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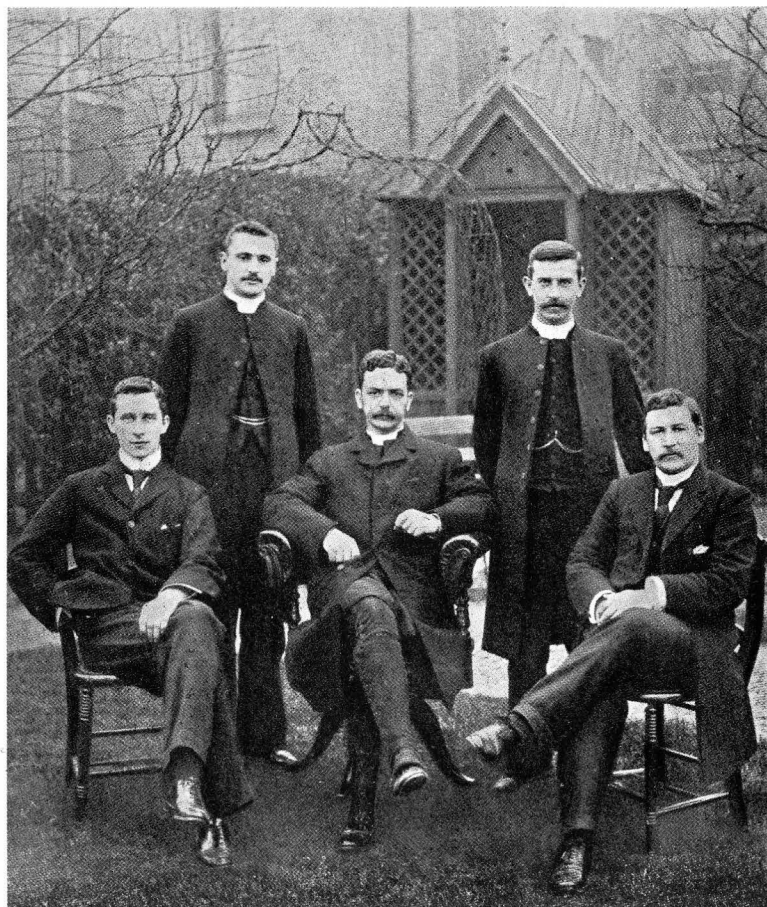


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DR. W. R. S. MILLER                      BISHOP TUGWELL                      MR. J. R. BURGIN  
THE PIONEER PARTY TO THE HAUSA STATES, 1899

*Frontispiece*

# REFLECTIONS OF A PIONEER

BY

W. R. S. MILLER,

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

*C.M.S. Missionary in Northern Nigeria, 1900-35*

WITH A FOREWORD BY

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To  
LORD LUGARD  
AFRICA'S FRIEND

## FOREWORD

**D**R. MILLER has asked me to write a foreword to this book, and I do so with very real pleasure.

To those who have lived and worked for any length of time in Northern Nigeria, as missionary or government official, no introduction of its author is necessary. Indeed, his name will long be remembered by Africans and Europeans alike.

By some he may be remembered chiefly as a great linguist. He says that he conceived it to be his duty to learn to speak Hausa so that some day he should not be detected, when speaking in the dark, by a native of the country. He was commonly reputed to have achieved that standard of proficiency in Hausa-speaking, and he is probably the only European of whom it could ever truly have been said. Others may have had as great or even greater knowledge of the language from a philological standpoint, but he, to an extent achieved by no other European, had the power to express his thoughts in the Hausa manner, to clothe them with the appropriate words and phrases, using just the right tone and faultless pronunciation.

I first went to Nigeria towards the end of 1929, and I took the earliest opportunity of making the acquaintance of Dr. Miller, about whom I had heard so much. I shall not easily forget the sumptuous breakfasts I enjoyed with him on various occasions in his house at Kano, and the opportunities thereby afforded of long conversations with him on a variety of topics. I never got up

from them without a feeling of regret that I could not stay on for lunch, but even an hour or two's conversation with a man who had so extensive a knowledge of the people about whom he was talking, and who brought to each subject a wealth of experience acquired over nearly thirty-five years, was of the greatest value and assistance to me.

The title, *Reflections of a Pioneer*, is a happy choice. The book contains a good deal about the author's life and work in Northern Nigeria, which in the early days were exciting enough for the most ardent adventurer, and cannot fail to inspire others who are thinking of devoting themselves to similar work in Africa and elsewhere. It has also some useful historical background, descriptions of the people, their life and customs, and many an interesting story. But perhaps the most important contribution for the student of African affairs is to be found in the "reflections" which occur on almost every page, and portray the reactions of the author to policies, customs, actions, and events.

Dr. Miller is perfectly frank in the expression of his opinions, and there will naturally be many who do not agree with all his views. If he is sometimes provocative, he is never bitter, and the conclusions of one who has had such wide experience should not be set aside without careful consideration.

He has things to say about native administration, and it will be readily admitted that the final pattern of a political organization has not yet been drawn, because it is of the essence of our policy that there should be continuous progress; what seemed right ten years ago cannot be right to-day in every detail, and what appears to be a satisfactory form to-day must be out of date in

ten years' time. His criticisms of Indirect Rule in Chapter VII may find sympathizers among those who look upon it as a device to give a semblance of authority, in order thereby to exclude the germ of individual freedom on democratic lines. Most readers will be acquainted with the latest exposition on Indirect Rule by Sir Donald Cameron, late Governor of Nigeria. They will be aware that the alternative system – Direct Rule, so called – does not imply all that its name would seem to indicate, as, in view of their comparatively small number, the law cannot be completely administered by European officials, and the most that the higher Administration under either direct or indirect rule can do is to exercise general supervision over African juniors, reserving the more important decisions, both judicial and executive, for European officers.

Readers with experience of the working of indirect administration in Northern Nigeria will make up their own minds as to whether we were right to maintain the form of government found in the country, admittedly a form imposed by the Fulani more than a hundred years ago, and whether or not our pace has been unduly slow in the matter of adapting Koranic law and practice to British ideals of individual freedom, of purging the system of objectionable features, and of moulding it into a form which will admit of cultural and economic development.

On many other subsidiary questions of principle and detail the author “reflects” during the course of this book, which I believe will prove to be a valuable contribution to the literature of Northern Nigeria.

ERIC R. J. HUSSEY



## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

**D**R. MILLER possesses a unique knowledge of life in the Hausa States in Northern Nigeria.

This is no hackneyed tribute to the missionary whose steadfast service has kept him steadily at work in the location in which he was established soon after his offer to the Church Missionary Society in 1897. He weathered successfully all the vicissitudes which deprived him first of one and then of another of the fellow-workers associated with him, from time to time, in missionary service. Government servants, for their part, are subject to such frequent changes of appointment that few could hope to rival the doctor's experience, even after surmounting the particular difficulties of their official position. Apart from these advantages, Dr. Miller's great linguistic gifts, which enabled him to complete the translation of the Hausa Bible while still in active service, have afforded him exceptional opportunities of observation and research.

A record, therefore, of his impressions and of some of the conclusions on political and other matters which he has reached is bound to be of more than domestic interest to his own circle. The Society welcomes him as an author to whom full liberty is due for the expression of personal views and whose opinions must command respect even when they appear to traverse accounts, more commonly accepted, of the evolution of Moslem rule under British tutelage in the emirates of Northern Nigeria. Dr. Miller wrote some of the chapters before he left Nigeria, and the book was completed early in 1936.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

**T**RIPOLI, NORTH AFRICA, 1898.

\* \* \*

“You say you are a Hausa, Hasan.<sup>1</sup> Well! what is a Hausa? Where is his country? What is his language? And why are you here?”

“I lived in a land far away to the south. My country is the home of the Hausas; the language we speak is Hausa; but I was caught, carried away from my land, sold as a slave, and finally brought here.”

“Do you want to go back, Hasan?”

A dreamy, sad look came into the eyes of the evil-looking old man, whose face was covered with scars, and tattooed with many tribal marks, as he said: “*Ai! da nisa! amma Allah shi sa!* (Ah! It is very far off; but may God grant it).”

And here in beautiful Surrey, as I finish the writing of this book, after thirty-five years' work in Hasan's country, I echo his words, and his prayer: “*Ai! da nisa! amma Allah shi sa!*”

The name “Hasan” in Arabic means “beautiful,” and to me, as to that old slave who first taught me Hausa, the land and the people and the language *are* beautiful. Though the material eye cannot pierce the distance, the

<sup>1</sup> Hasan was the name of the eldest of the ill-fated grandsons of the Prophet Mohammed. Since then all twins in all Moslem lands have been “Hasan” and “Hussein.” Hasan is a common name in Northern Nigeria.

memory of the strange beauty of that land lives. Lives also the assurance of a beauty yet to be fully developed in the many Hasans living there, and speaking that alluring African language—Hausa. But where and what is “Hausa”?

Could you have been with me in Ripon in 1897, and met there that great traveller, scholar, and saint, Canon Charles H. Robinson, who long since passed over, you would have listened as I did, and never tired, while he told you of the great land in West Africa, so little known. In his book: *Fifteen Hundred Miles through the Sudan*, you may read a thrilling story of adventure in the land as it was then, now known as Northern Nigeria.

Travellers like Clapperton, Barth, and Baikie, some starting from the Mediterranean littoral, penetrated into this block of Moslem states in the early part of the nineteenth century, and wrote deeply-interesting histories of their journeys. These are standard works, and will never lose their power and wonder as records of adventure. Treaties were made with some of the emirs, or kings, most important of whom was the titular ruler of a large empire, the Sultan of Sokoto, whose grandson was in England not long ago.

But the more recent travels of Robinson appealed with a new and vivid challenge to the Church generally, and to the missionary societies especially; for he claimed that here in this land, twice the size of Great Britain, lived a people well worthy of our deepest interest, and of the evangelizing zeal of the Christian Church. By publishing a dictionary collected with amazing rapidity, a grammar which has since passed through several editions, and some passages of the New Testament in Hausa, he stirred up such interest in

Cambridge that a studentship of Hausa was founded and endowed at the University.

. . . . .

Adventure, empire building, enterprise, and commerce have been the incentives bringing men to West Africa, never pleasure in the first instance. For many years the Royal Niger Chartered Company had been trading in the south of this great land, now called Nigeria, and had penetrated far up the evil, disease-bringing rivers of the east, in an area then known as the Oil Rivers Protectorate. During the last decades of the nineteenth century they had attempted to get into closer touch with the great northern emirates, and conclude trade treaties with them. The slave trade was always the chief difficulty, and constantly led to serious incidents between the trading company and the rulers. The scramble for these potential West African colonies by the Great Powers began after the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, and toward the end of the century Great Britain extended her "protection" over the Hausa States, but at first and for some years only as a "sphere of influence."

The Hausa people, living in West Africa, yet far removed from the other West African peoples by language, religion, culture, law, and customs, were more akin to, and in touch with the countries of the north and east - Morocco and Egypt, and with Mecca. Their history went back to the tenth century, or even further, when Islam first began to civilize their tribes. Some of the emirs can trace their own ancestry and the history of their people for many hundreds of years. They have roots in the past, and have become a people with solid traditions, an international law - that of Islam, a language which is now one of the four most important and

widespread in the whole of Africa, and a real measure of culture and education.

Various peoples have invaded their territory in more modern times. The Jukun tribe, now confined to a very small area near the Benue River, claim to have once ruled the whole Hausa country. It is certain that the Gwari tribe, now very small, once ruled over and gave their folklore to large parts of the land. The Fulani, a nomadic people of herds and flocks, bearing a striking resemblance to the bas-reliefs on old Egyptian monuments, were wandering over the face of all the great plains and river beds, wherever food for their cattle could be found; in the end of the eighteenth century they revolted against their masters, carried their arms and a *jihad* (religious war) throughout the land, and established the empire of Sokoto, which the British found on their arrival.

But "Hausa" have remained the people; and "Hausa" is *the* language.

Arab traders from the north, chiefly from Tripoli, and a constant stream of pilgrims to and from Arabia to the tomb of Mohammed, were the chief links between the Hausas and the outer world until the advent of the British. But the Hausas had some trade with the West Coast, and it was in these coastal districts of Lagos, the Gold Coast, and French Senegal that English and French people chiefly met them.

Theirs is a country of great tablelands and wide-sweeping areas like English parks, with giant trees – the locust bean, the tamarind, and the silk-cotton tree. Further north it becomes also the land of wind-swept plains, scorching hot for one part of the year, when the sirocco wind blows down from the Sahara, but

piercingly cold during the weeks round Christmas, when the sun is nearly blotted out, not by grey mists, but by sand.

Here we see the women coming from the wells with their water pots on their heads as in eastern and Bible lands, and the men sitting on the ground with outstretched legs, sewing. Schools abound in town and village, where boys and a few girls in the open air shout out the portion of the Koran given them to learn by heart.

It was to this land of religion and slave raids, of cruelty and culture, of nature's beauty and sin's ugliness and disease, that the call of God came to the Church Missionary Society in 1896. John Robinson and Graham Wilmot Brooke, who were at Lokoja, had longed and tried to enter it. Nott had succeeded in visiting some of the border villages; others from the north had lost their lives in seeking to pass through and settle in this closed land; but so far none had settled among the people.

While the Government of Great Britain was sending statesmen, soldiers, and experienced administrators to explore the possibilities of this Hausa country: to make treaties of trade, if possible; or to occupy, with intent to administer, if forced; and while commerce was sending ever further into the interior its soldier-administrator-merchants, a small band of five men was being prepared by the Church to go in and live and adventure in the Name of Christ.

Was it the right time? Were we taking the tide at the flood? Or had the call, urgently given by men alive to the need many years before, passed, and was the real opportunity gone?

Those who read this book will judge for themselves by the events recorded.



## CHAPTER II

### THE TEAM AND THEIR PREPARATION

SOME interest is naturally taken in the previous life and history of those who are chosen to form any pioneer group. Together with their training these give the data from which are reckoned their suitability for the special work which, as a team, they are to attempt. But such conclusions are often upset by unrealized factors. This was so with our party; within fifteen months only one member of the original group who sailed for the Hausa country remained in the work.

Our leader was a bishop, a man whose character and ability had marked him out quickly in a West African mission for leadership, and at an early age for a bishopric. I for one, and I believe I express the feelings of all the others, felt fortunate in starting my missionary life under Bishop Tugwell.

Two of our party, the Bishop being one, came from Cambridge. Wadham College, Oxford, gave us one, and the doctor came from St. Bartholomew's Hospital, which, by the way, has an older educational foundation than either Oxford or Cambridge. From business came the man whose patience under unusual difficulty, tact, and all round common sense made it possible for our journey to be accomplished.

