was progressing, the Spanish Government claimed the full possession of the Island of Fernando Po in 1845. All religious worship except that of the Roman Catholic Communion was forbidden by an edict, necessitating the establishment of another mission for the members of the Baptist Church who chose to leave the island.³

In referring to this resolution Edward Medley said:
"Thus did these Africans suffer for faith and freedom, and prove that the Gospel of Christ can lift men up, conquer

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1. Alexander Innes: The Cameroons and the Baptist Mission, pp. 10-11.
2. Ibid., pp. 9-12.
3. Travels and Explorations in Africa, pp. 162, 165.

their native weakness and make them strong."¹ On the shores of Amboises Bay land was secured, and the work of the mission began. A constitution was made which guaranteed freedom of faith and worship to the present and future settlers. The colony was called Victoria, in honour of the Queen.

From this Ambas Bay Mission Christian influence penetrated into the darkness of the interior. Winwood Reade, a non-Christian, quoted these words in reference to the work at Victoria:

I do not at all understand how the changes at Cameroons and Victoria have been brought about. Old sanguinary customs have to a large extent been abolished; witchcraft hides itself in the forest; the fetish superstition of the people is derided by old and young, and well-built houses are springing up on every hand. It is really marvellous to mark the change that has taken place in the natives in a few years only. From actual cannibals many have become honest, intelligent, well-skilled artisans... There must be surely something abnormal about this.²

2. Missions During German Protectorate

Protestant missionary work continued during German Protectorship.

a. Basle Mission Established

The Basle Missionary Society began work at Acera, on the West Coast of Africa, in 1828, sixty years before working in Cameroun. In 1882 the Douala chiefs asked the British Government to annex the Cameroun. Action was delayed and the Douala chiefs accepted a German Protectorate in 1884.

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1. Travels and Explorations in Africa, p. 162.
2. Du Plessis, op. cit., p. 165.

Soon the government had established a policy of reserving Highland areas for German settlers by the acquisition of native land and conscription of native labor. This encouraged native revolts, which later caused the destruction of a number of the buildings of the English Baptist Mission. The missionaries were expelled because of their influence on the natives. This led to the withdrawal of the Baptist Mission.

In 1886 the first party of missionaries of the Basle Mission sailed for the Cameroun. Within ten years the outposts established by the Baptists at Mulimba and among the Ba-kundu, Ba-kwiri and Abo tribes were occupied by European missionaries. Active opposition was encountered in the establishment of new centres at Nyasoso in the North, and at Lobetal and Eclea on the Sanaga River. The Baptists had a total of 200 Christians after forty years: under the Basle mission the number of converts increased from 172 to 1,500 in ten years. At the end of a decade nine stations had been established by a staff of twenty-two European missionaries. A station which was opened in Sakbayeme had 1,150 baptized Christians, ninety-three out-stations and 6,600 students in the schools in the year 1914.¹ This growth soon proved to be too swift as the discipline cases and moral weakness indicated. This brought out the following

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1. Arthur Judson Brown: One Hundred Years, p. 219.

declaration by the Basle Committee: "No further extension of the field but greater intensive and fortifying labour at existing institutions."¹

b. The German Baptist Mission

In order to solve the problem of the pastorless independent communities in the Cameroun, the German Baptists sent missionary Steffens and his wife to oversee these churches in 1891. The German Baptist Missionary Society, which was formed in 1898, proceeded to advance further inland and opened a station called Bonakwasi among the Abo people. In 1904 another station at Ngamba was opened on the Mbam River. Five additional stations were opened and 1,500 converts were received. Forty missionaries were sent to the field, of whom eleven died. In 1912, some 3,000 pupils were attending the schools.² Great attention was given to the growth of education.

c. The Gossner Mission

New territory was annexed to the German Protectorate on the eastern border in 1911, when the Congo-Morocco Agreement was made with France. The German Emperor made possible the support of mission work in German colonies and German missionary Societies. Oksas and Rossat, their first appointed missionaries arrived in the Cameroun in December, 1913. They labored at the basin of the River

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1. Du Plessis, op. cit., p. 170.
2. Brown, op. cit., p. 220.

Sanga, in Eastern Cameroun. The mission board was greatly disappointed when the efforts of this pioneer work was nipped in the bud by the outbreak of World War I.¹

d. American Presbyterian Mission

In 1871 the American Presbyterian Mission established a mission station at Baraka and in 1881, another station was begun at Angom where seven missionaries worked, including Adolphus C. Good. Three specific problems were stated which made the undertaking very difficult: heathenism, liquor and Roman Catholicism. The Roman Catholic priests made and sold brandy, and used it as a "treat" to persuade parents to send their children to Catholic schools. At school the children were taught to refrain from listening to Protestants.² The priests finally influenced the French government to issue decrees which forbade pupils to be taught in any language except French. This brought forth the decision of the Board to transfer the work to the Societé des Missions Evangeliques de Paris and move to Batanga on the Coast of Cameroun. The development of the work at Batanga is thus described in the 1939 Drum Call, the official publication of the Cameroun Mission:

"'But the Word of God grew and many became Christians. The women of Batanga banded together, holding prayer meetings and slowly pushing back the old heathen ways and bringing in the new. The missionaries found that through this band of faithful women the church grew

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1. Du Plessis, op. cit., p. 172.
2. Lillian L. Beanland: African Logs, pp. 27-28.

and in 1899 the new surf boat was named 'Peace of Batanga' because here was peace where there had been strife."¹

D. Summary

The history of Protestant missions has shown that the mission work on the Island of Fernando Po Island was the stepping stone to the mission work in the Cameroun. Alfred Saker was the first missionary to settle in the Cameroun, and at the end of his years of service, he had succeeded in translating into Douala the Bible and the hymn book; in itineration to nearby towns; and in establishing three stations, Bethel, Belltown, and Hickory.

It was also found that Joseph Merrick contributed to the development of the Cameroun Church through his printing and translation work. The Amba Bay Mission was influential in spreading the Christian influence into the interior and in destroying many heathen customs.

During the German Protectorate which began in 1884, the Basle Mission, the German Baptist Mission, the Gossner Mission and the American Presbyterian Mission were at work evangelizing the Cameroun. New stations were opened by each board and the schools reported great increases in the number of students. Throughout, two great problems were obvious, heathenism and Roman Catholicism.

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1. Beanland, op. cit., p. 32.

CHAPTER II

GROWTH AND EXPANSION, 1892-1953

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GROWTH AND EXPANSION, 1892-1953

A. Introduction

The period between the years 1892 and 1953 have been years of transformation in French Cameroun. Protestant Missions have been active in the evangelistic, educational, medical, literary, and industrial work of the French Mandate. Included among these missions are the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, the Sudan United Mission, the Norwegian Lutheran Mission, the Seventh Day Adventists, and the American Presbyterian Mission which maintains a more extensive program than any other Protestant Mission in French Cameroun.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the development of Protestant Missions in this period in which a complete change was made in government and in which the outreach of various missionary societies brought about changes in the illiterate, diseased, superstitious, unindustrialized, and unevangelized inhabitants of French Cameroun.

B. Paris Evangelical Missionary Society

When the German missionaries were removed from the Cameroun after World War I, the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society began to occupy the principal stations of the Basel Mission. The same Society responded to the

call of the American Presbyterian Mission to take over the two stations on the Ogowe in 1890; Talaguga Station in 1892; Lambarene Station in 1893 and the Baraka Station in 1913. In 1919 the churches of the Basel Mission were reorganized and in 1922 advance into the Interior was begun. With the help of the Africans the work has progressed until the Society now has fifty-six ecclesiastical districts; 829 churches and outstations; and 64,000 communicant members. There are six missionary pastors; forty-four African pastors; and 917 Evangelists.²

In the Paris Evangelical Mission schools 30,374 children are taught by the seven missionary teachers and 244 African teachers. There is a Teacher's Training School; a Seminary with twenty-four pupils; and a Professional School for artisans.³

Medical work is carried on in three dispensaries and two hospitals with a monthly average of 108 operations and 7,512 patients treated.⁴

C. Missions Affected by Governmental Transference

In a report of the Cameroun Mission in 1898 the effects of the German colonial government were described as follows:

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1. H. Beiderbecke: Gospel Dawn in Africa, p. 48.
2. Eugène Guernier: Cameroun Togo, p. 385.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
4. Ibid. loc. cit.

..travel has been made easier and safer than ever before. ...The old custom of carrying weapons has been prohibited, and walking sticks have taken their places. The robbing of caravans has been checked, almost stopped. Petty tribal troubles have been settled. Tribes are mingling as never before. Natives are beginning to travel as far as the coast. Hats, coats and trousers are common where two years since there were none. The missionaries can now send men for mail and provisions without fear that they will be robbed. The opening of the roads has brought in the traders, colored and European. The former can be found in every town of any size and two white men have established trading posts in Ebolewo'e. They, of course, bring in rum, disregard the Sabbath, and, in fact, break all the laws of God, setting a bad example for the people. New influences are at work for good and for evil.¹

After the World War I the Franco-British partition of Cameroun was made official by an agreement concluded on March 4, 1916, ratified on June 10, 1919 by a Franco-British declaration, and in 1922 by the League of Nations. The French mandate comprised 2,000,000 inhabitants and was administered by a commissioner from 1919 to 1922. The objective of the French government was to improve the habitat, to multiply the medical establishments and laboratories, and to create a homogenous body of one hundred million people capable of resisting the forces of aggression to which France had been exposed since the time of Charlemagne.²

Cameroun, as a French Mandate, was not subject to the governmental rules and regulations of colonies; nevertheless, there was a tendency on the part of the local government to rule the Mandate as a colony. This meant that the regulations

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1. Annual Report of Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 1899, p. 30.
2. Jacques Stern: The French Colonies, pp. 262-263.

and restrictions with reference to education under any auspices other than that of the government were applied to the Mission schools. One of the rules required the teaching of the school children in French, which meant the closing of all the Missions' Bulu schools. When a Commission discussed the matter with the local government, a decree was promulgated which made the mission or catechetical schools an exception from the application of the general rules in force throughout the French colonies in Africa; and gave the Mission three years in which to conform to their regulations.¹

This was a period of great trial for the missionaries. The German missionaries from the Basel Mission and German Baptist Mission had been removed. The tide of self-support which advanced steadily until 1918 began to decrease. High prices caused suffering and unrest, making close supervision necessary on the part of the Missions, although their forces were inadequate.