A. E. Richardson, of Wadham, was a first-class tennis player, a great worker among school children, and has

since been well known for his work in the Church Army. J. R. Burgin had been in South Africa, was a fine shot, and had a great knowledge of men and a patient disciplined mind.

Claud Dudley Ryder, of Trinity College, Cambridge, was a great-grandson of the first Earl of Harrowby, one of a group of prominent evangelical peers of the nineteenth century. Immediately after his year at Ridley Hall, Claud went to a working-class parish in the industrial north under the Rev. A. B. G. Lillingston, where he was able to test his principles of Socialism. The beauty of a naturally charming character was altogether intensified by this experience; I think his nature had fathomed depths greater than we realized; he had entered into regions of thought where he had been misunderstood, and, with a very sensitive nature, had thus learned closer communion with God. One year was all the time he was with us, and then, "already ripe for heaven," as his mother said to me, he passed on.

Burgin had the training of the hard world, and it fitted him, better perhaps than the life of a university, to "stay" when we nearly wilted. I look back to this stout, agile, little man as a hero, for his Christian practical sense made him the essential member of the party; either of us might have been spared, but not he.

I had been fortunate in having wide opportunities for meeting and getting to understand men of various kinds. A London medical school and hospital can be a rare medium in which to shed fantasies. Summer holidays spent in camp with public schoolboys prepared me for the chief part of my after work, while a year as travelling secretary of the Student Volunteer Missionary Union (a part of the Student Christian Movement) brought me

into deep and intimate touch with the moral and spiritual needs of men in most of the universities, hospitals, and colleges of Great Britain. This was a wonderful year for me, for a large number (I think over a hundred) of men and women during that year gave themselves to God for missionary work. My fellow-secretaries at that time were G. T. Manley, J. H. Oldham, Ruth Rouse, Temple Gairdner, F. O'Neill, Alec Fraser, W. E. S. Holland, and Douglas Thornton. Most of these went abroad for foreign missionary service, and two have died.

After this year's work, at the insistent personal request of Bishop Taylor Smith, of Sierra Leone, afterwards for twenty-five years Chaplain-General, I joined him in Freetown as doctor in charge of the Princess Christian Hospital there - a very bijoux little place. The tragedy as well as the thrill and enterprise of foreign missionary work had to be learnt there; for 1898 saw enacted a terrible rising and rebellion of the native tribes round Freetown, which nearly blotted out a native Christian Church. It was estimated that over three thousand people were cruelly murdered, while several English and American missionaries also were killed, including the Rev. W. J. Humphrey with whom I was living. Fever drove me home from Freetown in time to go with the other two members of our party, Richardson and Ryder, to Tripoli for the study of the Hausa language.

The C.M.S. is very rightly keen on the preparation of its cadets. Sometimes, in looking back, one cannot help wishing that the training had been less academic, more practical. Probably things have moved since then. Hygiene, first aid, the study of comparative religions, phonetics, anthropology, and the understanding of money are obvious studies which should not be omitted

from the training of any missionary. But survey, map making, writing good business letters, a decent ability to deal with varied correspondence, and the keeping of accounts are equally important. The essentials of team work rather than individualism and a knowledge of human nature cannot be taught, only acquired; the school may be hard and rough, but these things are central, and the lack of them prejudices most of the work done. To all those who have anything to do with the C.M.S. I think it is unnecessary to write that a vital knowledge of the Bible, in experience as well as in an up-to-date exegesis, is the one pre-requisite above others.

In the autumn of 1898 we were ready to sail for Tripoli. The C.M.S. showed great wisdom in the selection of this place for our study. The old route of the pilgrimage from Nigeria to Mecca, traversed by thousands of pilgrims for so many hundreds of years, was closed, owing to the fiendish cruelties of an Arab, Rabeh, and his son, Fadar Allah. The pilgrims from Nigeria therefore had changed their route, and now travelled through the Sahara, nearly three thousand miles to Tripoli, to proceed thence, when they had enough money, *via* Alexandria, Cairo, to the coast, and thus across to Jiddah and on to Mecca.

These men, the pick of the Hausa States, were thus available in a very delightful country and climate, only four days' journey from London, to teach us the best Hausa possible. With the help of these charming pilgrim people we all three got through our first language test in record time; and it was here that I registered my determination to make a complete translation of the whole of the Bible into the Hausa language. A beginning was made with the first Epistle of St. John, and I found

even thirty years later that the draft then made needed little alteration. The Hausa language, a very beautiful one with great possibilities, gripped me, and I was quite clear that it was my duty to master it so that some day I should not be detected, when speaking in the dark, by a native of the country.

Those were strenuous days of language study. Rarely did we do less than ten hours a day, and often took our recreation in walks with Hausa boys or men in the desert, alternating this with golf and tennis at the European tennis club, where several languages were spoken by the various consuls and their wives.

Among the Hausas who had made this long journey was a boy called Abdul Majid, who had walked from Katsina in West Africa to Tripoli to do the pilgrimage, or *badj*. His father had died on the way, and the boy, a lad of fourteen, continued the tremendous and wearisome trek in the caravan of several hundreds of pilgrims, and arrived in Tripoli to stay for a few months in our house before going on to Alexandria. He became greatly attached to me, and I tried to keep him; but he was an intensely devout little Moslem, and would not be deflected from fulfilling his vows at Mecca and Medina. He was afterwards with me for many years in Nigeria as a Christian; but of this later.

During that time we obtained a good deal of information about the people, customs, and religion of the country in which we hoped to spend our lives. We also found much that was very interesting and attractive in the character of the people; but of all those whom I knew in Tripoli there were only two, Abdu being one of them, whom I afterwards met in West Africa.

In June, 1899, we returned to England and made

arrangements for the pioneer journey into the interior of what was afterwards to be called Nigeria. Bishop Tugwell was our leader. He would have made an equally good explorer, soldier, or administrator, and in every way was a man to be respected, loved, and followed.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SITUATION IN 1900

THE end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth were crowded with events of the greatest importance in the opening up and development of various parts of Africa. The Sudan, but recently reconquered from as savage a regime as history records, was already becoming the scene of dispute between England and France. At the same time both of these nations were beginning to acquire extensive possessions in West Africa, in addition to those which they already ruled. Friction in the East did not tend to make matters easier in the West. At Zinder, over which France was claiming a protectorate, two traders had been killed, and a punitive French expedition had more than avenged their death. Ashanti, from which Prempeh had been deposed and removed to the Seychelles Islands, was about to make a last bid for freedom in the final little war which took place early in 1900. The South African war, begun with characteristic English lightheartedness, was already proving disastrous for our arms, and severely draining England of some of her best officers. What was to have been the gay promenade to Pretoria in three months, already gave signs of the long drawn out struggle which ended with the Treaty of Vereenigen in 1902. England had been horrified by the unexpected and bloody rebellion and massacre in Sierra Leone in 1897, in which English and

American missionaries were cruelly murdered, and the up-country native members of the Christian churches were either butchered or driven down to Freetown.

In the more immediate vicinity of Nigeria to which the Church Missionary Society was preparing to send a small pioneer band, to work among the Hausa people, events were happening, small compared with those which were engaging the interest of the world, but sufficiently vital to make West Africa, and Nigeria in particular, difficult countries for military or missionary enterprise. Around Lake Chad, in the semi-Arab states which had consolidated their power through centuries of conquest and Moslem civilization, a new conqueror had arrived. This was Rabeḥ, the son of Zubair Pasha, of Sudan fame through his connexion with Gordon; he was making his name a terror to Bornu and the neighbouring states. The generally accepted idea is that Moslem does not make war on Moslem, but Rabeḥ had no such scruples; he added to his slaves and his harem from all and sundry, Moslem and Pagan, and killed all those who were either useless to him or who seemed inclined to assert their rights to live. The old native rulers had been killed or driven out, and the semi-civilized states around Lake Chad had had their populations decimated by indiscriminate slaughter with fiendish cruelty. This was still in process when the British and French forces were getting perilously near to each other in that vicinity. In 1901 I met at Loko Major McClintock who was proceeding under orders with a Hausa force either to destroy or to make terms with this human fury, Rabeḥ. The French, however, had anticipated him and had killed Rabeḥ and his son.

The Royal Niger Company was soon to lay down its



onerous task, and hand it over to a government which could do more than the best trading company. Among its last acts were the big fights through which the two powerful Emirates of Bida and Ilorin had to learn that British government was incompatible with the slave trade. The Royal Niger Company, which had been empowered to employ British officers seconded from their regiments and to levy native troops, had carried on the double function of ruling and trading. This is not the place to enlarge on their activities, but there is no doubt that the Company and its servants laid Nigeria under a heavy debt of gratitude. But the struggle with the powerful and irreconcilable Moslem emirs had entered on a stage in which considerations of State had to weigh more than commerce, and the important battles at Bida and Ilorin had thrown down the gauntlet to the other and more powerful emirates in the interior. The next step in what was to lead to the subjugation of the northern states and the final suppression of the slave trade would be taken by the civil and military representatives of the British Empire, acting directly from the Colonial Office. The man who was to carry through this change had already been building up a reputation second to none in African colonial history, for solid, wise, humane statesmanship. The next few years were to see an experiment unique in European administration, which was to become the pattern for rulers dealing with subject peoples. More will be written on this subject in a later chapter.

It had been vaguely realized, from the writings of Barth, Baikie, Clapperton, and others, that a solid block of Moslem states occupied this territory between the latitudes of  $8^{\circ}$  and  $13^{\circ}$  north; how strongly entrenched

was the slave trade in the hands of Arabs, Senegalese, and Fulani, and how great a struggle for supremacy must inevitably precede the complete break up of these powerful vested interests. Looking back now over a space of thirty-five years, one sees clearly that only British genius for rule and the exceptional ability of one man, Lugard, enabled a handful of officials, political and military, to bring about such momentous changes, and complete a revolution at the cost of so little loss of life, and so little disintegration of the social fabric of the country.

It is necessary to have lived in the environment and endured the conditions in order to understand fully the arrogance, bigotry, and self-confidence, together mixed with supreme ignorance, of the rulers of the peoples of these Moslem states. Their isolation from the world was almost hermetic, and only the merest breaths of information stole in through the few not quite closed doors. From the north, through the Sahara, came intrepid Arab traders, mainly from Tripoli, then from Turkey, and also from Morocco. These naturally, as Moslems, brought ridiculously exaggerated reports of the power and influence of Islam in the world, as represented by the Sultan of Turkey. Fantastic now seem the crude, distorted ideas which had percolated through of white men supposed to live in the water, only emerging from time to time for purposes of trade, sightseeing (*sic*), and travel—people known as “Ingilishi” and “Fransai.” Later, when hearing gave way to sight, their clothes seemed grotesque, their customs and food most weird, and their skin quite horrible to these tanned people of the sun-burnt lands of the Sudan.

Trade was carried on with Lagos, Accra, and other

ports on the West Coast by a few bolder spirits who risked the dangers of the long journey through pagan and even cannibal tribes, only to be undertaken in parties travelling together for protection. A small number of these people were marooned and finally settled down in the coast towns, but there was little communication between them and their friends in the interior, and so the isolation continued.

The inhabitants of these northern interior emirates knew of one and only one religion, Islam, and they belonged to it. It was to them dominant and exclusive, and they had waged incessant war against the only other system that they knew, that of paganism, and had succeeded in driving its fast-diminishing survivors into the caves, mountains, forests, and fastnesses of the land. They looked east, north, west, and south upon a prevailing faith, which had become intolerantly ruthless and bigoted in proportion as it had become stagnant in ideas.

Who then, they asked, were these newcomers who were beginning to invade their sanctity, to claim the rights of equals, and even superiors, for trade and travel, and were actually demanding treaties from the sacred rulers of Sokoto? Even worse, by what right did they seek to establish a Pagan's claim to anything, either his freedom or his life, and, *horribile dictu*, even speak of the abolition of the slave trade?

Of course no concession could be made to such people. Moslems did not treat with infidels, and if the great Sultan of Sokoto in the past had fatuously concluded some treaty with these white unbelievers, as they asserted, there could be no obligation on the part of present day believers to respect such a treaty. That these strangers

should ever overcome them, enter their land as rulers, and proclaim equal rights for all men could only be the dream of fools.

But powerful Bida had fallen ; Ilorin, a great walled city, followed, and it began to be noised abroad under the big trees at the door of the chiefs' houses, and in the courts of the emirs, chiefly among their household slaves, that the white man had more potent arms than sword and arrow and spear. Could it be possible that the weapons of the faithful would be overthrown ? The answer given by sycophantic *malams* (religious leaders) was always : " Their guns and ammunition will melt and become useless when used against Moslems."

Into this country came General Sir Frederick Lugard (afterwards Lord Lugard) as soldier and administrator. He pitched camp and government head-quarters at Jebba on the Niger, close to the spot where many years before Mungo Park, the explorer of that mighty river, had perished. And at the same time five unarmed, peaceful, hopeful men also trekked up from Lagos, and after three months of riding, walking, and innumerable delays, at last reached the great walled city of Kano. The very insolence of their folly went a long way to ensure its temporary success, but, humanly speaking, it was not the right time for the beginning of such a venture, and subsequent events often seemed to point to the same conclusion. Yet our tests of success or failure are different from God's, otherwise the greatest failure in this world was enacted on Calvary.

On Easter Sunday, April 15, 1900, we five remembered our Lord's death on Calvary, and in our small mud room celebrated probably for the first time in Kano city the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, the seeming defeat

and the glorious resurrection. Writing after thirty-five years, and from Kano again,<sup>1</sup> with the assured victory still in front, and most of the promises still to be claimed, one still has no doubt that defeat is not a part of God's plan, and that we are meant to think and plan only in the certainty of the ultimate triumph of His Kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> This chapter was written before my return to England in July, 1935.

## CHAPTER IV

### SLAVERY IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

**S**LAVERY anywhere, in any phase, or under any guise, is damnable. People who know nothing and have seen nothing of the details at first hand euphemize and make ridiculous comparisons between domestic slavery and the condition of the demi-monde in European countries. Few say anything in support of the raid and the slave market, with the exception perhaps of an extreme Malthusian or Eugenist ; these may be ignored from our point of view in Nigeria, for no parts of Africa are over-populated. To owner, slave, and country of its existence, slavery brings nothing but moral degradation and social and economic stagnation. Men suffer most in the body, women in the moral realm.

The slave raid in Nigeria was not greatly different from its prototype in other parts of Moslem Africa : the dark moonless night ; the village surrounded by a band of men armed with spears and flintlocks ; the signal in a loud voice, " Allah Akbar," followed by the throwing of torches into several huts and zarebas ; the consequent fires, panic, and murder of the males of the village ; women, girls, and children caught up and carried away together with any men or boys who survived ; the final act, the utter destruction of the village. Only a blackened ruin remained to show what had been a pleasant little centre of busy farm and social life.

The whole thing was soon over. A good bag of

perhaps fifty or sixty persons was secured with no loss to the invaders ; but wounds, sickness, and the long march to the destination of the nearest slave market killed numbers of the miserable captives. An expensive way this of dealing with population, but the Moslem in Africa was not troubled with such fancies. Allah was pleased that so many unbelievers had been killed, and there were so many more prospective Moslems added to the company of the faithful.

A heredity of callousness, if not of actual brutality, grows up round such a system. No life can be held of high value intrinsically where men and women look without pity or feelings of shame on members of their own kind suffering indignities, and unalleviated pain of body and mind. Hence we should expect to find cruelty to animals, and a ghastly insensibility to the suffering and pain of all sorts of life, where people have seen slave markets, or raids, and have taken a share in the transaction. I believe that this goes further and affects a whole race, even those born of the slaver after slavery is extinct. Only a change of mind, a complete *metanoia* can purge this poison from a national conscience. It is so in Nigeria. May *we* not have to regret that the repentance for such a horrible traffic, and the self-sacrifice involved, was not shared in England by the *whole* nation when we put away from our national life this vile thing ?

It is probably well known that women slaves having borne children to their masters become, *ipso facto*, freed women ; the offspring are always legitimate of course in Islam, and inherit equally with the children born of those with the status of wife. There are no disabilities whatever ; in fact quite a fair proportion of the ruling emirs of Moslem states are the offspring of pagan women.

This is one redeeming feature in an otherwise bad business. Such women slaves often obtain considerable influence, a high position in the household, and not infrequently considerable power in the state ; they have also far more real freedom than the orthodox wife.

There is some curious psychology connected with the fact that so few slaves managed to escape during the years before the British occupation. Slaves were always told, and usually believed, that a wise provision of Allah had especially decreed for the benefit of all faithful Moslems that when a man or woman became a slave, a white mark was put on his black forehead by Providence, and that the mark was always visible to Moslems and to Moslems alone. When therefore men or boys – hardly ever women – risked the serious results of recapture, and ran away, it was always with the subconscious fear of this damning evidence. The furtive look, the sudden acts betokening fear, the suspicious manner, coupled with, perhaps, some tribal marks, the absence of decent clothes or any possessions, made it comparatively easy to detect a runaway slave, and it then became a pious duty of any Moslem to hunt down and recapture such. They rarely escaped.

In spite of the terrible evils of slavery, only a rash man would have dealt rapidly and drastically with an institution which seemed so much interwoven with all the life of Africa, and till recently, of the East. The methods of Moses seem to us very slow and lacking in humanity, and the humanitarian has often been tempted vehemently to criticize the methods of the British Government. But this is frequently due to the ignorance of the novice. There may have been British administrators whose antipathy to this anti-social custom was not sufficiently



pronounced ; but philanthropists were well advised not to interfere with the wise provisions made gradually to eliminate slavery by such rulers as Nigeria was fortunate to have in the early days of British rule.

Religious Moslem propaganda by peaceful means in Nigeria was always antipathetic to the slave raid. The trader and the ordinary man carried on the former, the rulers and fighting people the latter. It must not be supposed that any organized missionary work was ever carried on by Islam in Nigeria ; that is, in the sense in which it is understood by Christian nations, who set out, or profess to set out, to evangelize other peoples by spiritual methods. A Moslem priest would go to a pagan village and make himself generally useful by settling quarrels. He would sell some charms, with extracts from the Koran written inside leather amulets, and perhaps persuade a few parents to let him have one or two sons whom he would take with him as neophytes to be gradually trained in the Moslem faith. Very likely he would combine with this a little scheme of matrimonial alliances, and obtain for himself concubines from among the pagan girls or women ; these being Pagans could not of course be wives to a good Moslem, but that was a detail to the Pagan - at the time ! In these and similar ways was the Moslem propaganda conducted. There was no religious appeal ; spiritual means were not used ; the results were social and largely achieved through domestic slavery ; hence there is now a strong tendency to revert from Islam, not to the previous condition of Paganism, but to that of no faith.

According to the laws of Islam if a pagan people profess conversion, or even agree to serfdom, heavy taxation, and permanent dependence, their territory may no longer be

raided for slaves. Obviously too large a number of people thus converted, or too many tribes brought out of Dar el Harb<sup>1</sup> into Dar el Islam<sup>2</sup> would seriously reduce the area of hunting fields; and the number of prospective slaves would decrease so seriously as to cause great apprehension to any native Moslem rulers with a long view. Conversion by tribe therefore or even by district was not desired; it was, in fact, discounted. Before the British advent gains to Islam were counted rather through the automatic increase due to the transference of pagan women, with their offspring born in Moslem harems. Devout Moslems have admitted to me quite freely that religious zeal for proselytism was unfashionable. But solemn promises given to semi-civilized or converted tribes were badly kept, as the pressing need for slaves became felt in that locality; this uncertainty of tenure led to risings among the Pagans and consequent reprisals.

At the arrival of the British there were some striking facts which had to be faced; no ruler could ignore them. Some districts, through too frequent raiding, had become largely depopulated, and were practically handed over to wild animals; such would be hard to recover. The Fulani rule from Sokoto was breaking up; state after state had defied the central authority, and was preparing to break away altogether; the days of the Sokoto empire were numbered.

Racial intermingling had taken place, probably much to the advantage of all. Fulani, Hausa, and Pagan were so merged that throughout some large districts there were comparatively few families who could claim clear, unmixed ancestry.

<sup>1</sup> Lands not accepting Islam, and hence to Moslems legitimate objects of warfare.

<sup>2</sup> Lands which have accepted Islam.

The religious zeal, so marked in the early days of conquest under the great and really enlightened leader Sheikh Othman Dan Fodiu, towards the end of the eighteenth century, had died down and had been largely replaced by sheer covetousness, autocracy, and severe oppression. The only inheritors of that early religious spirit, in a very attenuated measure, were the small trader and the peripatetic malam, continuing by more peaceful methods what had been begun as a fierce jihad. The yearly raids on a small scale were the only relic of what had been a very notable conquest by the sword for Islam of a large empire. It remained for the British Government to complete the process of attenuation by the introduction of a fixed coinage, the making of roads, total prohibition of the raid, and the establishment of markets everywhere, and so extinguish slavery.

It is sometimes asked whether slavery can still continue when the sources from which slaves were obtained are cut off. There are still means of obtaining what every Moslem wants, just as the man in America who wanted it could get drink under Prohibition; and to those who know the ropes the risks are not much greater.

A proportion of the girls captured for various reasons were not admitted into any harems but married to slave boys and men; from these have grown up a slave class, who always remain the property of their masters. The lord and master had, and has, the *droit du seigneur* of the women and their daughters, and all remain slaves. It is from this class that the present emirs and ruling and opulent people are still able, by ignoring British law, to draw their fresh supplies for the harem. Through their greater contact with the outer world since the occupation, men know that under the British constitution those

born since 1901 are free ; if any chose to remain slaves it was because their material prospects were likely to be rosier under this condition. With the girls and women who know little of the outside world, and are taught from infancy to believe they are slaves, it is otherwise. No questions are likely to be asked, and they automatically continue in the surroundings in which they have grown up. This is only a matter of time, and when this last feature is eliminated, then monogamy, assisted by all the social, political, and economic factors of the twentieth century, will make, as it has elsewhere, a more successful fight against polygamy ; and incidentally it will afford the vindication, on non-religious lines, of what is really a great religious truth, the true union of one man to one woman, and only one, in marriage.

The kidnapping of children still goes on. From the French territory round Lake Chad and in other districts it is not difficult to obtain children. During local famines there are always parents who will sell their children for money or food ; and by these and other means, cleverly devised and carried out, the demand *can* be, and *is*, supplied to some extent, provided always that the pay is good and remunerative after all insurance for risks has been made.

The brutal custom of making eunuchs still continues in the Sahara. Nigerian potentates who look upon these poor creatures as necessary appendages to their households will pay large sums to get them, and *will* get them at any cost. This is a particularly hideous form of slavery ; the proportion of those killed by the operation, so ignorantly and cruelly performed, is very high, and the survivors are proportionately valuable. Probably it

is not only in the Sahara that this ghastly provision for brutal sensuality is being made ; as long as there are beasts who need them, and the penalties are not prohibitive, so long will the custom prevail.

My instincts, I fear, are not those of the orthodox ruler, and hence I tend to a desire to stop by force these and kindred practices. For instance, I have worked hard for the amelioration of animals of transport, pack oxen, donkeys, camels, *etc.* ; and record with gratitude the efforts made by members of the British Administration to curb some of the worst barbarities. It is never hard to enlist keen sympathy among Englishmen for dumb animals ; the harder thing is to sustain the effort, and in the teeth of constant passive and active opposition, finally to obtain the change sought. Fury and undisciplined rage at the sight of horrible cruelty to helpless, poor, suffering animals is useless. Careful teaching, steady pressure, the occasional making an example of a very hardened sinner, the attempt to win the sympathies of the younger and less-hardened of the community, and slowly but surely the building up of some public opinion, these are the methods, however much one's spirit may gird at the apparent slow progress, which alone are open to the Christian Englishman.

It should not, however, be difficult to win over the ruling class to a position of support, for it is well recognized that Mohammed has much to say in the Koran about the kind treatment of animals. Callousness rather than brutal cruelty is the vice of the African, and I fear that it will be a long time before even the consciences of the small Christian community will be sufficiently enlightened about these matters. This is the direction,

and the community, from which comes the most hope, because there is with them the most understanding response on the highest grounds. As one looks back more than thirty years one has with gratitude to recount a great advance on all these questions.

## CHAPTER V

### SEEKING A FOOTHOLD

THE journey out was crowded with interesting events. With the energy of schoolboys, and in spite of the heat, we wanted to go ashore at every port to see all we could of African life ; and every such visit on shore was greatly enhanced if we met some Hausa people on whom to practise our knowledge of their language ! Hausas are traders and travellers ; and we met some of them at all the ports, Freetown, Axim, Cape Coast, Accra, and Lagos. Whenever in showing off before our fellow-passengers we found that we were understood, a superiority complex was rapidly developed, only to be quickly crushed at the next place where we found our efforts less successful. Hausa is a tonal language, but we did not realize this at the time, in fact not till very much later, and this was the cause for some years of the unusual difficulty that we had in acquiring it.

The trek into the interior was to begin from Lagos. People who do this journey now in comfortable saloon carriages, with sleeping berths, electric fans, and quite decently cooked meals in a dining saloon, still grumble at the heat, dust, food, and general discomfort.

The first part of the journey took us, stage by stage, through various mission stations, at each of which we spent some days learning what we could, and often beginning lifelong friendships. The real journey began

from Jebba, where we spent two or three weeks before we passed on into the more or less unknown, and saw no more white faces for a long time.

Jebba was at this time the scene of indescribable activity since it was the head-quarters of General Sir Frederick Lugard. Here were engineers, royal and civil ; artillery ; a few mounted infantry ; and linesmen. Horses did not do too well, as the tsetse fly was found almost everywhere in this region. Drainage of land, building, and preparation for military movements were all going on feverishly. Political officers and doctors, soldiers and traders were pouring into this place which was the temporary capital of Northern Nigeria. On the top of the hill overlooking the two branches of the mighty Niger River, where it divided to form an island, was Government House, and there I was first introduced to His Excellency. How rare it is to find men of great experience and achievement willing to listen to, and be interested in, the aspirations and hopes of younger men ! Here was one great enough to do so. As I talked with Sir Frederick of the language, the future of the country, education, and other matters, notably what script was to be adopted for the schools and all literary purposes, Arabic or Roman, he was never impatient, but encouraged all that was sane and reasonable in one's ideas. At all times, then and since, I have received kindness, courtesy, and real friendship from the Governor and from the members of all the Services, administrative, army, medical, and others. Often we did not agree, but our disagreement rarely led to any breach of friendship ; we recognized each other's good faith, and were prepared to give any help possible.

The journey from Lagos to Kano took just three



months, the stiff part being between Jebba and Kano. This was a great strain on the health and spirits of quite inexperienced men, who knew nothing of the hardship of continually trekking in African heat. We reached Kano, and spent Easter, 1900, there.

Our reception in Kano was anything but pleasant. After one night's rest, we were asked to visit the Emir at his country house in Panisau, a village about seven miles from Kano. Here we were kept in a grass hut for several hours, with the shade temperature considerably over 100°, while the Emir saw other deputations – among them one from Zinder, now in French territory, with whom Kano had been at war – and discussed with his chiefs and courtiers whether we should be executed or not. In the early afternoon we were summoned into his presence, and after a brief, but very disagreeable interview were ordered to leave his dominions at once. This was afterward changed to five days, and then donkeys were given us to take our loads back to Zaria; for all our carriers had bolted, having heard that we had been murdered. At the request of the Bishop, before we left I wrote a long letter to the Emir, in Hausa, and the Arabic script, protesting against his treatment of friendly strangers. I told him of our completely sincere purpose towards him and his people, and indulged in a little amateur prophecy about himself and the kingdom of Kano generally. I did not see him again until seven years later, when he was living as a pensioner of the British Government in Lokoja, with much time on his hands for reflection.

Our reception in Kano did not promise well for any other emirate, and we were not altogether surprised to find on arrival at Zaria, five days later, that the Emir of

Zaria, who had been extremely friendly to us on our way up to Kano, was now not prepared for us to remain anywhere in his emirate. He told us that he dared not give permission to us unless we first obtained sanction from his over-lord, the Sultan of Sokoto. Here was a dilemma. The heat and hardships of our journey, the incessant trouble with carriers, so well known to all travellers in Africa at that time before easier methods of transport were available, had, I suspect, tried us all severely, and Ryder and Richardson were clearly spent. Burgin was needed to look after our possessions; all through, he had been the great stand-by, friend, and helper of every one on the march, and general camp-controller. The Bishop and I therefore, tired as we were with continual trekking, were planning to start off at once to Sokoto, when a letter, literally from the blue, the first we had seen in English writing for many weeks, was brought to us by a messenger from Colonel Lowry Cole. He was in charge of a military reconnaissance party, which, entirely without our knowledge, had reached a place called Girku on the Kaduna River, forty miles south of Zaria.

The Emirs of Kano and Zaria, by means of their well-managed and swiftly-travelling spies, had known of the progress and destination of this small army, and had, as we afterwards ascertained, looked upon us as being connected with it, probably spies! This we afterwards found was largely responsible for our treatment.