Introducing French into the flourishing school system of 1914 was one of the greatest problems. For the following eight years an outlined program of advance work progressed slowly. Economic conditions were discouraging. The material outlook was gloomy. However, the mass movement toward the Church and the Christian religion was rapidly

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1. Annual Report of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 1922, p. 28.

advancing. One church alone, drawing from a district of twelve miles, received at an average Communion season from 200 to 250 new members. This number was quadrupled in the year.¹

Another period of trial was introduced when interned Bulu soldiers from Fernando Po returned home and encouraged their brothers to travel. This brought unrest to church members. With a little knowledge of reading and writing, some became proud, flippant, and indifferent to the Church. They had learned that they would not be beaten or imprisoned for breaking Church rules. Nevertheless, throughout this trial a majority of Christians placed a great value on Church standing and refused to break with the Church, or assume the bold disobedience which was prevalent.²

D. West Africa Mission

The American Presbyterian Mission is referred to as the West Africa Mission in French Cameroun. This Mission has also been called the "eldest child of the Western Foreign Missionary Society" because this society was taken over by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. at its organization in 1837.

When the West Africa Mission began its work the

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1. "A Time of Trial," The Drum Call, October 1922, Vol. I pp. 14-15.
2. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

West coast of Africa was called the "White Man's Grave". Fifty-three colored missionaries were sent to Africa with the hopes that they would survive the climate better than the white missionaries, but twenty-one of these colored missionaries were buried in the African soil. Other missionaries followed, often giving less than one year of service before laying down their lives for the cause of the Gospel among the African people.

These missionaries went to Africa with the primary aim of the Mission as their personal aim. Melvin Fraser, President of the Dager Theological Seminary in 1924 stated the aim of the West Africa Mission as follows:

The aim in all phases of our Mission life is at evangelization and education by training and utilizing indigenous forces. The movement, fluctuating tho it may be, is to make the work self-supporting, self-propagating, self-governing, to put the natives in position to take care of themselves.¹

In 1879 the first station was opened at Batanga and in 1892 A.C. Good made a trip of exploration of nearly 200 miles into the interior. A new station was opened in 1893 at Efulan with Dr. Good in charge. A year later he died, leaving behind a translation of the four Gospels in the Bulu language.²

Seven years after the beginning of the work at Efulan, two men and three women were baptized and a church

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1. Melvin Fraser: "The School of the Prophets in the African Jungle," The Drum Call, July 1924, Vol. III, p. 6.
2. W. C. Johnston: "How a Great Work Began," The Drum Call, April 1937, Vol. XVI, pp. 4-5.

was organized. Another church was organized at Elat the following year. However, progress moved so slowly during the first ten years that the Board wished to discontinue their work but could not find another society to take it. After this discouraging period people began to come to Christ, by tens, by hundreds, and later by the thousand, through the efforts of missionaries engaged in evangelism, education, medicine, industry, and literary work of the Mission.

1. Evangelism

For centuries the Africans in French Cameroun had no alphabet, no written language, no recorded history, no schools, no roads, and no Gospel of Christ. Francois Abomo, an African, describing the worship of the people at this time states:

They (the African people) all were worshippers of all kinds of gods of stone, wood, grass, birds, animals, snakes, bones of beasts and of dead persons. To our people one could apply with one exception the whole catalogue of sins recorded in the first chapter of the Romans.¹

The Gospel was eagerly received from the early years until the present time when thousands of new converts are added every year. The first converts witnessed to the extent that many families, villages, and tribes were evangelized before they saw a missionary.

a. Church membership requirements

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1. Francois Akoa Abomo: "The Synod of Cameroun," The Drum Call, April 1948, p. 8.

Strict discipline and great care has been exercised in accepting new members into the church. E. Edwin Jones, in his biography of Rowland Hill Evans of Cameroun, has outlined the procedure for church membership:

The first step into the church, is to be enrolled in the Inquiry Class... A person is examined as to motives, conduct, and knowledge... The motive must be pure, past conduct must be straightened, restitution must be made for the sins of the past, then the person must have knowledge of the way of life... If the examination is satisfactory, a person is enrolled into what is called the Esulan Class. He is then put under instruction, for at least one year, and his conduct carefully watched. At the end of this period he is called before the church session and examined. If his progress and conduct are satisfactory, he is then enrolled in what is called Nsamba Class, and he is again put through a course of instruction for the period of a year or more. He is again examined by the session. If satisfactory, he is ordered to be baptized and taken into the church ...The candidate continues instruction after he has been baptized. Many fall into sin after they are accepted into the church and must needs be disciplined.¹

b. Response to the Gospel

As early as 1895, people in the towns for miles around Efulen had heard the Gospel and children sang the familiar hymns. The people recognized the Gospel as the power which had raised the coast people, but did not realize what the cost of becoming a Christian would mean in their lives. One chief said, "I want to be a Christian, but I cannot part with my wives for I have many."²

Several tribes built houses of worship of their

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1. E. Edwin Jones: The Life of Rowland Hill Evans of Cameroun, pp. 37-38.
2. Annual Report of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 1894-95, p. 29.

own accord and waited for a teacher of the Gospel. Food and residence were offered for a teacher, but the personnel of the Mission was inadequate to meet many of the requests.

In 1910 the report from the Elat church stated that 3,500 people came to worship on July 4. Parts of the back and side of the church were removed so everyone on the outside could see and hear. In the same year the Batanga church reported that the church membership was increased at every communion service and at each a dozen or more babies were consecrated in baptism.

In 1952 there were 132 organized African churches; 69,194 communicant members; 2,372 catechists; 7,230 members added on confession of faith; 2,650 children baptized; and 58,343 catechumen.¹

c. Training Evangelists

For more than half a century individuals were trained in small groups to be pastors and evangelists who would be willing and able to guide and serve their own people. In 1923 the Dager Biblical Seminary was organized at Elat with the basic idea of training the indigenous ministry, natives who would take places of responsibility and leadership.²

In 1924 there were nineteen men representing

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1. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 1.
2. Fraser, op. cit., pp. 4-10.

seventeen clans of Bulu enrolled in the Seminary. They were not the spear, knife, and gun fighters of the past thirty years, but called themselves "God's tribe". Every student was under care of Presbytery and was recommended by the Session of the church to which he belonged and in which he had lived in good standing at least one year. Many had experienced years of service, success in evangelism and steadfastness in the midst of much temptation, persecution, and always poverty.¹

The curriculum consisted of the study of Books in the Old and New Testaments; Theology of the Westminster Shorter Catechism with Scripture proofs and main points of Agreement and of Difference between Protestant and Romish Doctrine, Church History, with special attention to ancient Paganism, the Growth of Papacy, the Reformation, the Influence of Paganism, Papacy and Protestantism; Homiletics and Pastoral Theology.²

By 1939 the quarters for the Seminary were inadequate and Evans Memorial Chapel was built at the McLean Memorial Station to help accomodate the students. Three distinct groups of students were enrolled in 1952; the theological class, made up of men who were looking forward to ordination; the lay evangelists who were giving full time

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1. Fraser, loc. cit.
2. Ibid.

service to the church; and the women's department, composed of the wives of the men in the other two groups. These students represented practically every tribe of importance.¹

d. Laymen Evangelists

Other evangelists who have not been students at Dager Theological Seminary are found in the Women's Work. They teach the Word to friends and give missionary tithes to foreign fields.

Teachers, doctors, industrial workers and their assistants have brought many into the light of the Gospel. A report from the Metet Station in 1952 describes the evangelistic efforts of young boys from the Cours Pedagogy School who asked to go to far away villages on Sunday afternoons to hold meetings for children who could not come to Metet to church. Another station reports the fruitfulness of Sunday afternoon services for prisoners in the jail. One prisoner who had confessed Christ said he "grew and sold Banga Indian Hemp, smoked as a narcotic, and that he helped eat four horses and three people."² The Gospel which has changed many lives and the Cameroun Christians continue to win others to Christ. Yet there are thousands in southeastern Cameroun who have nothing but their life of paganism and terrifying fears. Their needs weigh heavily as the

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1. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, pp. 11-12.
2. "Service for Prisoners," The Drum Call, 1952, Vol. XXXI, p. 14.

responsibility of the Mission.

e. Church Growth

Although there has been rapid growth in self-propagation of the Gospel, the economically poor people of French Cameroun have grown slowly in self-support. Many natives believed missionaries were business men and the offering was believed to be a kind of tax imposed by the church. The missionaries hesitated to stress money matters, because they feared that the natives might think they could buy their salvation. They stressed, instead, faith alone as the only condition of receiving life. Meanwhile, the Cameroun Christians assumed little responsibility in supporting their churches. Sometimes there was great faith in God's sending support or some much-needed supplies through the "white brothers across the salt sea."¹

In 1942 the Mission turned the Church finances and the direction of all the affairs of the Church of Cameroun over to the African leaders. This stopped many misunderstandings of the people about finances, encouraged their efforts in giving, made them feel their responsibilities and cultivated respect among the people for their national leaders. Since 1942 the churches have contributed more money than ever before and the salaries of the workers have been increased every year.² The "Giving Meeting" in which

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1. L. K. Anderson and Skinner, W. Sherman: Bridge to Africa, pp. 5-64.
2. Francois Akoa Abomo: "The Synod of Cameroun," The Drum Call, April 1948, Vol. XXVII, pp. 9-10.

offerings are made to help other places, build old churches and pay workers, has been a great help in the work of God in French Cameroun.¹

f. Church Government

When the Mission gave the responsibility of the Church finances to the African leaders, the entire government of the Church was also placed in the hands of the African leaders. Most of the ordained missionaries are still members of Presbytery and Synod, and their actions and assignments of work are controlled by the Church. In 1951 there were seventy-five African ministers and seventeen missionary ministers. Few, if any, missionary pastors are now in administrative positions. Soon the second synod will be formed and when three synods have been established the Church will be able to form its own General Assembly, or adopt the form of church government most suitable to the local situation.²

2. Education

One of the strongest emphases of the Mission is the education of the Cameroun people. Under the German and French administration the Mission led in the educational work in the colony.