Colonel Lowry Cole's letter told us of Sir Frederick Lugard's genuine anxiety on our behalf. Wild stories about us had already been circulated, and he felt that our presence so far north enhanced his difficulties with the great Moslem emirates, since we were utterly

unprotected. He asked us to come down to Girku, put ourselves under the charge of Colonel Lowry Cole, and consult with him about all our movements.

We responded at once to this appeal, and arrived in Girku three days later to find ourselves immediately among friends. Ryder met officers of his brother's regiment, we were given the freedom of the mess, and everything was done to make our stay with them both as easy and as pleasant as possible. But God had other plans. The strain of the long journey, several attacks of fever, and other things had been too much for Claud Ryder. A severe attack of dysentery soon destroyed his remaining strength, and in three days he was dead – a gallant scion of a family of soldiers and statesmen, and Christians.

Could not such fragrant ointment have been put to better use? His was an unusually choice life and character. Never strong enough for the hardships of a pioneer expedition, he had hardly expected to be long with us, but thought the short time worth while. He was a very perfect Christian gentleman, full of dry humour, with great capacity for love and friendship, which he told me on his death-bed had rarely had the chance of full expression. He never groused; he took his full share, when not too exhausted, in the arduous work of camp life, and all the duties involved in a journey like ours into the interior of a little known country. We buried him in Girku; he was given a military funeral, and as many of the officers of the expedition as could be spared from their duties were present.

By a strange coincidence the little village of Girku is the burial ground of the two first missionary pioneers to the Hausa country. Some Canadians, under the Rev. R.

Bingham, a few years before had made the same attempt as ours ; they had been compelled to return, leaving one member of their party, Walter Gowan, a victim to dysentery, buried in the same village. We do not think that these two men died in vain ; they, and their work and sacrifice live.

Ryder's death, following on previous ill-health, so unnerved Richardson, that he became very ill ; but how could he return to England to recover ? The answer came speedily through a messenger to Colonel Kemball, who had now taken command of the military expedition. War had again broken out in Ashanti, and all the troops were ordered to be withdrawn at once, to return to Jebba, and thence to the coast. Colonels Kemball, Lowry Cole, and Morland entreated us to return with them ; but we felt that, even with the loss in our party, we could not so easily give up the project to which we had pledged ourselves. It was therefore decided that the Bishop, Burgin, and I should remain in the small grass huts which the soldiers had so kindly put up for us, and that Richardson should go back with the troops to the coast, and so home to England. He has never since been able to return.

Events change very rapidly in Africa ; only the guidance of God is safe there – or anywhere – for a Christian ; and plans made for more than a few hours ahead need to be very tentative. In those days our lives, with their plans and surroundings, were very kaleidoscopic, and in that first year we learnt to count on nothing but God.

It will not be hard to imagine the forlorn feelings of us three white men, in the heart of a strange land, among a people far from friendly, when the last of those twenty-six

officers and three hundred African soldiers vanished from sight, leaving us alone. Evening came and the Bishop and I took out our horses and guns to try to get something "for the pot." We were very dependent then on our skill in aim, for we were strangers among people of an alien religion, who as yet had not learnt that there was any reason to trust us. After several ridiculous failures at most easy shots we gave it up, went back to our empty camp, and, more as a joke than anything else, took our temperatures. Both of us were nearly  $103^{\circ}$ ; the rains were well on; we were in a swamp in grass huts, in an unfriendly country from which some not altogether polite efforts had been made to eject us. Burgin and our boys were most devoted, and then he went down also.

But we were not played out! A lull in the rains; two boxes of medical comforts sent back to us by the kind thought of Colonel Kemball; and a few fine days, with quinine, brought down the fever, and we staggered out of our huts, were literally put on our horses, and went out to investigate. A splendid site on a hill, with fine air, and a great view overlooking the glorious Kaduna River, at that point nearly a mile wide, appealed to us. We also struck camp, and in a week we had our new home, and were so much cheered with it, and with God's goodness in not allowing us to be driven back, that, like St. Paul, "we took courage." Then began a new chapter in the work and our existence.

Very few days passed before our little company was still further reduced in numbers. Burgin for many reasons had to go back to our base, and Bishop Tugwell and I were left for several weeks alone. The Bishop was amazing in his energy, always indefatigable, but we

were facing a very difficult situation. At this stage we were unable to do more than make friends with the people in the many villages around us, both Pagan and Moslem, continue our study of the language, and treat a few sick people.

We knew that we were being closely spied upon. Strange, unfriendly looking people passed by our little encampment on their way to the town of Girku, half a mile away, and it became evident that the people of Girku were becoming more and more troubled and frightened. One night we were awakened after midnight by some of the villagers and their chief who had walked the half mile to our house. This is what they had to say.

“ You must go, and we will go with you at once. Neither you nor we are safe. The Emir at Zaria has heard that you are making friends here ; that deputations from pagan and Moslem villages are coming to see you ; in fact, that you are becoming far more friendly with us than he wishes. He is angry, and has sent five well known thieves and murderers here from Zaria with orders to kill you ; and not to leave here till it is done. They arrived this evening on horseback, well armed. We dared not come and tell you earlier ; but as soon as we found they were sound asleep we got away. And now we are ready to escape with you, for you are our friends, and we are afraid of the Emir.”

We cheered them, laughed with them, and assured them that we had no fear, and were certainly not going to run away or leave them.

They reminded us that the next day was Sunday, and that at 8 a.m. would be our usual Sunday service, to which many of them would be coming, and that these servants of the Emir would probably come with them,

armed, to kill us. "Bring your guns," they said, "and be prepared."

This was even funnier, and we had to disclaim all intention of using our shot guns on worshippers at our Sunday service !

The next morning at 8 a.m., quite a little crowd appeared, and among them the would-be assassins. The Bishop and I walked the few yards from our hut to the little grass house which we called a church, and there at the entrance, with impressive politeness, received these five gallant men who had come to murder two unarmed strangers, by order of the Emir. Most cordially we greeted them, shook hands, and asked them to come in to the service !

Each had a nice little round mat to himself, and they must have felt themselves quite important and welcome visitors. White men did not usually treat Africans in this way, to their certain knowledge.

We had a short, simple service, parts of the ordinary liturgy, a hymn in Hausa, and a brief address from the Bishop which I translated ; and then the benediction — on our would-be murderers ! After this we walked out, escorted them to their beautiful horses, gave them the heartiest of handshakes and good-byes, and came back to our frightened villagers, "before whose eyes a notable miracle had been wrought."

It was more than two years later that I heard the remainder of the story from one of the men. Their reception in Zaria had been a little frigid, and might easily have led to the same fate for them as they had planned for us, for Moslem emirs do not like to be disobeyed.

"Where are they? Have you killed them?" they were asked.

“*Ranka shi dade* (Your life be long)!” “We have not killed them; those people cannot be killed.” Short but conclusive!

A year after the event described I learnt that the fear of the poor villagers had not been unfounded. The head man of those who came to warn us that night, a member of an old Hausa family and a man of quite distinguished appearance, was called in to Zaria to see the Emir, nine months afterwards, when we had left Girku.

“Why did you show so much attention to those white men?”

“Your life be prolonged. They were your majesty’s visitors, and how should I not show them honour?”

In the presence of the Emir he was thrown to the ceiling of the Emir’s palace, a height of ten feet, by four active ruffians, called *dogarai*, or police. His hand and foot were broken by the fall, and in this condition he was lowered into an old cess pit, several feet deep, up to his knees in filth, and left there for four days, his only food being his dirty old trousers. Shortly before his death he was taken out of the pit by order of the Emir.

“Put me on my horse,” he said, “and take me home. I never have been disloyal to my king.” In irony this was done, and he was led away, only to die a few hours afterwards. Missionaries do not always bring happiness and release to the people to whom they go with the news of peace on earth and goodwill towards men.

The Emir Kwasau, who was responsible for this act, died himself in exile a few years afterwards. But what thought of expiation ever came to the mind of the tyrant,



only one of so many, and what remorse for all the broken lives and bodies in his province ?

The attempt to get rid of us in this pleasant way having been unsuccessful, a more trustworthy messenger, with a more reliable instrument – fire – was found. I was wakened one morning by the Bishop's voice. It seemed very early, for I had had a poor and all too short night.

“Get up, man, we're very late ; it's quite light, and the sun is up.”

It *was* quite light, but the sun was not up, for it was only 2 a.m. The light was caused by fire, which had already almost completely destroyed our grass huts. Some of our quinine, and a few other things of value were saved, but the bulk of my medical equipment, some stores, and various items of camp equipment were gutted. It is not a pleasant feeling to be an unwelcome visitor, especially when such crude methods are used to make the fact clear.

By some means or other, exaggerated reports of our predicament reached Lokoja and Jebba, at that time the two head-quarters of Administration. From Lokoja came stores ; from Jebba a very serious letter from the Governor. Our stores had almost reached vanishing point when one day a dishevelled little person, whom neither of us recognized, burst in upon us, accompanied by five carriers with “ chop ” boxes.

“I am the Rev. J. J. Williams of Lokoja, and I thank God for bringing me here alive.”

This dear little African parson had volunteered *alone* to travel to our help from Lokoja, twenty days' journey, through a district which in patches was distinctly unpleasant. He had brought his stores two-thirds of the

way safely when he was set upon by pagan highway thieves.

“What happened to you?” said we, “and how did you get away alive?”

“They got my horse, killed and ate him, and were so busy with this that I was able to steal away, and crept towards a swamp, into which I plunged up to my neck, and awaited events. They tried hard to break open the boxes, but these had been so strongly bound with iron bands that, without tools, they could not do it; and, I suppose, being satisfied with their good feed off my horse, they did not worry about me very much, and left the boxes.

“As soon as it was dusk, and I knew that they had gone, I got out of the swamp, and started to walk to the nearest town, fortunately for me very close by; it was Kachia. But I salvaged my horse’s tail, and here it is! The chief of the town gave me carriers, and here are we!”

We were deeply touched by the devotion of this plucky little man, and wanted to keep him with us for some time; but he was anxious to get back to his station and church at Lokoja, so reluctantly we said “good-bye.”

The Governor’s letter, in most courteous but distinct language, left us no option but to pack up and start for safer regions; and so ended our first attempt to evangelize the Hausa States.

The Bishop and I, with Burgin, who had ere now rejoined us, arrived at Loko on the Benue in thirteen days, and were joined there by Hans Vischer, of Emmanuel College, Cambridge (afterwards Director of Education for Northern Nigeria), and the Rev. G. P. Bargery, who had just come from England to work with us. The

Bishop after two or three weeks in Loko returned to Lagos ; Burgin was over-strained and had to go home, and not long afterward, I also had to return to England after a very severe attack of dysentery and fever. Bishop Tugwell did not return to the Hausa country until 1907, and then as a visitor.

## CHAPTER VI

### HAUSA, FULANI, AND PAGAN

THE time that we spent in Girku afforded a most valuable opportunity of absorbing information about the country, its peoples, customs, folklore, proverbs, and religions. We made friends without distinction with Fulanis, Hausas, and Pagans, and not only became deeply interested in them all, but learned to see the standpoint of each. The Bishop, who had no previous experience of Moslems and did not anticipate a long period of work among them, found most of his sympathies going out to the Pagans, and during our stay in Girku not infrequently he had to champion vigorously the cause of the Pagan against the Moslem.

For centuries there had been the inevitable struggle between these two hostile types. The Pagans had stood their ground remarkably well, using the natural features of river, mountain, rocks, and forest to protect them from the horse-riding Fulanis. Some tribes, or parts of tribes, had been partially subdued, and paid *gandu* (tribute); others kept up an intermittent warfare with varying results. Whole tracts of land, such as the Bauchi Plateau, had maintained almost complete independence; and woe to the Hausa, trader or otherwise, who went there without guarantees. His fate was not pleasant, the least undesirable being to be cooked and eaten. Fulanis, unless they belonged to the ruling class, were tolerated because they were nomads and had cattle,

which the Pagan always coveted, and to which he sometimes helped himself in unpleasant ways. A state more or less of equilibrium had been reached between Pagan and Moslem when the British arrived, for the conquests of one year lapsed very quickly into the independence of previous times.

The Hausas are a mixed race, like ourselves, and having been Moslem for several centuries fought with the Fulani on a different basis. The Fulani rising at the end of the eighteenth century was partly religious, partly due to racial causes. Undoubtedly the great Hausa or Habe<sup>1</sup> dynasties and peoples had become slack in their religion, and in some respects were not easily distinguishable from Pagans. Wealth and prosperity, with little interference from outside, had made them sensual and arrogant. They kept the Fulani herdsmen well in hand, often bullying them severely, and taking heavy toll of their cattle.

Many books have been written about the sudden uprising of this wonderful people, who still are a problem to ethnologists. Under a really great leader, by now invested with almost divine attributes, Sheikh Othman Dan Fodiu, the Napoleon of Africa, they freed themselves from the domination of the Habe, proclaimed a jihad, and were joined by the more fanatical Moslems among the Habe. This led in some places, as in Katsina and Sokoto, to civil war between the *tawaye* (rebels) who refused to follow the Fulani, and their more docile and religious brethren of the same community who accepted a stricter religious regime, and recognized the Fulah as leader and master.

<sup>1</sup> Meaning aborigines, but usually applied by the Fulani to all the mixed Hausa-speaking people.



ANNUAL MOSLEM FESTIVAL (ID-UL-FITR), IN ZARIA CITY *Photograph by Dr. F. R. Snell*



ANNUAL MOSLEM FESTIVAL (ID-UL-FITR), IN ZARIA CITY *Photograph by Dr. F. R. Snell*



OVERLOOKING ZARIA CITY  
IN THE FAR DISTANCE, FROM WUSASA

*Photograph by Dr. F. R. Snell*

The ex-cowherd malam was soon ruler over an area nearly twice as large as England, and then set himself to consolidate his rule and the Moslem faith. Trusty, chosen men were given the green flag of Islam and sent out to proclaim a religious war against Pagans and recalcitrant Moslems. The empire so set up had been in existence over a hundred years when the British arrived, and was then in process of breaking up. The great Emirate of Kano, the most prosperous and powerful of all, was openly truculent, and refused to pay tribute to Sokoto, the seat of government of the ruling dynasty. Othman and his descendants, the Sultans of Sokoto, have not only been temporal rulers over all the other emirates of what is now called Nigeria, but their spiritual dominion extends much further afield; and the ruling Sultan of Sokoto ranks to-day as one of the most powerful and venerated heads of Islam in the world.