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1. Paul Falle Engoto: "The Church's Missionary Vision," *The Drum Call*, April 1948, Vol. XXVII, pp. 17-18.
2. Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1952, Vol. I, p. 60.

a. Early Mission Schools

When the schools first began, the parents were paid to allow their children to come to school. Great tact and patience were required to overcome the fears and prejudices of the native mothers who hesitated to send their sons to the "white man's school". These school boys were the ones who spread the Gospel among their people. Strong educational work has continued to furnish men and women who evangelize the field.¹

In 1904 the mission voted to demand a nominal tuition instead of paying the parents. At first this caused some opposition but the Africans accepted because "reading" was beginning to be appreciated. By 1907 the schools were unable to accommodate more students. Clean Christian living and Christian standards were stressed among the school boys, bringing great sorrow to the rum traders. During vacations the boys went out by twos to untouched regions and were successful in starting the Christian work among the people. The Mission could not supply all the demands for teachers in these villages.²

In 1916 the whole school system had to be discarded when the French language and social regulations replaced those of the Germans.³ Normal schools were estab-

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1. Jean K. Mackenzie: An African Net, p.5.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.
3. Ante, p. 17.

lished largely as a result of the lack of French teachers. . Mission schools ranked high with the French Government which was interested in the educational work of Cameroun. In 1923 more boys from the Mission received diplomas at the annual government examination than from any other institution in the colony. All but one of the graduates of the Government High School in the same year had received their early training at the Mission schools.¹

b. Progress and Objectives of Government Schools

Two objectives for Government Schools were stated in 1936; to train their own assistants and employees, and to provide for the sons of headmen and employees. In that year there were seventeen districts and each had from three to six bush schools. In each school about 100 pupils learned the rudiments of French and studied Arithmetic. The best pupils were allowed to attend the fifth to the eighth grades at the District School, directed by a French instructor. When the students successfully passed an official examination after completing the primary work, they were able to become apprentices in offices, in shops, or to enter the High School to prepare to be teachers, clerks, postmasters, customs assistants, and medical assistants.²

c. Progress and Objectives of Mission Schools

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1. Melvin Fraser: "Some Comments on Mission Meeting," The Drum Call, January 1924, p. 7.
2. René Ryter: "Education in Cameroun," The Drum Call, July 1936, p. 21.

In 1926 there were 766 mission village schools; eleven day and boarding schools for boys; and ten schools for girls. There were 30,299 pupils enrolled in these schools; eighteen students in the theological school, more than 100 apprentices in the industrial and agricultural school and forty future teachers in the normal school.¹

Printed charts and books in the native language of the village schools have now replaced the first school materials made of crude wooden blocks cut out by one of the missionaries. The Mission schools have sought to teach everyone to read and understand the Bible. As soon as the students in the village schools learn to read "The Letters", they begin to study Matthew, Mark, and Luke.²

The Mission's primary objective in education has been: to take care of souls, by teaching the young people about Christ; to care for the bodies, teaching them how to keep clean and how to become healthy; and to train the hands to accomplish what is useful and beautiful, and to engage in the service of others. Therefore, Bible, hygiene, writing, arithmetic, handwork and singing have been the main subjects.³

Now, in 1953, the actual teaching in the Mission schools is largely in the hands of the African staff, but

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1. George Schwab: "The Schools of Our Mission," The Drum Call, April 1926, p. 23.
2. Ryter, op. cit., p. 22.
3. Ibid., p. 23.

the direction is the responsibility of the Mission, working in collaboration with the Government. The report of the Board of Foreign Missions describes the future of the West African Mission Schools as follows:

It becomes increasingly evident that the Government will eventually assume the responsibility of all primary education and at that time there should be well-trained Protestant Africans able to undertake 1 direct control of schools in the government system.

The 1952 report of these schools was as follows:

There were 25,000 pupils registered in the mission schools this year. It is estimated that the primary school population of Cameroun is about 500,000. About 150,000 are now in some kind of school. Again the force is inadequate to meet the need. Fifteen years ago the Mission had twenty missionaries giving either full time, or most of the time, to the vernacular schools, and seven giving full time to teaching in the French schools. Now the Mission has launched the Cameroun Christian College and opened new classes in the lower secondary grades, and yet there are only ten educational missionaries, a third of whom are usually on furlough. The new college reports 190 students but there were 420 applicants for entrance... the Normal Teacher's Training School reports a good year with ninety students registered, including five girls... A course in agriculture was carried on at Metet, which is being reorganized into the Metet Rural Training Institute, in line with the Board's 1952 emphasis on Christian-Community Services."²

3. Medical Work

Faith in old superstitions has been destroyed since the white doctor has accomplished more than the medicine man. The old African stands in deepest awe when he beholds the miracles done in Mission hospitals. Cases

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1952, p. 61.
2. Ibid., pp. 61-63.

of sleeping sickness, syphilis, tuberculosis, leprosy, pneumonia, malaria, itch, ulcers, yaws, tumors, elephantiasis, and filariasis are daily treated by the mission doctors who are limited only by time and strength.

a. Early Medical Missions

In 1894 one doctor at Batanga Station reported that within six months he had made 259 calls, had treated 1,080 cases in the dispensary, and had performed seven capital, 150 major and 450 minor operations. He expressed his great joy in the soul refreshing times spent while kneeling beside his patients in the tiny dispensary or in their homes. Most of the people were already placing great confidence in the "Mission Doctor."¹ However, the natives often failed to bring the sick until a few native medicines had been tried or the patient was almost dead.

The daily routine in the Mission hospitals has always begun with religious worship in the vernacular. In some stations the natives who desired treatment were expected first to be present at morning prayers.

b. National Assistants

As early as 1924 the Mission maintained hospitals at Benito, Efulan, MacLean, Metet and Sakbayeme, and a large central hospital at Elat. By 1937 many nationals had been trained to assist the medical doctor. Later these

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1. Annual Report of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 1894, Vol. LXVII, p. 26.

trained men and women were sent to take full charge of the medical out-posts under mission supervision. The native staff did practically all the laboratory examinations, the dressings, sterilizations, preliminary physical examinations and diagnoses, filling of prescriptions, and admitting of patients. At this time there were also Itinerating Clinics, Leper Colonies and Orphan Babies Colonies. The inpatients totaled 6,417; and 431,289 treatments were given to thousands of these sufferers in the five hospitals with a total of 660 beds.¹

c. Medical Centers

The West Africa Mission now has ten medical centers. Efulan functions as a dispensary in charge of an African medical assistant. The medical assistant and the nurses keep the dispensary going. Many of the patients are in the maternity ward, for the African woman realizes the value of hospital care instead of the methods of the old-time village midwife.²

The hospital at Nkol Mvolan now has beds for twenty patients and often patients have built little thatch lean-tos in order to have a roof over their heads when the housing conditions were inadequate at the hospital. Many times members of the family accompany the patients to the

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1. "Our Physical Pulse," The Drum Call, April 1937, Vol.XVI, p. 20.
2. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 14.

hospital to take care of them.¹

Clinics have been opened and many have been impressed with the work, including the daughter of a headman who was allowed to come to the station and study to be a nurse even at her request.²

Ibong Hospital is under the leadership of an African medical assistant trained at Sakbayeme Hospital. In 1951 a missionary doctor arrived at Batouri to oversee the work there and that of Momjepom. There is a fifty-bed hospital at Foulassi which is always full. African nurses do the nursing and help in the pre-training school for nurses.³

McLean Memorial Hospital, the oldest hospital in the mission, is run by African medical assistants and nurses. Missionary doctors at Central make regular visits for operations and consultations.⁴

The 150-bed hospital at Metet serves a large and populous area. Clinics for babies and pre-school children increase yearly; two leper colonies are supervised; and untainted leper children are cared for at the hospital nursery until they are old enough to be placed in homes in the villages. There is also a Nurses' Training School at Metet

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1. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 14.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
4. Ibid., p. 16.

and a training school for medical assistants with about ten students enrolled.¹

Two mission doctors and one mission nurse care for the Bafia Hospital which is always full. The Baby Clinic is helpful to many mothers. There is a pre-training school for medical assistants and a nurses' training school. The following report from Bafia gives a picture of the work:

The number of operations performed on each operating day was limited to the number of beds available. By the end of February, we were more than a month behind in operating those who had paid for their operations. For the next two months we refused to accept payment on new patients, except for emergencies, of which we had plenty. This was necessary because these patients, most of whom had come from quite a distance, after having paid for their operations, did not have enough money left to buy their² food while waiting a month or more for the operation.

More Africans are treated at the Sakbayeme hospital than in any other mission hospital in Africa. The hospital has 200 beds and one doctor who is aided by African medical assistants and trained nurses. A medical assistants' and nurses' training school are run by the hospital.³ One hundred and fifty lepers in the colony near the hospital are cared for by the doctors and nurses, aided by the American Leprosy Mission.⁴

The largest and best equipped hospital is the

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1. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 17.
2. Ibid., loc. cit.
3. Ibid., p. 18.
4. Ibid., loc. cit.

Central Hospital at Elat. This 230-bed hospital for African patients is always filled. There is a staff of three American doctors, two nurses, a dentist, thirty African assistants and twenty-five African nurses. There is a training school for nurses and one for medical assistants. Those who complete the entire course are competent to handle almost any case, including major surgery.¹

Central Hospital, with the help of the American Leprosy Mission has organized four leper colonies which are run on the voluntary segregation basis. They are organized as far as possible along the lines of the native village, with a headman, a chapel, and a school. There is a home for the children of leper mothers.²

The Dental Clinic is housed in a beautiful, modern, brick building and receives many patients every month.³

In each Mission hospital, evangelism and medicine are combined. The doctors feel that the function of the mission hospitals is medical evangelism and not merely humanitarianism.

4. Industrial Work

a. Early Mission Industry

When work in the Cameroun first began, the missionaries often found it necessary to spend much time

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1. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 18.
2. Ibid., p. 19.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.

in the building program which increased as new stations were opened with their demands for living quarters, hospitals, and schools.