Following suit, Zaria, further south, was beginning to show signs of independence; Katsina was awaiting events; while Hadejiya, always one of the most warlike provinces, had for long been an uncertain quantity. The British administration accepted the *de facto* Fulani rule, established and consolidated it, and, probably unwittingly, gave a great impulse to the subduing of pagan tribes that had so far resisted, more or less successfully, the Fulani conquest.

I have always looked upon this as an error in administration. Granted that Pagans, being divided into smaller groups and tribes, are less homogeneous, less easy to deal with at first, and need far greater patience and endless tact; granted also that there was no common language as among the Moslems, no accepted and common law like the *Shari'a* of Islam; and that it was a far easier

solution of the numerous difficulties confronting our rulers, at the earlier stages, to seek to make use of, and extend the more civilized and homogeneous rule of the Moslem Fulani emirates. Even so, I am convinced that this was short-sighted policy, and was due to local circumstances – shortness of staff, ignorance of local history, *etc.*, but opposed to the policy of the Central Administration. From the very first it caused great disappointment and discontent among some of those hardier and independent peoples who had hoped on our arrival for rest from the perpetual persecution and raids of the Fulani rulers. It was not well to antagonize them from the beginning.

The Pagans have proved more ready to receive teaching than the Moslems, and more willing to become really loyal. They have also become far more widely responsive to missionary enterprise. Large areas of pagan peoples are now occupied by missionary societies, and the younger generation give promise of soon outstripping the Moslems. I look forward to the time, not far hence, when educated Christianized Pagans will lead the way to higher intelligence and culture, and even encircle the more obstinate and conservative Moslem emirates.

They are more virile, more sexually moral, and have a less damaged physique. Their minds have not been warped by the sterilizing influences of Islam. Having no rival claimant to his loyalty such as Islam, the Pagan is far more ready to see the advantages of British rule and accept its privileges. We have also found that when a Pagan becomes a true Christian he is much readier and more likely at once to become a witness than is the Moslem.



Should there ever be any revival of pan-Islamism, and an attempt at a Moslem rising in the great Fulani emirates, which I do not at all anticipate, but which is not impossible, the presence of a solid block of loyal Pagans, largely become Christians, would be a very steady influence for good.

Roughly speaking there are three varieties of Fulani. First, the absolutely unsophisticated nomad, who wanders with his cattle and his women and children over large tracts of land, following the rivers and pasture lands. He is handsome and light coloured, with straight, not negroid, hair, Aryan in feature, and only very superficially a Moslem. Large numbers of these people are quite unblushing Pagans, and recognize little higher objects of worship than the cow.

Secondly, there are the Fulani who have settled near the towns and villages, and have kept their race comparatively uncontaminated and pure. They farm as well as keep cattle. They are chiefly Moslems. Lastly, there are the ruling Fulani. These through keeping large harems, intermixing with Pagans, and taking unlimited pagan women, have lost their distinctive features. Few among them are of pure Fulani origin, and many have ceased to speak the Fulani language, knowing only Hausa. Some rule over areas as large as the whole Uganda Protectorate. The Emir of Kano has nearly two million subjects. They have undoubtedly some of the qualities of rulers, and many are very capable men. But unlimited power for generations, together with a naturally cruel and vindictive nature, have made them tyrants rather than rulers; and even now, after thirty years under British guidance, there is a great deal of oppression of their subjects.

I look forward to a policy which will give positions

of authority and influence with more impartiality to Hausa and Pagan as well as Fulah. Much is being done in this direction at present in more distinctly pagan areas, and the principle might well be extended. I should like to see more of the old Habe families, in recognition of their previous power and influence, given rank as first and second class emirs.

It is not difficult to detect flaws and make criticisms at this distance of time. Few can have lived through all the years of our administration and have such a whole-hearted admiration for much in the method of rule, and especially for the rulers as I have. I only criticize here, because I think that the natural evolution, which should go on in the rule of any protectorate, is not proceeding as quickly in some directions as it should. Material and scientific progress is too rapid without a corresponding moral and spiritual growth; and growth in character is alarmingly inadequate to cope with the requirements of the time. We have been too progressive in some directions, too conservative in others. The Administration is not alone to blame for this.

An incident occurred during the first few days of our stay in Girku which is worth recording, as illustrating some of the facts, the relationships between the various peoples, and the inter-relation between them and our Administration. It must be made clear, however, that the part played in this incident by the British was that of an individual commander, acting on his own responsibility, and not the action of the civil authority.

There was a powerful pagan tribe called Kadara, living to the south of the Kaduna River, and close to Girku. These people had not only kept their independence, but had been a terror to Hausa and Fulani

alike. They were much like the highland Scots cattle-lifters of olden days, and their relations with their Fulani and Hausa neighbours were reminiscent of the Border raiders. During our first week in Girku in May, 1900, a company of these Pagans sallied out from Rimau, their strongest fortified town (having a wall of about four miles in circumference), and lifted several hundred head of cattle from wandering Fulani herdsmen in the vicinity. The latter took their complaint to the commandant of the expedition of reconnaissance which was at the time in Girku, and were backed by a deputation of people from Girku, including their chief, who saw the opportunity of getting rid for ever of this thorn in their side, the truculent, raiding Kadara of Rimau.

I liked these people of Rimau and most of the Kadaras, and later on had many faithful friends among them. An ultimatum was sent to their chiefs – twenty-four hours in which to give back the cattle. Clearly this was impossible, for a large number of the fattest had already been eaten, and there was no disposition to give up the rest. And anyhow, who were these few white people who made such an unusual and preposterous demand? An insolent “No” was sent back.

The next day the town was attacked by a force of trained Hausa troops, with rifles and one or two Maxim guns. Six hours' fighting followed, and a plucky resistance was put up by almost naked men and boys with bows and arrows and spears against arms of precision. It was a massacre, and also a travesty of justice. Colonel Lowry Cole was wounded by a poisoned arrow, but his life was saved by the doctor. The walls of the town were ordered to be demolished, the gates destroyed, and this plucky little people, who had upheld

their liberty so long and done some freebooting into the bargain against the usually conquering Fulani, was left at the mercy of its old foe.

The troops had shortly afterwards to return to the coast, and to us who remained after they had gone it was a tragedy to see the vindictiveness and cruelty with which the rulers from Zaria and Girku treated the people who had once been their terror. Many were made slaves ; heavy taxes were mulcted from the rest ; and a proud pagan people were made to feel the iron go into their souls.

Pathetically they never blamed the English, only their old enemies ; and they have been a peaceful tribe since more settled rule was established in later years.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SYSTEM OF INDIRECT RULE

**T**HE term "indirect rule," now so famous in colonial circles, is still but vaguely understood among people generally. It may be well, before entering on a discussion of the merits and demerits of this system, to illustrate its meaning, as understood and applied in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, where under Sir Frederick Lugard it was first exemplified and fully administered.

When British political officers arrived in Northern Nigeria they found a people with an established government, a quite well-thought-out system of taxation, which they in turn had inherited from a previous ruling race, the Habe; land laws which many socialists would think ideal, and the Shari'a, or Islamic Law.

On occupying this territory four alternative methods of rule were possible: (1) To allow the existing rulers to administer their own laws in their own country, and govern as responsible rulers; (2) to retain the rulers, but give them a more or less British substitute for their own system; (3) to rule directly, with no pretence at a diarchy, *but* according to the system in use; or (4) to start everything *de novo*, "new wine in new bottles," as is the French plan. Lugard, with previous strong inclination toward the first of these, decided on carrying it out with some modifications, and so grew up that somewhat new form of administration known as "indirect rule."

From the very beginning I could not rid my mind of a suspicion that all was not sound and watertight in this most attractive scheme. Was there anything in the present rule and rulers which promised progress, and which could ultimately lead to even a modified form of democratic rule suitable to an African people not lacking in culture and ability? Were the existing rulers truly representative of their people, and such as the people trusted and respected? Was the Koranic law and the general system of judicature indigenous or foreign? If the latter, was it better suited to the people of Northern Nigeria than British law and equity?

For the magnificent ideal of preserving the country for the people of the country; of preventing all alienation of land and granting of concessions, which so often involve the signing away of the birthright of a people, one could have only the greatest admiration. The determination to conserve all that was good in law, custom, religion, and social life, was only what could be expected from men of the fine type that first came to administer this great land. For the way in which this ideal has been adhered to through opposition from many and various quarters, through success, and sometimes apparent failure; for the optimism which has made indirect rule a gospel, a creed with its adherents – again one has nothing but respectful homage. But has it been wholly justified? Will it stand the test of time? If the British had to leave the protectorate, what would remain to prove the value of the ideal? If no conclusive affirmative can be given to these questions, no optimism or enthusiasm can be sufficient to justify the experiment.

With regard to the first question, my early impression, confirmed since by thirty-five years in Nigeria, was that

the prospect of wholehearted co-operation with the British toward genuine progress was small. It seemed then, as now, that any keen desire for that type of progress so dear to, and so integral a part of British tradition, was very unlikely ; and that any attempt to broaden the basis of rule would be met with active or passive opposition. Absolutism had been inherent in the rule of these states under the Fulani, and the two fall or stand together.

An answer to the second question is that the alien rule of the Fulani, only established through conquest about one hundred years before our advent, was not acceptable to and did not suit the genius of the Hausas ; and moreover that the conquered are still the abler people of the two. The majority of the middle and lower classes, together with a sprinkling of the class who were the rulers before the Fulani conquest, are Hausas with a culture, character, and order of life different from that of the Fulah, and far less bigoted Moslems than he. There has been no great assimilation between these two widely different races – nothing to approach what happened within one or two hundred years of the Norman conquest in England, except for one striking parallel, that the Fulah conqueror in most of the Hausa States has adopted the Hausa language, often completely losing his own. After living among these people for over thirty years and getting into very close contact with members of almost every group and social status, I am convinced that there is a growing dislike to the present system, and that before long the British administrators will be faced with a powerful plea for direct British rule, leading to a more representative and widely-based rule of the people for the people. Those who have these aspirations can

hardly yet express themselves, and are neither heard nor realized; but they are rapidly increasing in number as education and travel become less confined to the few, and they will soon find leaders. Unless the present Native Administration can adapt itself to more modern ideas I foresee a widespread revolt before long against its obscurantism, tending towards more democratic institutions and a more representative administration.

The answer to question three is more difficult. A people largely Moslem would be expected to prefer Moslem rulers and the Islamic code of law—the Shari'a. But these are as foreign as are British rule and law at present, and rather less suitable, so far as I can judge, except in matters concerning religion or religious customs. Turkey has given up the law of Mohammed, as well as a very large proportion of the customs and social institutions connected with Islam, chiefly because they were foreign, Arabic, and alien to the Turkish character. How far the Turks have gained by this action is a matter for discussion, but not relevant here. In Northern Nigeria under British rule Moslem law has certainly been freed from many of its worst features, but even what remains could well be spared without loss or grievance to the people. I have found few among the great mass of *talakawa* (the populace) who would not infinitely prefer to be under English civil and criminal law administered by Englishmen.

But it is concerning the actual details of the administration of law, order, taxation, justice, rather than the abstract theory, that I have most misgiving. Granted that oppression is not a monopoly of either Africa or Islam, I still share with many others here the belief that under Moslem rulers, bred in the instinct of slavery,



and steeped in the belief that their system of religion and all else is heaven-given and therefore fool proof, there is little hope of a progressively impartial and just administration. Bribery and corruption seem ineradicable.

The chief assessor to a native judge in a big provincial native court told me once that there were fifteen methods by which, if properly bribed, a Moslem judge could make the oath on the Koran innocuous to the man who bribed him, from whom therefore the last fear of perjury would thus be removed. There is too much unlimited autocracy among the rulers ; too deep an instinct for bribery in the judiciary, civil and criminal, to permit of justice and equity being easily obtained by the poor. There seems, on paper, always the possibility of obtaining redress and protection by appeal to the higher authorities, but in practice, as I have found in innumerable cases, there is little real chance, unless the victim has at his disposal the means for unlimited bribery, as well as time to wait for the turn of the wheel of fortune. It is often better to leave an injured man to nurse his feelings of hopelessness and indignation than to interfere on his behalf, for interference usually leads to reprisals and greater suffering in the future. The Hausa says : " The man who beats is always so near, and the man who saves too far off to be of use."

With all one's respect for the members of the British Administration and for their work, it is a fact that the majority of them come from the most conservative class in England, the middle and upper middle class, and that they look far more from the standpoint of the ruler than the ruled, and are usually wedded to the *status quo*.

Further there is a great deal of difference between the views and the practice of administrative officers in Northern Nigeria. While all hold to the principles of indirect rule, many keep a tighter hand on the rein, use more direct means, and are so far the more loyal to humanity as they *seem* the less loyal to the system. One large province was ruled by an emir utterly unfit for his high office, under a succession of European officers, who, preferring *laissez faire* methods, were content to leave this degenerate oppressor alone. The end came when one or two men of a different type, with eyes more widely open, were located to the province: they were younger and more susceptible to cries of oppression, and conceived a feeling of dislike to a degenerate and unworthy ruler. These officers used more direct means, and one of the most powerful men in the Central Sudan was deposed, but only after doing untold harm. This instance is by no means unique.

I had myself to prepare the case against an emir of eighteen years' standing in a large province. These eighteen years had been one long drawn out misery for the poor; the province had been badly misruled by the emir, and his various relatives and slaves, for nepotism is the rule here. Justice had been largely forgotten or over-ruled, and the majority of the district chiefs lived to get what plunder they could. This emir, as a result of his trial, was sentenced to deportation for life; but how tardy was the justice, and to his people how slowly "the mills of God" had worked.

This and other similar cases are not reflections on the essentials of the system of indirect rule; but they seem to indicate that many of the incidents are baneful, lead nowhere, and might be well scrapped. It is very

important to distinguish between what is essential and what is incidental in this question. Surely the essentials are that we preserve the country for the people ; that we undertake in the shortest time possible so to educate the right type of rulers that they may be able to administer their country fairly and justly ; that everything which is valuable in custom, law, and religion should be preserved ; that a healthy nationalism, leading on to the truer internationalism, should be encouraged and trained ; finally, that when we leave this land as rulers we may feel confident that what has been started will be continued by men who have voluntarily accepted the ideals which we have sought to inculcate, and will carry them on to ever better success.

The incidents are hardly worth mentioning, but they include : preserving to the old families the right to rule ; protection of much that is harmful and evil because it is picturesque and ancient ; unwillingness to interfere ; and tardiness in dealing with big offenders. I should like to see radical changes in all these matters. The most damning criticism of the system, as carried out in Northern Nigeria, seems to me to be that the safeguards have never been sufficient ; that there has been too much variety in the degree of direct or indirect rule ; and that the native rulers have not felt adequately their responsibility to their people, while they have had far too great a sense of the security of their own position under British rule. An old saying which I found in the mouths of most of the Fulani rulers when I came first to Nigeria was : "*Talakawa abinchinmu ne, mi ya dame mu* (Our subjects are our lawful food, why bother ourselves [about our treatment of them])?"

The supreme test is : How much of all the splendid,

unselfish work put into this country, medical, judicial, administrative, hygienic, educational, public works, and commerce, would remain if all European influence and control were removed now? The best native opinion I have met affirms that a small proportion of the temporary benefits, such as pump water, electric light, motor traffic, road making may continue, until the question of payment becomes too acute. It is considered that the railways, coinage, and some other public works might be retained, and possibly the newer police methods; but that in what had to do with moral, educational, intellectual, and hygienic advance, all would be lost. Moreover, slavery, inter-tribal warfare, and a ten-fold more brutal oppression than at present would immediately return.

It is, of course, open to the defenders to say: "This is mere unsupported supposition." But I believe that in the hearts of even the most powerful champions of indirect rule there is a fear. What is it that inspires to hope in Turkey, and in Iran, whereas in so many other lands of Islam the reverse is the case? The deeper I probe, the deeper are my feelings of fear for Northern Nigeria.

It is only fair to anticipate the question: "What constructive proposals have you, rather than uncertain and unproved criticism?" My first class of suggestions will seem trite, and half-baked; nevertheless I give them. The second will meet with amusement and scorn from many people as being chimerical, quixotic, and hopelessly in the air.

First, I would broaden the basis of education, and make it clearly understood that the road to even the highest positions is open to character and ability. I would stamp out all nepotism. Sins against the revenue would be

punished far more lightly than those of oppression and injustice. Younger men would be put into responsible positions before they have sunk into the ruts of tradition ; and older men should feel that unless they can adapt themselves to a progressive system, in consonance with the best traditions of civilization, they may not retain their positions. I would introduce carefully far more correctives to the Koranic law ; and make it impossible for any case to be settled, either on the mere oath of either party to the litigation, or without an appeal to be taken and tried in the highest court, which for some considerable time would be British.

I almost hesitate to write my next words ; and yet, as a Christian, I have no option. They are based on St. Paul's words that " Christ is made unto us . . . wisdom . . . and redemption." Only in Jesus Christ do I see the wisdom to rule Nigeria, or any hope of its redemption. Far from standing for a narrow, bigoted propaganda, I am praying for a native *Moslem* prophet to arise with a call to repentance to all, so insistent and so inspired by God's Spirit, Who works in all who seek, like Cornelius, to do His will, that there will be an immediate response ; that crowds will see other than material values, and that the native rulers will also hear the voice of God, and come to real surrender and submission to God's rule and Kingdom. (Islam=surrender.) The ignoring of the big spiritual and moral claims of a people must always lead to failure. In the fellowship of personal repentance, surrender to God, and confession of sin, Fulani and Habe might be united.

Surely this claims the attention of British officers as seriously as do systems of taxation. If rulers and people can be taught, and together see, that by service men can

get nearer to God than by pride of rule, then oppression will die. I have a vision of a time when all political, educational, and other officers coming to Nigeria will themselves be men with the one paramount desire for God's Kingdom to come; and will realize that in seeking first that Kingdom and its righteousness all the incidents of health, taxation, prosperity, and advance will solve themselves: for according to promise "all these things will be given unto you." This can only be a chimera of foolishness to those who have not themselves made the great surrender; but I believe that more and more as men of all kinds and various spheres of work come to Nigeria determined that as far as their own lives are concerned Christ shall have full power, this policy will be practicable. When men of different faiths and races can meet and bring themselves, their country, their money, their plans, their ideas, and their rule, all under the guidance of God, expecting Him to lead, and prepared to obey at once, then indirect and direct rule will become synonymous, for it will be His rule.

We have been afraid to apply Christ's clear teaching to such matters, and the world is slowly coming to see that the chaos which ensues is due to that fear. We have been misled into thinking that in dealing with young and subject races, prestige, discipline, force, and similar weapons are essential in the relations of ruler to ruled. Christ surely would teach us that in service and humility we should reach inevitably the height and object which He reached. Shall we not learn that, in all relations, suffering and service are the true preliminaries to perfection and full understanding?

Four years ago I should not have written thus. But at a House Party held at Oxford by the "Oxford

Group" my own life was changed, with a resultant change in outlook and personal relation to all such subjects. Had I therefore written this book when first requested, some of these latter paragraphs, which to some people will seem sheer folly, would not have been included.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MISSION AT ZARIA

**A**FTER a short furlough, and complete recovery of health in England, I returned at the end of 1901 to Loko to rejoin Hans Vischer and G. P. Bargery. It was not long before Vischer found it necessary to retire on account of ill-health and family claims.

We felt that there was little use in remaining at Loko, a wretched, deserted spot where hyenas, sand flies, mosquitoes, and donkeys alone seemed happy. But how was permission to go elsewhere to be obtained? If an expedition under such a leader as Bishop Tugwell had suffered so severely, and had been forced to withdraw by the special desire of the Governor, was there much likelihood of two youngsters like ourselves going up with any prospect of success? I had to learn that "God is no respecter of persons," and that there are neither old nor young with Him; also, that an interview is worth masses of correspondence; and lastly, that "there is a tide in the affairs of man."

I wrote to ask for an interview with His Excellency, then in Lokoja, three days' journey by dug-out canoe, and very soon had an answer offering to give me half an hour. Quickly a canoe was obtained, and the three days' journey accomplished. There were then few steamboats on the Benue, the great tributary of the Niger.

I had breakfast with one of the most charming hosts, the great statesman who had been chiefly responsible for



a large slice of our empire in East, and later in West Africa. The interview lengthened to two hours, and I think I may say that the friendship which began then, it has been my privilege never since to lose. To my amazement consent was given to my return north. Very few restrictions were made ; most was left to my common sense. A little valuable advice was offered, one detail being always to travel light, and the second to remain a layman.

Overwhelmed with joy, I returned to find Bargery equally glad to strike camp. Considerable ingenuity had to be used to cut down our loads to the minimum, and even so there were times later when we regretted that we had not further used the axe. The journey at that time was perilous, and mostly through country that was strange to us. Our carriers were proverbially truculent ; and often our journey, not to say our patience and even our lives, were near to being destroyed by their utter fickleness. But this kind of story is well known to all travellers in Africa. I would only add that modern missionaries, civilians, and merchants would do well to learn more about conditions of travel in West Africa in those days, before complaining of the lack of luxuries in the very easy ways of travelling in most parts of Africa to-day.

No more patient, helpful, and efficient companion could have been found than Bargery, or " G. P. B." as all his friends love to call him. Never appearing weary, with a meticulous sense of duty, and an unlimited capacity for work, he was the ideal man for such a journey, either as leader, or as second in command.

One of those who travelled up with us was Abdul Majid, the hajji to whom I have referred in Chapter II.

He had finished his pilgrimage, and had come to join me, during my first furlough, in England ; and was glad to get the chance of going back with us to his own home in the Sudan. He was still a Moslem, but already half-way towards faith in Christ.

A somewhat alarming incident happened on that journey. In a very lonely part of the way, in a valley greatly feared by African native travellers, and given by them a gruesome name, pagan bandits fell upon us. The road was exceedingly narrow, only a track. Our caravan was composed of several scores of people who had asked to be allowed to join us, with a body of spearmen in the advance guard, and their leader, known as a Madugu, at the head. I was more than two-thirds of the way towards the back of the caravan, and about half a mile from the front people. My horse boy dashed back to me. . . .

“ The Pagans are upon us, and are attacking the front of the caravan ; come quickly ; here is your gun ! ”

I do not know what use he thought my shot gun would be, even if I had wished to use it, in thick bush where the attack came from an unknown, unseen source, enemies with poisoned arrows ! I was soon at the scene of disaster, and the Pagans, hearing my galloping horse's hoofs, and possibly knowing there was a white man about, disappeared into the bush, still watching us.

Loads were scattered in all directions ; some had been carried off. People were crying, and nearly frenzied. One man was lying on the ground, if not dead, certainly with no sign of life. A double-barbed poisoned arrow, shot from very near by, had gone clean through his armpit, and protruded behind. This had been torn out by his friends, who feared most the poison ; the man had

apparently succumbed to the power of strophanthus, a vegetable poison, and the desiccated decayed liver of crocodiles, the animal poison – a compound from which recovery was thought to be impossible.

While I examined him, and did all I could, without any available water, to suck the poison from the wound, Bargery was preparing strychnine injections. Never did I feel so thankful for the rapid, collected help of an Englishman as then. I gave three powerful injections, and we both prayed. When I say that the pupil of the man's eye gave no reaction to light or touch; that breathing was absolutely suspended; and the heart and pulse both quite inactive, it will be realized by doctors how far gone was the case.

But in three minutes there was a flicker of the eye, and from that moment, by massage, and everything else that was possible on a blazing, scorching road under a mid-day tropical sun, the man came round. We dressed his wound; and in less than an hour he had been half carried, half walked into camp. In three days he had made sufficient progress to continue on his journey, and we gave him a supply of dressings. This had taken place while the pagan robbers watched us from their concealment in the bush at probably not more than twenty or thirty paces.

A few more days of travelling, usually about seven hours a day, with incessant troubles from carriers and a variety of smaller pests, and we arrived in the city of Zaria, to be welcomed in very friendly fashion by the Emir Kwasau. Quite obviously he had decided to allow his previous treatment of me, when in Girku with Bishop Tugwell, to fade into oblivion. We were given a resting place in the house of our old acquaintance the chief of the

blacksmiths, whose Hausa title was *Sarkin Makera*. This man was one of the most powerful in the province, a prime favourite with the Emir, and always my faithful and true friend.

At that time there were powerful guilds in Zaria, Kano, and other of the chief Hausa cities, very much like our guilds in the Middle Ages. Builders, blacksmiths, merchants, butchers, weavers, and even the lepers and the blind, all had their chief and a whole galaxy of notables with high-sounding titles. Each trade union, so to speak, was self-centred, self-ruled, and self-protected, exerting great influence in the politics of the province; none more so than the blacksmiths, and the "chief" of the blacksmiths was a man to reckon with.

When he went to salute the Emir he travelled in almost royal splendour, magnificently mounted, accompanied by many of his chiefs and followers on beautiful horses, with silver trappings of real beauty, exquisite workmanship, and great costliness. This was our appointed host; and in the weeks which we spent in Zaria the kindly old gentleman treated us with generosity and friendship. Under the British Administration these guilds with their elected chiefs have lost their original character and power. They were undoubtedly a salutary check on the autocracy of the emirs, and I personally greatly regret the passing of their useful influence.

In coming to Zaria at this time we had undoubtedly run our heads into a quite unforeseen and very dangerous trap. During the months since we had left the north, there had been a perceptible hardening of feeling against the British, and the complexion of affairs in the northern emirates was becoming very unhealthy. There was considerable apprehension about future British movements.

The Sultan of Sokoto, for a variety of obviously invented reasons – it would be hard for a foreigner to know which were real, if indeed there were any such – had withdrawn his support from his vassal of Zaria. Failure to pay taxes; an insufficient annual tribute of slaves; insubordination and truculence; and many other reasons were adduced.

My own belief was that Emir Kwasau was more far-seeing than the other emirs; was guided to a considerable extent by the Sarkin Makera, a very shrewd man; and knew that his province, being on the direct route to the northern emirates, would be the first to be invaded, were the British to advance. He had therefore decided to sit on the fence, and not openly defy the white man as Kano and others were doing. I think also that our close contact with him, and the many serious talks we had had together may have influenced him to some extent in the same direction. Clearly the attitude of Kwasau had been noted by Sokoto and Kano, and they determined to make an example of him. Sir Hugh Clifford lately described Zaria as the gateway to the Hausa States.

Nagwamachi, nephew of the Sultan of Sokoto, Emir of Kwantagora, and known as “The king of the Sudan” by sycophants who loved to give high-sounding titles, was chosen as the instrument of discipline. He had fled from his own town when it was captured by Colonel Kemball. This filibuster, always ready for a scrap, gladly invented reasons, and invaded Zaria Province. “Invasion” meant that he “sat down” in a huge camp with his thousands of “braves,” and sallied out at intervals to catch the poor undefended villagers, farm labourers and their wives and children, besides any travellers who were unarmed. In this way he had soon

collected a large number of captives, who were disposed of by being sent, some to Sokoto, some to Kano and Zamfara, while the "king of the Sudan" kept all he wanted for himself!

In one of my unguarded walks outside the city I met a little group composed of a man, his wife, and three children, one a child in arms, captured just in this way, and in the hands of their captors. I could do nothing. The woman was destined for Sokoto, so they told me, her husband for Kano, and Nagwamachi would keep the three children; they would probably never meet again. Such was war and its consequent slavery in the Hausa States before the British occupation.

So far Nagwamachi had not tried conclusions with the city of Zaria, which was thirteen miles in circumference, with a wonderful mud wall, nine gateways of great thickness built of mud, and well defended, and, to such an army as his, well-nigh impregnable. But he was becoming bolder and bolder in his incursions on villages and smaller walled towns, and only awaiting the result of treachery in the city to make his attack. He had made known beforehand what were his intentions toward the two white men in the city. They were no kinder than those he had felt and shown to our messenger with mails, just a year before. The messenger had been beheaded and our mails of three months cast to the winds.

In the city of Zaria were a number of princes, malams, and other important men from Sokoto. Coming from the capital, and through their association - often faked - with the Sultan, these people exacted large presents, houses, and hospitality wherever they stayed. They were more dreaded than the locusts; and woe to the unhappy householder upon whom one or more of these

vampires was quartered by the Emir ; for neither wife, nor children, nor animals ; nor corn nor substance were his own during the enforced stay of his visitors. These people repaid the hospitality (*sic*) of the Emir by conspiring against him, with all malcontents, strangers, and evilly-disposed people, fomenting unrest among the inhabitants also by stories of the Emir's cruelty, too many of which unfortunately were true.

The Emir some days previously had sent an urgent letter to the Governor, begging for help. This of course was done secretly, for he would never have been forgiven had it become known. But through his confidant, the "chief" of the blacksmiths, he had informed me of this move.

Day after day passed and no news or help came. Nagwamachi and his fighting men and spies were everywhere. Affairs were getting desperate. Picture the position. On the outside, a powerful emir and fighting man, with an army, and backed by the chief Moslem emirs of the north, not very far from the city, watching and ready. Inside, rank treachery and unrest among the people.