In 1894-95 a missionary mechanic was sent to Africa to train some of the young men in various forms of industry. The natives were eager to make useful things for themselves and soon learned that if they wanted anything they had to make it themselves. They were not industrious by nature because it was not necessary to work in their primitive style of living. Therefore, the Mission found industrial education necessary in helping the Cameroun people raise their low standards of living.¹

b. Frank James Industrial School

An industrial school was begun in 1908 with two Bulu boys in the carpenter class doing the repair work of the station, and a few boys in the tailor class working with cheap cloth and a second-hand sewing machine. In the following years the Frank James Industrial School, as it was named, was producing coats, doors, windows, houses, rattan furniture, and ivory products. The gross output of the school in 1923 was about \$35,000. New classes included shoe making; tanning; general machine, garage, and blacksmithing shop; agriculture; manufacture of rattan furniture, ivory novelties, pith helmets, hats and caps; and brick-

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1. F. H. Hope: "The Frank James Industrial School, 1908-1923," The Drum Call, October 1923, Vol. II, p. 1.

laying. The wives of the men of the school had classes in Bible, sewing, hygiene, and care of children. Every teacher in every department was Bulu.¹

The Acting Director of the School reported the following in 1952:

At Frank James Industrial School, the students, as a part of their training have worked in the sawmill including running the logs through the saw and operating the big Diesel engine, made doors and windows in the carpenter shop, laid bricks, made a cement tile roof, made 200 desks for mission schools, cemented the floors of four classrooms for the Elat French school, as well as making several thousand cement blocks. A class in accounting was an innovation during the year...Each student has kept a detailed account of the operations of the Industrial school by departments, including a quarterly calculation of the profit and loss of each department and the net balance in the assets and liabilities accounts of the school..²

The main purpose of the Industrial School has been "to build men of Christian character, committed to the service of their communities."³ Many of the students have been staunch evangelists as well as good tradesmen. They have started Christian groups in the villages where they have gone to work.⁴

5. Language and Literary Work

a. Language School

When the first missionaries went to French Cameroun, there was no written language. The drum served as

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1. Hope, op. cit., pp. 1-5.
2. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, pp. 9-10.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
4. Now in Cameroun West Africa, The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States Of America.

radio and newspaper. In 1911 the new missionaries were spending two hours a day with Africans associated in language study, and were granted voting privileges in the mission only after passing two examinations at six-month intervals. Now there is a language school on the field for new missionaries.¹

b. Halsey Memorial Press

The Halsey Memorial Press made it possible for the mission to progress in literature from a few verses of Scripture to some twenty-five books and pamphlets by the year 1942. Ten million printed pages were produced in 1946.² These publications are important from the evangelistic viewpoint because the literature has the sole purpose of evangelizing the race.³ The regular publications of the Halsey Memorial Press now include: the Drum Call; the Bulu and Basa Sunday School quarterlies; monthly newspapers in Basa and Bulu; tracts; books; and church and hospital forms.⁴

c. Laubach Literacy Campaign

Under the plan of the Laubach Literacy Campaign, scores of women are able to read the Laubach Primer. In the 1952 Metet report the progress in literacy is described

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1. Christian Action in Africa, Report of the Church Conference on African Affairs, p. 99.
2. "Bulu Land," The Drum Call, April 1947, Vol. XXVI, p. 20.
3. John H. Bradford: "The Halsey Memorial Press," The Drum Call, October 1923, Vol. II, pp. 16-17.
4. "Wanted: One Printer", The Drum Call, January 1950, Vol. XXIX, p. 12.

as follows:

An unofficial poll in several churches among church people reveals about a 50% illiteracy. The churches therefore are making an effort to teach illiterates to read. Thus far 500 copies of Laubach's primer have been sold, about 100 people have received the certificate for having learned how to read, and as a result, the sale of Bibles and other Christian literature has increased. One woman taught herself to read in three weeks. She is reading the Bible now and has organized a class of learners, one of whom has already received the certificate.¹

E. Other Protestant Mission Societies

Other mission societies which have shared in the evangelization of French Cameroun are the Sudan United Mission, the Norwegian Mission, the Seventh-day Adventists, and the West Africa Mission.

1. Sudan United Mission

An internationally-supported Society in the Cameroun which works with the Norske Misjonselskop Society is the Sudan United Mission. In 1952 this Mission had fifty places of worship and 850 communicants. The total Christian Community numbered 2,500 and many of these came from Moslem territory. Another Society working in the same territory at Nord and at Garoua is the American Lutheran Brethren.²

2. Norwegian Mission

The Norwegian Mission has opened thirty schools

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1. Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1952, p. 64.
2. E. J. Bingle: World Christian Handbook, 1952 Edition, p. 83.

near N' Gaundere. Twenty-two missionaries work in the six principal stations and the fifty outposts where there are one thousand members of the church.¹

3. Seventh-day Adventists

The doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventists differs from that of the other Protestant Mission Societies found in French Cameroun. Therefore, they are unable to work closely together in their missionary efforts. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has grown to the number of two thousand Christians. The mission territory is divided into five territories with principal stations at Maroua, Batouri, Nanga-Eboko, Sangmelima and Kribi. Four thousand pupils are enrolled in the four central and one hundred village schools.²

F. Summary

The chapter revealed that during the years of growth and expansion in French Cameroun the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society has continued the work of the Basel Mission and advanced into the Interior, establishing schools and hospitals. The German Cameroun became French Mandated Territory in 1916. For the Missions this brought the problem of finding French teachers and staff workers and of changing the entire school system.

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1. Guernier, op. cit., p. 386.
2. Ibid.

It was discovered that the principal Mission Societies working in French Cameroun are The Sudan Mission, working with the Moslems; The Norwegian Mission, working near N'Gaundère, the Seventh-day Adventists, with five territories and 2,000 members; and the West Africa Mission, which has a more extensive program in evangelism, education, medicine, industry, and literary endeavors.

The chapter revealed the fact that the West Africa Mission has sought to evangelize and educate by training and utilizing indigenous forces. The Gospel has been eagerly received and Cameroun Christians have been active evangelists. The churches and the schools are now under the direction of African leaders. The Mission believes the Government will soon assume the entire responsibility of all primary education.

It was discovered that superstitions are abandoned as hospitals and clinics accomplish what is impossible for the witch doctors. Ten medical centers care for thousands of Africans and train nurses and medical assistants. Leper colonies, Dental Clinics, Baby Clinics, Orphan Homes and homes for children of leper mothers have been established.

It was pointed out that training in industry, as well as Christian living, has been accomplished at the Frank James Industrial School. The Halsey Memorial Press has yearly increased their production of literature with the purpose of evangelizing the Cameroun people; but all the requests for Bibles have not been filled.

It was discovered that scores of women are learning

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An unofficial poll in several churches revealed about fifty
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CHAPTER III

DETERMINATIVE FACTORS OF FUTURE GROWTH

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DETERMINATIVE FACTORS OF FUTURE GROWTH

A. Introduction

Great progress has been made in the development of a self-supporting and self-propagating Protestant Church in French Cameroun. This progress has been made in spite of some difficulties and obstructing elements found throughout the past history of Protestant Missions in that area.

The purpose of this chapter is to present some of the prevalent influences which are now considered by many authorities to be the factors which will affect the growth of the French Cameroun Church in the future. This will be attempted with the realization that it is impossible to make definite statements regarding the future growth of the Church or the definite factors which will chiefly determine that growth.

B. Governmental Attitude Toward Missions

From the beginning of Protestant Missions in French Cameroun to the present time, governmental attitude towards Protestant Missions has been favorable. During the German rule the governmental officials were courteous, cordial, and looked to the Missions for the teaching of the natives to speak, read, and write the German language fluently, and for

teaching the natives a trade.¹

The government was changed in 1921 when the Cameroun was allotted to France as a mandate by the Treaty of Versailles and again when the land became a United Nations Trusteeship in 1946.² It is now governed by a Commissioner who is assisted by an Administrative Council, to which African members are elected. The Commissioner is directly responsible to the Minister of Overseas France. The trusteeship guarantees the population freedom from forced labor, control of traffic in arms or alcohol, liberty for organized labor, and freedom of conscience and religion.³

Further protection of the government which is related to the interests of the Protestant Missions is outlined in Article Ten in the Treaty Series No. sixty-six, in the 1947 Text of Trusteeship Agreement as Approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations:

The administering authority shall ensure in the Territory complete freedom of thought and the free exercise of all forms of worship and of religious teaching which are consistent with public order and morality. Missionaries who are nationals of States Members of the United Nations shall be free to enter the Territory and to reside therein, to acquire and possess property, to erect religious buildings and to open schools and hospitals throughout the Territory.⁴

G. C. Beanland, in his 1942 review of the American Presbyterian Mission, reported the following concerning

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1. Annual Report of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, U.S.A., Vol. LIX, p. 22.
2. The World Almanac and Book of Facts for 1952, p. 321.
3. Haynes, op. cit., p. 229.
4. Treaty Series No. 66 (1947), The Cameroons Under French Administration.

government relations:

Our relations with the Government have been very cordial and satisfactory, in fact, we know of no circumstance that has arisen to disrupt the harmonious spirit of co-operation and amicable feelings which have characterized our relations during the several years past...it is an incentive to us to so conduct ourselves and our work as to merit such commendation at all times.¹

The French Government now recognizes the missions' value to the country, and their right to continue there. This involves certain corresponding recognitions from the missionary bodies.² The 1952 Presbyterian Foreign Mission Report from Cameroun states the present governmental attitude and influence on Cameroun Protestant Mission in these words: "There are absolutely no government restrictions, no open opposition except by the forces of evil."³

C. Problems of Indigenization

Socially and politically, French Cameroun is now developing with great rapidity. The same growth is true in the industrial and economic fields. Young people are leaving the interior and coming to the cities to look for more remunerative work with the Europeans. The church loses contact with them and they become victims of moral disorder which is the result of social uprooting. Other changes include

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1. G. C. Beanland: "A Bird's Eye View of the Mission for 1941," The Drum Call, April 1942, Vol. XXI, p. 2.
2. Julian Huxley: Africa View, p. 359.
3. Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1952, p. 60.

the political evolution of the country, increasing business schemes and syndicates, and race problems. The indigenous Church has not developed at the same pace as this evolution and is therefore inadequately prepared to meet these problems.¹

French Cameroun has needed a strong, free Church, and Christian leaders to accept the many calls which have come from the expanding program of the various Missions. Protestant Missions have been effectively training ministers, lay evangelists, and their wives to be leaders in this indigenous, self-supporting and self-propagating African Church.² Yet, many native ministers are woefully ill-equipped for their work; having only elementary education and catechist's training.³ Theological seminaries of the various denominations are understaffed and have poor facilities. The libraries are small and most of their works have been done in African languages. However, the theological teaching has been outstanding although general knowledge is limited in the training of theological students.⁴

Another difficulty of the national Christian leaders who are the hope of the indigenous church, is the problem of financial insecurity. Some well-trained leaders shrink before the small salary provided by the free-will

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1. Jean Rene Brutsch: "A Glance at Missions in Cameroon," The International Review of Missions, July 1950, Vol. XXIX, p. 306.
2. Ante, pp. 23-25.
3. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 29.
4. Ibid., loc. cit.

offerings of the church. Some also hesitate to leave the larger cities and venture out to the pagan areas where the need is so great.¹

Tribalism is also a deterrent to the evangelistic efforts of the native pastors and evangelists. Jean Ava Ava states this problem: "...Pastors of the same tribe contend for positions near their own home towns betraying the work to which they were called..."² Often the work of these evangelists includes Bush School teaching as well as the service of preaching in the native tongue. Furthermore, the limited salary often makes it necessary for these men to have a supplementary occupation which absorbs much of their time.³

Within the church there are problems which the American and European missionaries have introduced by imposing western individualism and American leadership upon the Cameroun Church. A. L. Warnshuis made the following suggestion at the Church Conference on African Affairs:

The true indigenous church uses the things that are natural and familiar in its own environment. This is what we ought to realize and let that church develop in those natural ways.⁴

The Missions have planned definite steps to rearrange the whole program of their churches in order to

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1. Emory Ross: African Heritage, p. 105.
2. Jean Louis Ava Ava: "Africa Seen By An African," The Drum Call, July 1952, Vol. XXXI, p. 21.
3. Brutsch, op. cit., p. 308.
4. Christian Action in Africa, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

offset the deadening and sterile over-organization which is developing.¹ At the same time, they realize the need for extensive itineration in distant, neglected areas and more individual contacts in direct evangelism.

The Cameroun Christians readily accept the positions of church government and demand their "human rights". There is a tendency to lash out more and more against all things white and foreign, including the church.¹ Many feel that the church has not done all it could to assure the Cameroun people the full use of the Western principle of human rights or the right to choose, formulate, and administer their own human rights.²

Edwin W. Smith stated the following in the Conference on African Affairs:

It is the African Church that will ultimately rule and decide its own destiny. We have to look forward to that. There are two safeguards that will ensure that the Christian Church will remain faithful to the Gospel of Christ. First of all there is the continuous, patient, painstaking teaching of the members of the church. Keep them close to the Bible and they will not go far wrong. Secondly, you and I believe that the Holy Spirit of God is active in the lives of us all. Surely the Spirit of God is working in the hearts of the Christians over there.³

D. Threatening Outside Influences

Chief among the threatening influences which are

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1. Ross, op. cit., p. 4.
2. Ibid., p. 6.
3. Christian Action in Africa, p. 73.

already at work in hindering the Gospel in French Cameroun, or which may exercise this practice in the future are: Roman Catholicism, Islam and Communism. These will be considered because they are the most aggressive in opposing missionary endeavours.

1. Roman Catholicism

The German Catholics began work at Douala in 1890. In 1901 they moved inland to Yaounde and also established themselves at Kribi near Batanga. During German rule the Protestants and Catholics had their own territories by governmental arrangement. The splendid work of the German Roman Catholics included an industrial program teaching tailoring, masonry, carpentry and printing, and a fine educational work.¹

During the past century the Roman Catholic Church has done little to improve the temporal and educational status of the mass of Cameroun people or to aid them in the fullest enjoyment of freedom. She has made common cause with certain economic groups by huge investments of church funds in their colonial businesses and has developed exclusive and dominating political ties with certain governments. To the minds of the Africans these actions have brought great concern and questioning about the Christian church's effective support of human rights.²

By 1936 Roman Catholicism had spread throughout

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1. Christian Action in Africa, pp. 151-152.
2. Ross, op. cit., p. 6.

French Cameroun. P. J. May, one of the Protestant missionaries, said:

Every step of our missionary enterprise here is contested by the Roman Catholic Church...One wonders whether any Roman Catholic Mission in Africa has gone on record for a translation of the Bible in the dialect of the people whom they serve. Should one be surprised then to find that many Roman Catholic converts get no farther than the phase of Natural Religion with its trail of Animism, and the usual offspring, Fetichism and Idolatry?¹

The division of Christians into Protestant groups and Roman Catholic orders of priests and nuns and lay workers is incomprehensible for the African. When the question of the division between Roman Catholics and Protestants was mentioned in the presence of a Catholic African and a Protestant African, they declared they were brothers and stated: "We will not allow the Catholic and Protestant divisions of our European Christians to divide us."²

Catholicism appeals to the people in French Cameroun because its authoritative and hierarchical structure resembles their traditional African social and religious pattern. The ritual, vestments, relics, the rosary, the medals, and the little pieces of "Mary's dress" worn by many African Catholics are welcomed, external symbols of what the African feels to be related to his tribal religion fetishism. The Roman Catholic can also

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1. P. J. May: "The Religious Complexion of the French Cameroun," *The Drum Call*, July 1936, Vol. XV, p. 18.
2. Haynes, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

give to the priests and nuns the ecclesiastical authority commensurate with the European rank, and at the same time retain complete control of all African clergy and members in the hands of the higher hierarchy. The Africans approve of this action which is not practiced so freely among Protestants. One problem which accompanies this freedom is the celibacy required of African men and women who take many of their religious vows and orders. Some feel that modifications should be made in relation to Africa.¹

In 1950 the Roman Catholic Church was making strenuous efforts throughout French Cameroun. New priests and nuns arrived until the Roman Catholic Missionary forces outnumbered by ten to one those of all the non-Roman churches combined. At the same time, the number in the African Roman Catholic priesthood was small because the standard demanded was high and the maintenance of celibacy was not easy.² Furthermore, the Catholics have established their full seminary training procedures for African clergy for practically all their African areas. This was possible through the authority in the hierarchy channeled from the pope.³

Africa, at the present time, continues to be the major Catholic Mission region for growth. Approximately three out of every five converts recorded are from this field.⁴

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1. Ross, op. cit., pp. 90-91.
2. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 27.
3. Ross, loc. cit.
4. John J. Considine: "Missions of the Catholic Church," The International Review of Missions, April 1949, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 176.

In relation to the problem which the Catholic Church imposes upon Protestant missionary efforts, the following was recommended in the report of the Church Conference on African Affairs:

Irrespective of the treatment that we may receive at their hands, the Gospel imposes upon us the obligation of treating all people as potential brothers in Christ. We must continue to seek to have friendly relations with Roman Catholics as individuals, and we are grateful for the success with which our efforts in that direction have been rewarded. But domination by the Roman Catholic Church as a political power is a danger which imperils the existence and curtails the growth of the young Protestant Church in Africa.¹

2. Islam

Muslim preachers from Arabia first entered Africa in 638 A. C. After conquering Egypt in 641 A. D., they began their advance into the Interior.² The advance was not through organized missionary activity, but through immigration, political conquest or holy wars, trade and cultural assimilation. Gradually there were cases of intermarriage which aided in spreading Islam. Strong Hamitic tribes who became Muslims, fought "holy wars" among negroes for the purpose of political domination or slave-raiding. When the new Muslim government was established and relations with the Negroes became peaceful, the Negroes began to be effected by the higher civilization and new religion of the invaders. The new religion continued to

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1. Christian Action in Africa, p. 154.

2. Howard R. Jordan: The Mohammedan Missionary Penetration of Africa, pp. 2-3.

spread as a result of trade, conquest, marriages, prestige, mosque schools, the living witness of Muslims to their faith, the social and religious superiority of the Muslim invaders; the African's realization that there was no color discrimination in Islam; and the African's recognition of the superiority of the Muslim culture and manner of life in their communities.¹

By 1948 sixty million Muslims were in Africa.² Reports from French Cameroun Mission stations reveal the Islamic influences as early as 1924.³ Bafia mission is now on the edge of Islam territory, close to a strong Islam in all of the North of Cameroun. Each commercial city in the south now has its Muslim quarters.⁴

Islam in French Cameroun has conformed to its environment; it has adopted African forms of religion to the degree that it has almost become an indigenous religion. Some tribes who profess to be Muslim have Islamic social and political characteristics but also use Muslim religious expressions for their old tribal religion with ancestors, nature god, and magic.⁵ However, in many cases the African readily accepts the Muslim Allah, a personal God who is Lord of the universe and of all its powers, as well as God of the individual. They are attracted to the direct and

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1. Diedrich Westermann: Africa and Christianity, pp. 114-116.
2. Walter Fitzgerald: Africa, p. 78.
3. W.C. Johnston: "Our Relation to 'the Debt'," The Drum Call, January 1924, p. 7.
4. Glenn M. House: "His Face Towards Mecca," The Drum Call, July 1951, Vol. XXX, p.
5. Westermann, op. cit., p. 117.

unconditional promises which require only a confession of faith which can be pronounced in less than a minute. No systems of doctrine are imposed upon them; no regeneration of the heart is required: and no charms, superstitions, nor immoral lives must be changed when one becomes a Muslim.¹

W.R.S. Miller, who worked for years among Muslims, describes the influence of Islam:

The lack of all home life; the utter prostitution of virtue; the total disregard of morals; all these have brought moral degradation to the people... polygamy, of course, is the law; only lack of wealth prevents men from having four wives and as many concubines as possible. Divorce for anything is permissible--for a quarrel, sickness, infirmity, poverty, or worse. The youngest girls are taught the worst vices; innocence and purity are rare. Boys and girls grow up in the densest atmosphere of sin, and all this under the strictest adherence to the outward laws of Islam.²

Another writer, Howard R. Jordan, who did research work on Islamic missionary penetration of Africa, sums up the advantages of Islam in Africa as follows:

It has introduced an element of progress in the social and intellectual sphere, it has raised the standard of morality among the pagans, it has created a sense of the worth of the individual, and, to a certain extent, it has brought about the suppression of evil customs.³

Today, Christianity has the advantage of being the religion of the white man, who symbolizes progress. The modern youth may not accept Islam, but if he is already

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1. Westermann, op. cit., pp. 120-121.
2. Church Missionary Society: "Moslem Lands," p. 57.
3. Jordan, op. cit., p. 126.

a Muslim, neither will he readily exchange his faith for Christianity. Young Muslims attend mission schools to acquire Western knowledge, but Islam has such a firm hold on its followers, they are impervious to other religious influences.¹

Recently Protestant Missionaries have been encouraged by the interest Muslim traders have shown in Gospel recordings² and Protestant Biblical movies.³

Islam has not been favored by the French government which is opening schools among the Muslims and excluding everything Islamic from the curriculum. They teach in French and refuse to use Arabic language because it is the "vehicule de l'Islam". Charles de Foucauld, the soldier-monk of the Sahara wrote: "If we have not made Frenchmen of these people, they will drive us out. The only way for them to become French is by becoming Christian."⁴