I was constantly called by the Emir for a talk, and became *persona grata* with him. It was clear that he was in desperate straits, and even meditated flight. My constant word of cheer to him was : " I know that God is looking after us, and I am sure that Lugard never breaks faith with any one who has trusted him."

During our enforced residence in Zaria a rather dramatic meeting occurred. The Hausa boy Abdu, whom I met in Tripoli and who had done the pilgrimage to Mecca, was in Zaria with me during these events, as my confidant, helper, and friend in everything.

One day the "chief" of the blacksmiths came into my room and said: "There is a woman here from Katsina, who has a story of her husband and son. Years ago they started on the pilgrimage to Mecca, and she has had no definite news of them for nearly four years, but has heard rumours of your boy Abdu, and . . . wonders!" Knowing Abdu's history, I got up quickly, walked into another room, and found a veiled woman sitting on a mat with others round her. After saluting her and making a few general remarks, I said: "What was your boy's name?" As he was the eldest son she was not permitted by Fulani custom to mention his name, so one of those with her said: "Abdul Majid."

My next questions were: "How old would he be now? What was his father's name? When did they leave Katsina?" The answers left me in no doubt, so I fetched the boy.

I expected some such greeting as there would be if an English mother and son had met after many years, and the latter had been given up for dead. But no! Fulani restraint and dignity had to overrule parental and filial love. "In all things be dignified," is the rule of the Fulani. Abdu stopped at the entrance of the doorway; she remained sitting. One rapid glance to satisfy herself that it was really her son - he already knew - and then with averted eyes,

"*Al Hajji* (Pilgrim)!"

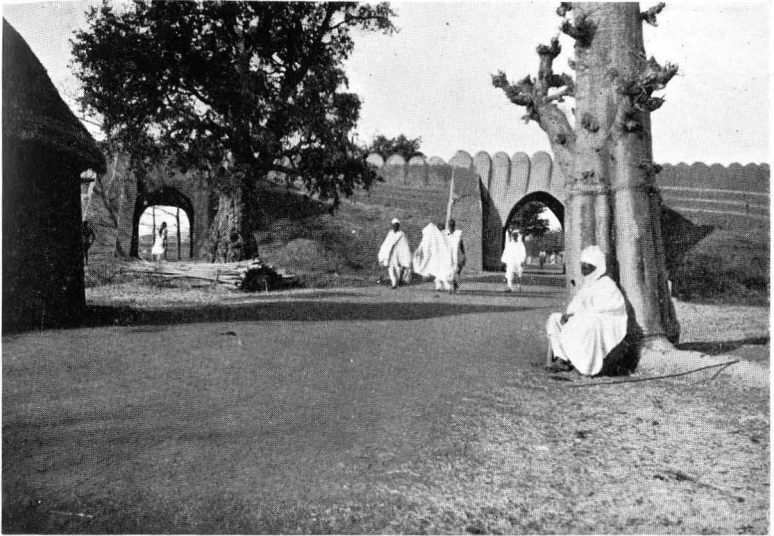
"*Inna* (Mother)"; and yet again: -

"*Al Hajji*."

"*Inna*."

That was all until night came, visitors were gone, inquisitive eyes withdrawn, and then alone these two told their story.





ONE OF THE THIRTEEN  
GATES OF ZARIA CITY: ENTRY AND EXIT

*Photograph by Dr. F. R. Snell*



THE MISSION COMPOUND, ZARIA, 1920

*Facing p. 76*

One morning while Bargery and I were working at our Hausa studies, a tiny note in English was handed to me. We were as much surprised as the people who had prayed for St. Peter's release from prison, when he appeared in person as the answer to their prayer! Quickly opening the note, I read: -

Dear Miller,

Just arrived. Nagwamachi with me a prisoner. Can you come out and see me this afternoon?

George Abadie.

I am not going to try to describe what we both felt. I realized that my first duty was to the Emir: and, followed by Sarkin Makera on foot (*mirabile dictu!*), with no ceremony I made for the Emir's palace. He gave me a great welcome; he also had just heard a rumour of the same news and was glad of my confirmation.

About 4 p.m. I rode out to the new camp. The whole city seemed alive with people, come to see the great event. I found Captain George Abadie and Major Porter, with two English N.C.O's. and some Hausa mounted infantry all encamped. It might have been tea-time after a tennis party in England! There was a jolly little camp table with a white cloth, tea-cups and cake, and perfectly made tea, and this on a piece of ground that had certainly never been occupied by a white man before, probably not even trodden by one.

Abadie welcomed me heartily, and together we chatted over the events which had led up to such a surprise. I will tell his news, as far as I can remember it, in his own words. For even after this thirty-five years no event stands out more vividly in my mind!

"Lugard had news of Nagwamachi's invasion of

Zaria, and the mischief he was doing, and determined to save Zaria as soon as he could spare the men. I as political officer, and Porter of the Mounted Infantry, were given forty men and two or three N.C.O's., and told to ride 'hell for leather' to where Nagwamachi's camp had been fixed, a village called Kaya. We were to do this 130 miles so that no possible news could precede us to give Nagwamachi information of our coming.

"The riding was so hard, and the rest so short, that many of the men dropped out by the way, and when we reached the hill above Kaya, and looked upon the great camp (there were said to be 10,000 men, but this is probably a considerable exaggeration!) there were only seven of us, including Porter and myself; and our horses were worn out. We decided to risk it, so putting spurs to our very wearied horses we galloped down and took them utterly by surprise. We made for the largest hut, concluding it would be Nagwamachi's; and before any one could resist had handcuffed him. Our bluff succeeded. A few more of the M.I. rolled up, and after a rest we came on here, having told the majority of the raiders that our quarrel was with Nagwamachi, not with them, and that they might all go home. So here we are with the king and a few of his chiefs under escort. I shall see the Emir to-day, hoist the Union Jack, and begin to establish British control over Zaria."

Abadie was an unusually charming man: a good soldier, a first-class administrator, trusted and loved by Lugard whose right-hand man he was for some years, a student, a linguist, as much at home in German philosophical books as in military tactics, and the most perfect gentleman and friend. I look back with pleasure and poignant regret, for he died very young, to every

remembrance of my close relationship with this true Englishman. The name by which he is remembered by Africans, *Maijimina*, the "owner of an ostrich" (Abadie used often to travel with an ostrich), is loved by all who knew him. To white and black he was always one of the best that our country can produce.

Early the next morning I received a note of a very different kind, and one that changed our plans considerably. The Hausa members of the M.I. were obsessed by fear of the magic powers of this man Nagwamachi. "He could turn them into toads at will! He could destroy and annihilate whom he would in this world and the next! No chains could hold him!" In their fear and lack of logic it had not occurred to them that if he had such powers he might have used them sooner.

Abadie felt the position insecure, and told me that he was leaving at daybreak, with Nagwamachi handcuffed between two English N.C.O's., for Zungeru, then the government head-quarters. I mounted my horse at once, and rode out to meet him, escorted him for a mile or so on his way, and returned a little disconsolately to our quarters in Zaria. But with all his own difficulties Abadie had not forgotten mine. He arranged with the Emir Kwasau that we should be allowed to return to our old place in Girku and build houses there.

So ended one of the bravest things done in Nigeria, and with no bloodshed, but quietly and efficiently, as everything else this agent of the British Government did. I suppose the records are kept. Possibly Abadie never gave all the details, for I do not think I have met, even among political officers in Nigeria, any who knew all that Abadie told me that day. By such quiet deeds, done with no bluster or advertisement, does the English rule

make Africans and others respect it. *O, si sic omnes!*

Nagwamachi remained a prisoner in Zungeru; Zaria breathed; the Sokoto faction was outwitted; the Emir of Zaria was exultant. And we, freed so unexpectedly from the menace of the now imprisoned raider, left Zaria after a few weeks for Girku, which again became the head-quarters of our work until 1905. Nagwamachi was afterwards reinstated and given another chance!

Village people are proverbially slow, and those in Girku were no exception. Fear of Zaria, the great city, prevented them showing any deep interest in anything new. They were good friends to us; they counted us as their friends, and we were able to do a great deal for them in medical and other ways. But I do not think that the message of deliverance from fear and sin, or the wonder of God's free forgiveness ever entered deeply into their hearts.

Bargery worked long and patiently among them. Two other clergymen, the Rev. F. H. Lacy and the Rev. W. P. Low who joined him there, stayed but a short time. They did not find Moslem work attractive, and begged permission to open a station in a pagan area. This they did, and the work they started in this and another station is now in charge of the Sudan Interior Mission. Dr. A. E. Druitt, another "Bart's" man, joined us early in 1902 with great hope of results through medical and surgical skill, and worked indefatigably. Later his wife, a trained nurse, came out with him on his return from leave, and they worked in Zaria, winning the love of many women there. But they longed for more distinct medical work, and it seemed wrong to hold them to a place where opportunities were so small. In 1907

they were sent to help build up a work which Miss Elms had started in Iyi Enu, near Onitsha. In 1904 Theodore Lunt, who joined me in England and came out with me, was taken ill before he got any further than Bida, and after making most plucky attempts over and over again, finally had to give up. He went back to England within six months of his arrival, not again to return to Nigeria.

In 1906 Bargery married and brought out his wife to Lokoja. The next year they were transferred to Bida, but after a few months he was invalided. On their return in 1908 they settled in Zaria for two years. Mrs. Bargery, known as "Sahiba," took a deep interest in the women and girls of the city.

I had never felt that Girku was long to remain our chief station, and it was with real pleasure and satisfaction that we obtained permission from the British Administration, and the new Emir of Zaria, Aliyu, to start in Zaria what was to become my life work. I was soon joined by W. A. Thompson from the West Indies, a man of sterling worth and great love of the people. He was my continual fellow-worker and indispensable colleague for many years.

Together we built the new compound and houses in Zaria - very primitive they were - and together we lived and worked, and shared our love for the people and desire to bring them to Christ. No man has done more spiritually for the Hausa people than this African brother of theirs. No man known to me so completely won their respect and confidence. He was an African among Africans always, but one with so lofty a creed, so high an ideal, so irreproachable a character, and a name never associated with any slander, that he lifted them up. We

had converts later who loved me as father and gave me true and loyal devotion, but Thompson was to them their brother, one with them in colour and race.

In school or medical work, in itineration and church work, as teacher and preacher, and in translation of the Scriptures, as builder, carpenter, sugar maker, and farmer, Thompson quietly but efficiently brought all his ability and laid it out for the Kingdom of God in Nigeria. He demonstrated in his life the power of that Kingdom simply and unostentatiously so that men respected him, boys and girls trusted him and loved him. Even Moslem women felt that here was a black man, unmarried, whose virtue and purity raised him above the level of any men they knew, and they revered him.

These were the days when we began to see men's and women's lives being changed, and when the message of the Cross, and the love of God shown supremely there, was beginning to awaken a response. But contacts had to be strengthened, deep foundations dug, and we had much to learn before that work could become vital. We were very raw, and I as leader had been forced by circumstances to take a position which I was not well fitted to occupy.

Rapid advance was soon made in the language, and I acquired a thorough working knowledge of Hausa. Considerable experience in work at home among boys and students, as an undergraduate and later in the Student Christian Movement as a travelling secretary, had trained me in understanding character. But all this African work was entirely new, and needed new equipment. To undertake school work, and make it a success without any previous training as an educationist; to conduct correspondence with government officials and

native rulers in matters needing delicacy and precision, without previous preparation ; to undertake such a work as the translation of the Scriptures without the particular scholarship so badly required – these were some of my responsibilities. In addition there were a variety of other lesser matters for which a good missionary ought to have special training, if he is to do pioneer work. All these things made for despair until God's strength, made perfect in weakness, was even partially realized.

Behind and at the back of all this we knew that we were ambassadors for Jesus Christ, His representatives among people of another faith, who could not be won by argument but by courtesy, love, and friendship. We had to bring some vital contribution to a people whose religion, while giving Christ a great name, did not acknowledge His supreme claim, and knew nothing of His love in life and death. We had to show Him ; and we found that we often spoilt our work by a blurred representation of Him. In making friends, in accommodating our ideas to the thought and life of the people, all had to be directed toward this one passion, to give what we had been given, and to share what had come to us.

Whether as fellow-citizens we talked of trade, economics, the harvests ; or joined our boys in the farm round our compound in sowing, and doing what we could in such a climate to show fellowship ; or played hockey and football truly and well, the one object was always before us – the regeneration of the lives of our people. We wished to be helpers and perhaps leaders – though often learners – in everything that was good, and which made for the social and moral uplift of the country. In the midst of religious misunderstanding, political unrest, and frequent opposition from unexpected quarters, one



sometimes was tempted to question whether anything but failure could come.

I never could accept the premises of some who claimed on the one hand that Islam was good enough for these people ; or on the other, that God could not show them the beauty and surpassing wonder of His Son's life and death, because they were not capable of understanding and appreciating it. Or again, I could not believe that Moslems would inevitably refuse to accept when they did understand. My later experience, when many had suffered much to follow Christ, gave the lie to all such ideas.

So throughout those years of alternate hope and despair, of success and disappointment, health and sickness, the optimism of Christ became our sheet anchor. I have continued to believe, when critics and even experience seemed to prove that one was a fool, that He will reign, and will yet establish His Kingdom in Moslem Nigeria, perhaps through us, perhaps through some from among the people themselves.

## CHAPTER IX

### MISSION AND GOVERNMENT IN ZARIA

**I**N 1905 began what was to be my longest stretch of work in any one place. For twenty-four years Zaria became the head-quarters of the Hausa Mission, and from this place have gradually spread other C.M.S. stations and work among both Moslems and Pagans in the Hausa country.

The Emir of Zaria must have smiled in his voluminous sleeve when he found which was our choice of the three compounds he offered us. To the east of this compound was a large space of open ground ; to the south a deep, unhealthy pond which took us years to drain, because it was connected with a whole system of other ponds belonging to our neighbours. Naturally they objected to our getting rid of our surplus water during the heavy rains and draining our pond in such a way that it overflowed into their premises.

To the north and west were other compounds, or one might more justifiably call them rabbit warrens, occupied by a considerable population of the poorer type of Hausa people, many of them butchers. After the execution (!) of an ox or sheep for food purposes I have known the neighbourhood swarm with repulsive vultures, so familiar a feature of tropical Africa, drawn together by the sight or smell of offal and blood and scraps of meat.

It was also not at all an uncommon event for us to be

threatened with a fire in our compound, as our neighbours seemed to be perpetually having them. Had there been an insurance company in Zaria the premiums would have been very high. My boys won admiration and friendship for the really brave way in which they would quickly line up, and get water into all our buckets and other vessels, climb up on to the burning roofs, and by their agility and fearlessness often save life and property.