3. Communism

One of the factors which will influence or obstruct the growth of Protestant missions in French Cameroun is Communism. There has been little progress in Stalinist Communism in Africa, but its proclamation of the brotherhood of all men is appealing to the natives who desire to

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1. Chester A. Whittier, Letter to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, December 1952.
2. Mary E. Hunter, Letter to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, December 1952.
3. Edwin W. Smith: The Golden Stool, p. 246.
4. Diedrich Westermann: The African Today and Tomorrow, p.302.

be equal with all men.¹ Although Africa is not communist in the sense of being Stalinist communistic, she is communalistic. This is true in the traditional way of life. There is communal ownership of land within the tribal groups, and barter economy. Social affairs, education, recreation and political organization are almost completely communal. Throughout this communalism there is the controlling factor of a belief in a higher being, in God, and in the animistic religion.²

Emory Ross, an expert on African affairs, makes the following distinction between animistic communalism and Stalinist communism:

In the animistic communalism of Africa there is a place everywhere for God or for gods. There are few, if any, African tribes which do not have some conception of God, and the animistic religion is the illumination and guide of all their communal life. In Stalinist Communism God is completely out (unless one calls communism a religion) has no role in life. Africa has an Animistic Communal society such as nearly all peoples have possessed in their primal years. But that in itself portends no special danger of its being a Stalinist Communist society.³

African animistic communalism includes superstitions, oppression, terrorism, and gives the individual small freedom. However, its solidarity has enabled the existence of man. It accepts Christianity more readily than Stalinist communism because Biblical Christianity is

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1. Diedrich Westermann: The African Today and Tomorrow, p. 302.
2. Ross, op. cit., p. 80.
3. Africa Committee of the Division of Foreign Mission National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.: Africa is Here, p. 135.

a saving fulfillment of the best promises glimpsed in animism, without the hate and terror of communism. Furthermore, Christianity believes in the existence of a God while the Communists reject the idea of God and seek to destroy religion among its subjects.¹

Throughout Africa the communists make material, political and social promises, but the greatest promise in the eyes of the African is the promise of complete freedom in regard to color discrimination. The African has no knowledge of the communist denial of God and spiritual control of life; he can only hear the great promises from behind the Iron Curtain.²

The possibility of Stalinist Communism invading Africa has been summed up in the following statement by Ross:

Africa need never become communist unless the individual and group acts of yourself and myself, of millions of Christians in North America, Europe, and Africa, fall so grievously short of being really Christian, that the African, embittered at these failures and hopeless of "white man's" Christianity, turns in desperation to communism. This would be to go completely against African tradition and belief by rejecting God and by repudiating any spiritual reign over society. It would be repugnant and soul-baffling to many Africans. But it can happen.³

Ross states further the necessary action of the Christian community in Africa if Christianity is to win

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1. Ross, op. cit., pp. 80-81.
2. Ibid, pp. 83-84.
3. Ibid. p. 92.

over Stalinist communism:

If the doors are opened widely by literacy, education, literature, by a greatly increased exchange of visits for study, observation, counsel, and friendship, and by an increasing national and international understanding and cooperation, the enabling step will have been taken. But the much harder and more important thing is for Christians to do their utmost to insure that through these wide-open doors the best possible examples of Christian life and action, in every phase of life's work, enter African society."¹

E. Social and Educational Problems

Some of the most outstanding social and educational problems of Protestant Missions which may influence the future growth of the Church are: heathenism, liquor, polygamy, and the status of women.

1. Heathenism

During the early years of the West Africa Mission William M. Dager left Elat to discover the land beyond the forest. Within five days he passed into the great forest where there were pygmies and where unclean spirits were also reputed to live. In nearby villages he saw men with spears in hand, clothed in a few strips of leopard skins, dancing cult dances. From the eaves of the hut hung fetishes which were symbols of spirits feared by the natives.²

By 1923 the African natives were becoming aware

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1. Ross, op. cit., p. 92

2. "Jottings By the Wayside," The Drum Call, July 1923, p. 24.

of the fact that Christianity had been so changing their wives that they could not beat them to force them to sacrifice their chastity to accomodate a friend or pay a servant.¹ Lying was beginning to be considered bad because the white man said that God proclaims it is wrong. There was no sense of guilt or sin when the natives found it necessary to lie. In 1939, dowries were still being given for small girls, and these child-brides were forbidden the privileges of school lest they become Christians and refuse to go to the husbands who had paid the dowries to the fathers.²

Superstition was also prevalent at this time. In one town nearly a dozen natives were suspended from the church roll because they used a mixture of dog's blood and native medicine to ward off sickness. In another town, two polygamous men threatened to harm anyone who came to their homes and advised their wives to become Christian.³

As late as 1948 new superstitions were being added to the existing ones, and as late as 1951 there were a few reports of magic, ritual murders and cannibalism in the pagan areas. Fetish groves with idols, charms and amulets on huntsmen were common.⁴ Throughout these years the Cameroun pagans have believed in a high god who is the

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1. "Jottings By the Wayside," The Drum Call, loc. cit.
2. "Discords--Discouragement," The Drum Call, April 1939, Vol. XVIII, p. 24.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
4. F.J. Pedler: West Africa, p. 42.

creator and father of the other gods they worship. These other gods, of earth, sky, smallpox and water, thunder, the snake god, and nature spirits have shrines dedicated to them for sacrifice and worship. The fetishes found in the huts are considered the dwelling places or representative of the attributes of gods and spirits worshiped by the natives. The magician who communes with the god for the people achieves the status of a priest-chief.¹

In contrast to the great development of Cameroun political, social and economic features in the progressive areas, there has been an apparent increase in the practice of witchcraft in some areas. Vernon A. Anderson, who made a study on primitive medicine and witchcraft, writes:

...Western civilization has swept thousands of Africans from their cultural and religious moorings and left them with a devastating sense of insecurity. It is not surprising that some have lapsed into once discarded practices which promise aid. In this there may be a possible peril that an unholy alliance might take place between Christianity and paganism, issuing into voodooism similar to that found in the islands of the Americas.²

2. Liquor

"The increase in drinking is one of the greatest problems of the southern Cameroun these days,"³ Esther M. Bartlett, a missionary at Elat, declared. A similar report comes from Jane E. Williams at Yaounde, who says:

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1. Pedler, op. cit., pp. 42-43.
2. Christian Action in Africa, p. 61.
3. Esther Bartlett, Letter to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, April, 1952.

"..the liquor problem is increasing by leaps and bounds in Africa."¹ This liquor problem has existed from the earliest period of Protestant Missions to the present time.² Jean Louis Ava Ava, an African, has designated alcoholism as one of the ills of the "sick African":

...Marriages are broken, brawlings on every street corner, mortality rates increase, prisons are full, the insane howl in asylums, the wretches flow back into the villages whence they came, employees cannot keep up with their work and teachers in schools are finding it increasingly difficult to cope with the youngsters whose parents were chronic drunkards before the children were born. The European employers know full well that alcohol makes their employees sick and irregular at their tasks but they themselves open bars near the workshops and sell alcohol beverages to their employees.

3. Polygamy

Polygamy, at the present time, as well as in the past, is one of the common features of the social life in French Cameroun. Even Christians are found who maintain that monogamy is merely a European social custom, and the traditional family and social organization of polygamy in Africa should make Africa an exception to this rule in the church.⁴

When the missionary first went to French Cameroun nearly all marriages were polygamist. The number of wives

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1. Jane E. Williams, Letter to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, September 1951.
2. Ante, p. 13.
3. Jean Louis Ava Ava: "Africa Seen By An African," The Drum Call, Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 28.
4. Presbyterian Facts From Cameroun, p. 28.

indicated the wealth of the man and these wives were slaves to their master, without possessions and without rights.¹ Now, due to the strict rule of the Church, polygamy is not characteristic of the practice found among members of the Christian Church.²

4. Status of Women

In French Cameroun there are two types of women: the slave, and the woman who has gained freedom through the teachings of the Gospel.³ In the latter case, Cameroun wives and others are assuming places of prominence and leadership in their homes and in their churches. Wives are becoming co-workers with their husbands in the work of the Church. In the former case men were liberated from the old ancestral customs many years before the women who have remained subject to it. Now, it is almost impossible for a Christian young man to have a home where real communion exists between husband and wife. He is forced to choose between a woman who is well educated, extremely independent, exacting, pretentious and profligate, and one who is uncultured, dulled, and brutalized by the labour imposed upon her. Christian catechists and pastors often have wives who are simply servants.⁴

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1. Mr. and Mrs. George R. Hill, Letter to the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, November 1951.
2. Ante, p. 22.
3. Mary Middlemiss Good: "Wife and Mother," The Drum Call, July 1947, Vol. XXVI, pp. 23-25.
4. Marguerite Mikolasek: "Some Attempts At Femine Education in Cameroon," The International Review of Missions, October 1952, Vol. XXI, p. 493.

Missionaries have endeavoured to teach these women lessons in sewing, hygiene, domestic training, and Bible. The Paris Mission in Cameroun also places great emphases on the education of girls. The establishment at Bamileke is wholly consecrated to this purpose stated by Marguerite Mikolasek:

...the adaptation of the girls to a more highly developed life, more closely conformed to modern ways, is carried out on progressive lines in a carefully graded training.¹

The girls are brought to the school at the ages of six or eight and are never allowed to return home. Parents are invited to entertainments and other functions. They seem to be glad to place their girls in the care of the Christian leaders.²

At Ndoungue there is another boarding-school for girls who live in little "family groups" for three years. They are allowed to spend a month each year at home.³

The parents' attitude toward the schools for girls was described by Mikolasek:

..And the remarkable fact, in Cameroon today, that the parents are pressing the mission to take charge of their children can only urge us further towards the fulfilment of this fundamental task. I do not believe, however, that boarding-schools on too large a scale are desirable. The best course would seem

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1. Mikolasek, op. cit., p.494.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 495.

to be to establish schools accommodating a maximum of from forty to sixty girls, with a team of two unmarried women missionaries, for instance a nurse and a teacher, in charge of each school. It would also seem very important that the girls should not be cut off, for the whole of their school period, from their family background, but that their education should in some way be gradually put to the test by renewal of contact with their home surroundings, thus avoiding the risk that, when they leave school, they will find themselves completely uprooted and estranged from their families. Our purpose is to train Christian girls, Christian wives capable of adaptation to the new life without giving up their own background which, on the contrary, it will be for them to help transform.¹

In the church of French Cameroun may be found adult women who attend the services because of the commands of their husbands. Some have chosen Christianity when forced to choose between Islam and Christianity; and others have become interested because it is 'some new thing'.² They dislike organization and all efforts at evangelization among them must have a rather 'inconsequential air'.³

There is a great need for more women missionaries in evangelistic appointments who have a knowledge of the vernacular and the African life and are willing to devote their time to visitation in the homes for the purpose of teaching and evangelizing the Cameroun women who are not already active in the Women's Groups of the Cameroun Church.⁴

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1. Mikolasek, op. cit., p. 493.
2. M. Mary Senior: "Women in the African Village Church," The International Review of Missions, October 1948, Vol. XXXVII, p. 404.
3. Ibid., loc. cit.
4. Ibid., op. cit., p. 407.

F. Summary

In this chapter it was discovered that the following factors may influence the growth of Protestant Missions in French Cameroun in the future: governmental attitude toward missions, present problems in indigenization, communism and communalism, Roman Catholicism, Islam, heathenism, liquor, polygamy and the low status of women.

The governmental attitude was described as being favorable to Protestant Missions and ensuring them the protection of the government.

It was further indicated that French Cameroun is experiencing great transformation in the political, economic, social and religious life of the people. This presents problems in the progress of indigenization, including: ill-equipped and poorly supported ministers; the introduction of Western individualism and American type of indigenous leadership; over-organization; and the demands for "human rights" by the Cameroun people.

Roman Catholicism was presented as a growing force in the Cameroun as a result of its attractiveness to the Cameroun natives. It was noted that Islam is a degrading influence in the home life and a progressive element in the social and intellectual sphere. Mission schools were described as attractions to Muslim youth who wish to acquire Western knowledge. However, it was pointed out that they will not readily exchange their faith for Christianity.

It was discovered that little progress has been made by Stalinist Communism in French Cameroun, but communalism is characteristic of practically every phase of life. Heathenism, liquor, polygamy and the low status of women were presented as problems which the church is attempting to eradicate through the teachings of the Gospel and Christian living.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to record the history of Protestant Missions in French Cameroun, by revealing their initial efforts, expansion, and present influences and problems which may affect future growth and development.

The first chapter of this thesis was devoted to the early history of Protestant Missions in French Cameroun. It described the establishment of a mission on Fernando Po Island in 1812 by the Baptist Missionary Society, which was a stepping-stone for the evangelization of French Cameroun. It described further the efforts of Alfred Saker at Bethel, the first missionary in the Cameroun; and the contributions of Joseph Merrick at Bimbia in printing and translation work.

Other missions which worked in this early period to spread Christianity into the interior were considered. The work of the Ambas Bay Mission, the Basle Mission, the German Baptist Mission, the Gossner Mission and the American Presbyterian Mission was included. At the same time it showed that Roman Catholicism was making great inroads through education and bribes. Heathenism was also seen to be receding in the lives of the animistic worshippers as they accepted the Christian message and attended the Mission schools.

In the second chapter a study was made of the attainments of Protestant Missions in the fields of evangelism, education, medicine, literacy, and industry. It was discovered that the Paris Evangelical Mission has been active

in these areas since 1919, when Cameroun became a French mandate.

The mission which was proved to have the most extensive work was the West Africa Mission, beginning in 1879 at Efulan with A. C. Good as the director of the first mission station. In the presentation of the activities of this mission, it was revealed that the Gospel was eagerly received and natives quickly spread the message to outlying villages. The Missions were unable to answer the request for teachers and evangelists from these people who wanted to be taught the Word.

Church membership increased by the hundreds each year in spite of the long process of training required before one could become a member of the Church. Throughout the history of the West Africa Mission, the training of evangelists and Christian leaders has been emphasized with the view of a future self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating church.

It was further noted that the West Africa Mission has been successful in educating natives as Christian leaders in their Cameroun villages. The Mission has gradually placed the responsibility of education in the hands of the natives.

Through a study of the medical work of the Mission it was discovered that superstitions and faith in witch doctors have been almost abolished as the African comes into contact with skilled Christian doctors and nurses. Mission

hospitals were presented as busy centers, sometimes unable to care for the increasing number of patients who have developed a confidence in the "white Christian doctor". It was pointed out that the doctors were effective hospital evangelists as well as skilled medical doctors. The supervisors of dispensaries and hospitals in the unreached areas were found to be trained native medical assistants and nurses.

Mission-sponsored industrial education for the natives was described as helpful in raising the living standards of the Cameroun people. At the same time, the students in the industrial schools were receiving Bible training and becoming staunch evangelists and Christian men who have committed themselves to the service of their communities.

The chapter further revealed the progress in language schools for new missionaries and the progress in printing literature at the Halsey Memorial Press. The Laubach Literary Campaign has been instrumental in decreasing the rate of illiteracy in French Cameroun.

Other Protestant Mission Societies which have a less extensive program were presented, including: the Sudan United Mission, the American Lutheran Brethren, the Norwegian Mission and the Seventh-day Adventists. It was discovered that the number of adherents in each one of these missions is increasing and the educational program is advancing.

The third chapter was devoted to a study of the factors which may determine the future growth of the church in French Cameroun. The governmental attitude was described as being favorable to mission work with a freedom to establish missions and schools. This study showed that the governments, both German and French, have realized the advantage of Mission schools, medical centers, and industrial institutions.

A great transformation in the lives of the Cameroun people in political, economic, social and religious areas, was pointed out. It also showed that the present church is unable to meet all the problems involved in these changes. It has the following great needs for future development: more and better trained church leaders who can be financially secure in the church without seeking other means of support; adequate theological seminaries; the absence of American leadership and European imposed western individualism; less sterile organization; more itineration and individual contacts in direct evangelism; and the exercise of self-government.

It was further pointed out that the faithfulness of Christians in the Cameroun Church is dependent upon patient and continuous Bible teaching and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Roman Catholicism was found to be a growing religious body in French Cameroun. However, it was pointed out that their lack of improving the temporal and educational status of the people, and their failure in aiding them in the fullest

enjoyment of freedom has brought reproach upon the Christian Church. It was seen that Protestant missionaries felt the need of friendly relations with the Roman Catholics although there is great danger of Catholic domination as a political power.

The Muslim problem was also considered in its relation to the Protestant cause. It was noted that Islam attracts many natives because it demands little change in these lives and makes great promises for those who accept the faith.

It was shown that Stalinist communism is not likely to invade French Cameroun unless Christians, by their individual and group acts, turn the African away from Christianity to an acceptance of Stalinist communism through frustration. It was discovered that the French Cameroun people practice communalism and have a belief in a higher being in their animistic religion. Liquor, polygamy, and the low status of women still present problems for the church.

In the light of these problems it was pointed out that the Christian Church in the Cameroun should be strengthened and expanded by literacy, education, literature distribution, exchanged visits for Christian and international understanding, and the best possible examples of Christian life and action.

Throughout the study it was shown that the Cameroun people have responded to the efforts of the Protestant missions.

Yet, the challenge to the evangelical Christian Church remains. It is a challenge to every member of the Church of Christ.

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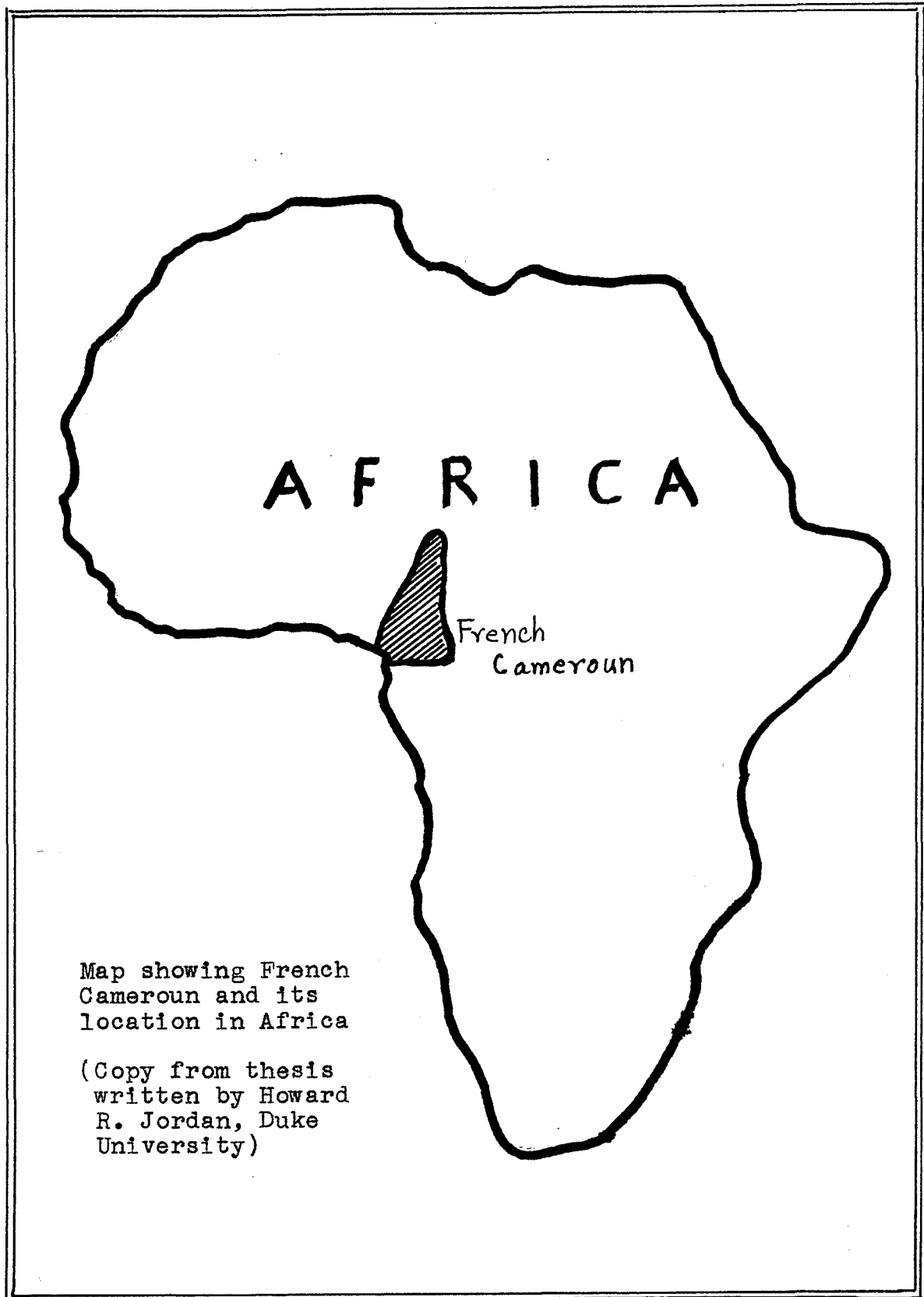
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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A.
Maps

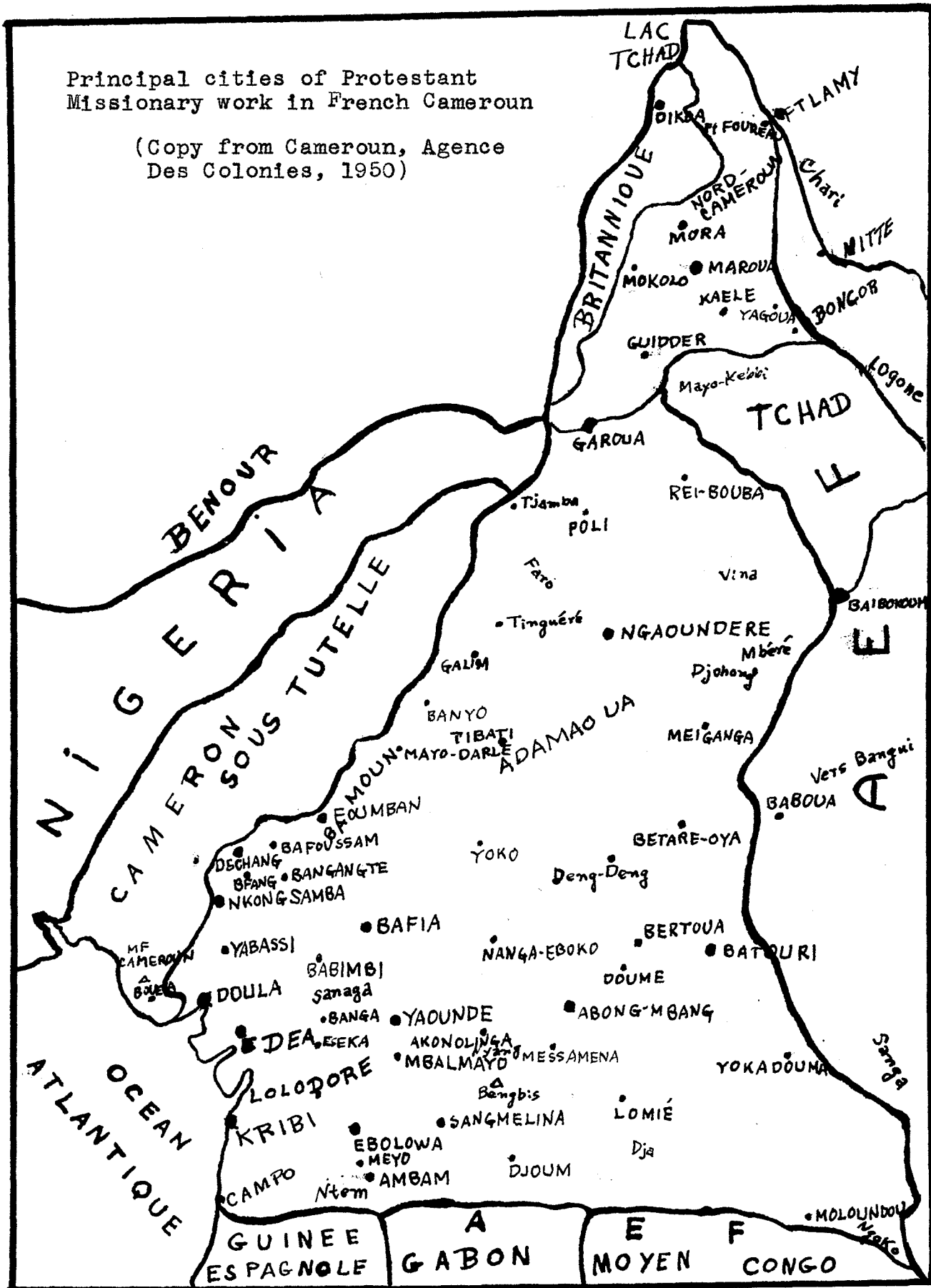


Map showing French
Cameroun and its
location in Africa

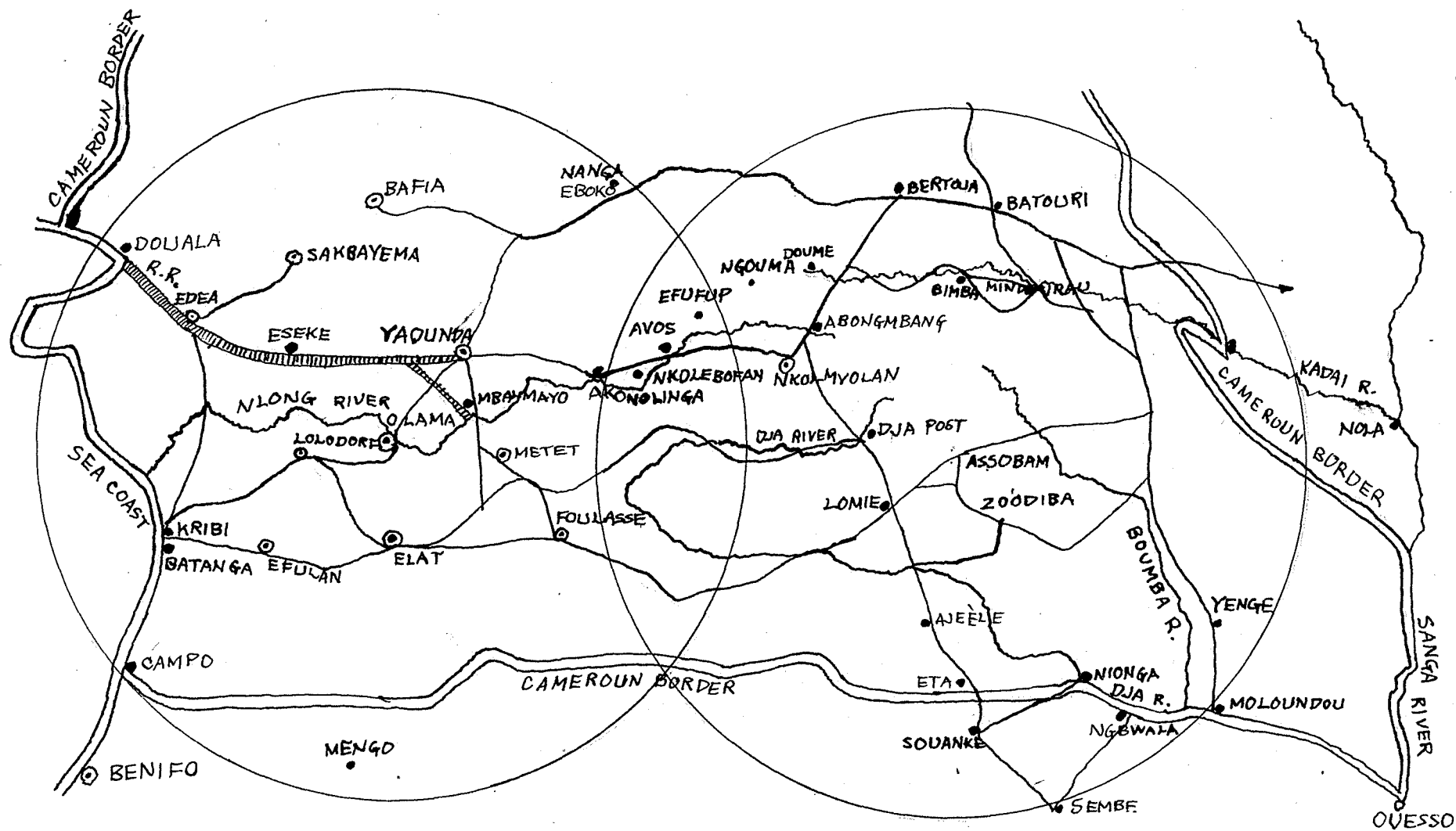
(Copy from thesis
written by Howard
R. Jordan, Duke
University)

Principal cities of Protestant
Missionary work in French Cameroun

(Copy from Cameroun, Agence
Des Colonies, 1950)



100 MILES



Map of the West Africa Mission, showing extensive growth toward the interior since Batanga Station on the sea coast and Efulan and Elat Stations were opened 1889 and 1895.

(Enlarged copy from the Drum Call April 1937)

APPENDIX B.

WEST AFRICA MISSION STATISTICS

| CHURCH | 1944 | 1947 | 1952 |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Organized African Churches | 78 | 89 | 134 |
| African ministers | 61 | 60 | 71 |
| African licentiates | 11 | 9 | 13 |
| Missionary ministers | 25 | 26 | 21 |
| Other church workers-- | | 2,300 | 2,372 |
| catechists | 2,268 | | |
| Communicant members | 40,082 | 46,278 | 75,179 |
| Added on confession | 5,450 | 4,439 | 4,860 |
| Other additions | 3,454 | 3,724 | 3,731 |
| Losses to membership | 5,800 | 6,931 | 7,714 |
| Catechumen | 63,603 | 55,470 | 42,384 |
| Children baptized | 1,575 | 1,883 | 2,769 |
| Number of Sunday Schools | 2,100 | 1,645 | 2,235 |
| Elders | 800 | 975 | 1,110 |
| Candidates for the ministry | 14 | 11 | 16 |

EDUCATIONAL

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Missionary teachers | 12 | 10 | 10 |
| African teachers | 435 | 547 | 600 |
| Kindergarten pupils | 9,450 | 8,016 | 16,000 |
| Primary and Intermediate pupils | 15,250 | 22,846 | 30,300 |
| Middle and High Schools | 1,260 | 1,730 | |
| College students | | 75 | 250 |
| Normal School students | 90 | 75 | 56 |
| Theological students | 7 | 9 | 14 |

MEDICAL

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Missionary doctors | 5 | 6 | 10 |
| Missionary nurses | 9 | 8 | 13 |
| African medical assistants | 124 | 210 | 105 |
| Beds in Hospital | 800 | 850 | 975 |
| Inpatients | 10,250 | 14,271 | 20,500 |
| Individual patients | 63,664 | 80,902 | 92,150 |

The Drum Call
January 1953