In addition to this nuisance, there were open wells in the middle of these native compounds, flush with the ground, into which, not infrequently, children and even old women fell and were drowned. On more than one occasion one of my plucky boys went down into these deep awesome holes and brought up, more dead than alive, a child who had fallen in, and for whose rescue no one else seemed sufficiently to care. One day, the father of a little girl came in to tell me of his child's plight, and spent so long in the ceremonial salutations without which no Hausa ever likes to get to more important business, that had it not been for a quick-witted and brave lad, called Musa, who went down and fished her out at the risk of his own life, she certainly would have been the victim of carelessness and ceremony. We did artificial respiration and she completely recovered.

But the reason why the Emir must have been amused at our choice was because the compound had such an evil reputation that no one cared even to pass it at night after sunset; many were the weird stories of people who had tried to live there but had died in horror, or rushed out and been mad for the rest of their days. We ascertained long afterwards that many criminals had been killed and buried in this compound: the urns over their

graves were accidentally opened in our building operations. Although in complete ignorance of this I was constantly aware of very queer happenings. I failed either to confirm or quash a persistent report from my boys of weird appearances in the evening, when they sat in the moonlight chatting, appearances of huge figures standing up immediately above these urns, and then sinking into the ground! What I did prove to my own satisfaction was that on more than one occasion a horse which remained perfectly quiet during the night in several other parts of the compound, if tethered near this spot tore up wooden, and finally even iron stakes, and rushed for some minutes wildly round the compound in evident great fright.

There is much work for enterprising members of the Psychological Research Society to do in Africa. I have no remnants of superstition in me, and only say about these weird phenomena that I can find none of the usual explanations satisfactory. We have the common stories of men turning into animals – in Nigeria always into hyenas. Such stories the unromantic white man hears and investigates, and merely says: “I neither know nor understand, nor attempt to explain”!

Our Emir Aliyu did not think we should be in the compound long. If he could have induced jinns and spirits to do what he was much too polite to do himself, I think he would have been glad. But we proved obdurate, and apparently the jinns and ghosts and spirits got tired and gave up the fight, for, as our early Christian converts said later on: “We had a Spirit stronger than these.”

From the beginning we were clear that our residences should conform as far as possible in type and detail to

those of the people among whom we lived. Our huts were built of mud with grass roofs, and a veranda of the same materials. We had then, and until 1915, no storied houses. A mud wall surrounded the compound, and at one point, by an involution of the wall, a porch became part of the compound, forming a room with two doorways open all day, so that a visitor could come in to this porch without any ceremony, stay and work in it – we had seats made – or take shelter during rain. From the inner doorway he could see all the interior of our compound; but, if he wished to enter, the usual salutation, so well known in all Moslem lands: “*Assalam alaikum,*” was made in a loud voice, to be answered from inside by the word of peace: “*Alaikum assalam,*” and the visitor was free then to walk into any part of the compound.

The “triple fence” of dog, iron palings with wires, and staircase to an upper story, which so often form a fatal block to friendship between missionaries and their Moslem acquaintances, we eschewed. We lived among the people, and were easily accessible by day or night. To this, as well as the friendliness of our boys, and our refusal ever to be “not at home,” I attribute the quite surprising friendship which I had with the people of Zaria. When several years later, the Rev. A. G. Fraser, of Achimota, came up to visit me, and we walked or rode together in the streets and to some of the compounds of the Zaria people, he told me that nothing so surprised him in Zaria, accustomed as he was to life in India and Ceylon, as to find the extraordinary confidence and friendship which existed between me and other members of the Mission, and the Moslem population. I had the *entrée* into a large number of Moslem houses, including

the women's quarters, where even Africans were not admitted, if men and over fifteen years of age.

Perhaps my African friends will not feel hurt if I say that at that time there were three things that distinguished our house from others: they were cleanliness; the presence of beautiful plots of grass which my boys and I spent many hours in cultivating; and the large number of flowers which we grew: roses, *Pride of Barbados*, lilies, and double hibiscus being the chief.

I was greatly amused when an African stranger visiting the compound and seeing the grass and the flowers, said: "I'm sorry to see how much your compound has gone to 'bush'; can I let my boys help to clear away your grass?" It was a little difficult to refuse the proffered help and explain to him the purpose of our seeming untidiness. And again:—

"What are those for" (pointing to the flowers)?  
"Do you eat them?"

"Not usually."

"Then do you make medicine of them?"

Again I had to reply in the negative.

Seeing also that the compound was not overgrown with corn, which is found in most Hausa compounds, making the place dark and insanitary, I think my visitor went away feeling that however friendly we might be we were certainly most unpractical people. We were yet a long way from the days when some of themselves, and many of their children, with better knowledge of God and of one of His great attributes, beauty, could appreciate and love sunsets, flowers, and pictures; but those days did come.

During all these early years, partly from choice, partly from necessity, we lived the simple life. We had

no washstands, no chests of drawers, few chairs – and those very plain and uncomfortable ; we lived in boxes ; had tables made of bamboos and plastered with mud, and never anything nicer than a camp bed to sleep on. Yet one looks back with some wistfulness to those days, and wonders whether all the furniture and equipment which is brought up now, the really nice houses, and almost English life make for an existence more truly happy. As my aim from the first was to introduce nothing which would tend to separate me from the people, I think I can say that were it possible one would greatly prefer the old. But *tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis* ; and perhaps it is well so.

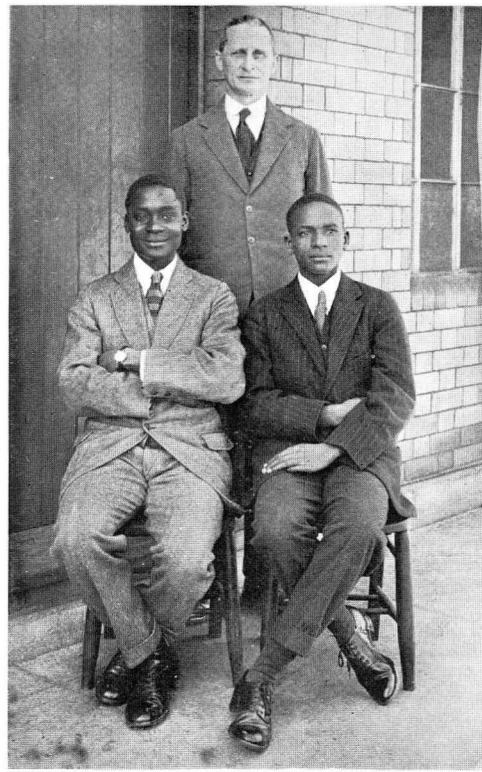
Very quickly we made friends ; far too quickly to please the Emir and some of his servants ! From morning to evening one heard the familiar “ Assalam alaikum,” bringing ever fresh callers.

Among the many with whom I formed a close friendship in those early days in Zaria, was a tall, handsome old Fulah, who lived in a village five miles from Zaria and owned large herds of cattle. He came in with his son, a young man of about twenty, soon to be married. They had feared signs of leprosy in the boy, and had heard of me as one able and willing to help. It turned out to be not leprosy but something I was able to deal with, and a strong friendship grew up between the three of us. The men began to learn to read, and this drew upon them some family persecution ; but they persevered, and ere long both were baptized.

Before this, however, the younger man was married, and his little son later on became one of my most faithful and close friends among the boys. The old grandfather’s faith in Christ grew wonderfully ; he would never miss



THE MISSION BUILDER, ZARIA, 1919-35



DR. MILLER AND TWO HAUSA STUDENTS  
(TAFIDA AND ANFANI), 1925  
*(Taken on roof at Messrs. Fry's cocoa works, Bristol)*



walking five miles on Saturday to come to our evening prayer meeting and to spend Sunday with us. During the wet season, not two years after his baptism, he was stopped at the river between Aba (his village) and Zaria ; but although many younger than he feared crossing the swollen river, nothing could daunt him, and he arrived at the mission shivering, wet, and very exhausted. I did not realize the degree to which this old hero had suffered, and often now reproach myself for not having seen through his dignified refusal to acknowledge pain and suffering. He died from dysentery within forty-eight hours ; but there were victory and heroism and the joy of Christ in the old warrior who in his early days had fought fights of a different sort and feared no man. He was buried close to our house, the firstfruits of those that slept in Christ in Zaria, of whom we knew that they could never die.

The son's family grew, and to-day there are six children. His wife, for long a persistent Moslem, has come into the Christian Church ; the eldest boy, Paul Anfani, who came home with me to England in 1925, is now schoolmaster in a large mission in the province of Yola at a town called Garkida. He, Paul, and his wife, and now their children, are all one in faith with the old grandfather, and the father who also has since " passed over." The youngest boy therefore is now my great-great-grandson in the faith !

There were others like these during this period, boys in our little school, and men and women, who braved the reproach of coming out for Christ's sake and being counted among those who had apostatized and were for ever accursed.

Among the boys who very early showed unusual

promise was one who had been born near Lake Chad, and been taken captive and sold into slavery, just as Bishop Crowther was. He came to me at Zungeru, then the government head-quarters. I never thought I should keep him. Several times he ran away. The sweetest possible smile was not incompatible with the worst of tempers, and I often despaired of a change. In spite of this he was indefatigable in learning. Books were his delight, and he quickly forged ahead of all my other boys. But the fiendish temper and morose nature, probably the result of months in slavery, were a problem to me. The boys did not feel safe in playing games with him, for sudden gusts of fury made him dangerous.

Soon after the age of fifteen the change came which our Lord called being "born again," and the boy with the untamed nature became a "new man in Christ." He was a diligent student, passed through our school in Zaria, became a master, went to the college at Oyo, and later was ordained, the first Hausa clergyman of the Church of England. For several years in Zaria and in the Bauchi Plateau he carried on a good work, valued by those of his colleagues, white and black, who saw the gentle, patient spirit of one who, once like the Gadarene, was changed by the same Master, and sent out as a witness of the great things God had done. This my adopted son, now known as the Rev. Henry Miller, is living and working with his wife, in charge of our large C.M.S. station in Lokoja, with many out-stations and a big central church. He has seven children, all of whom he is educating to become worthy of their father. They all call me "Grandfather."

The many restrictions put upon our work were deemed

necessary by a Government which was ruling a huge African protectorate with a very small number of white men. I could see neither the necessity nor the wisdom of this plan ; and felt that a bolder policy would have been equally safe or safer, and in the long run have made for the truer blessing of the country. But I am dealing with this subject in another chapter. It was often a great burden to me to see work that might have been done so easily, and with such good results, prohibited.

Juvenile offenders were herded in the common prisons, and I begged for the right to help save them from lives of crime ; but it was held that this was too much like proselytism, and was refused. A counter suggestion made by the Resident to the Emir that some Moslem malams should take up the matter ended in nothing. I could have done a great deal for the education of the country, before the Education Department got into its stride much later on, but this again was feared to have elements which would excite the suspicion of the Moslem rulers.

Within a very few years, without outside help, and entirely by personal efforts and the help of other men, African and English, who worked with me, a school was built up which was the best in Northern Nigeria ; and, as far as I know, not a particle of resentment was ever shown by Moslems against it. In fact, one Christmas, when we were having our terminal break up and a distinctly Christian religious service, the Waziri of the province, *i.e.* the highest Moslem officer next to the Emir, responded most kindly to my invitation, came in, and very charmingly addressed the whole school, giving some helpful words of encouragement and advice.

I was not supposed to itinerate and preach in the

villages, but managed perfectly openly and honestly to continue doing this all the years I lived in Zaria. Whenever I was called over the coals in a friendly way by the Resident, I pleaded guilty to the offence, and offered to stop if a definite prohibition were put in writing. This was not done, and we continued, and I am convinced that the Governor had never any more fear than I had that we should be such fools as to provoke trouble and so spoil our own work. I believe I am right in saying that during the thirty-five years in which missionary work has been carried on by the C.M.S. in the Hausa States of Northern Nigeria, in spite of all fears and anxieties on the part of the Administration, there has never been a single incident calculated to cause trouble to the Administration that could be attributed in any sense to missionary work.

I have visited a town and seen the people in a fury of excitement, ready for mischief, and have passed on, receiving only kindness, and heard the next day that a police officer was murdered in the same town with his guard. I have often been in places where government servants went with a large police or military guard; and although only accompanied by two or three boys I have passed as a friend through the very country in which men I admired, such as Captain Malone, Barlow, and others were cruelly murdered, when they were on tour in government service.

I am more and more convinced that there was practically no opposition to us *qua* missionary. The native rulers, however, feared our civilizing, educating, emancipating effect on their people, as it was to their interest to keep them in subjection and ignorance. I do not wish to labour the point or to refer at too great length to this

matter. It has passed; either the policy is rapidly changing, or the idea is now, as C. D. Temple, the first Lieutenant-Governor, used to say: "Only keep the missionaries and the lawyers out until such time as they can do no harm; the people will then learn to estimate them at their right value."

At the invitation of the Governor I undertook to be examiner for the Administration in the Hausa language. I greatly enjoyed this work, and especially the opportunities of visiting Government House at Zungeru, where I always had the kindest welcome from the Governor, and met people who were engaged in the administration of the different provinces. Among those whom I examined were C. D. Temple (afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Northern Nigeria), Gowers (afterwards Sir W. Gowers, the Governor of Uganda), Palmer (afterwards Sir H. Palmer, High Commissioner of Cyprus), and Arnett, Resident of the Cameroons. There was always a great keenness in learning the Hausa language, and among the various administrative and educational officers of the protectorate were several who made real advance in it. I surrendered this work later on to the Education Department, which by then had many men who were well able to examine for both lower and higher standard. Quite recently, however, when the scheme for a much higher examination, to be known as a higher proficiency examination, was revived I was asked to conduct this.

During one of my earliest visits for this purpose to Zungeru I saw the Freed Slave Home which had been founded by the Governor. Into this home were brought the large number of freed slaves, who in spite of the stringent laws against raiding, were still being caught

and enslaved. The Governor was deeply interested in this home, and it was largely through his persistent energy and known determination that many hundreds of children were rescued from a life of slavery. From this home I was allowed to select five boys and take them back with me to Zaria, where they, together with the sons of a few leading Zaria Moslems, formed the nucleus of our first school.

It was on one of these examination visits to Government House that I had a very severe attack of blackwater fever, and my missionary career was nearly terminated. I can never forget the care and kindness and attention which a busy man like Sir Frederick Lugard freely gave me. With every comfort I was taken to the little hospital, where devoted nurses, and an unusually clever doctor, Dr. Twomey, pulled me through. At that time blackwater fever had a very sinister name for being usually fatal, and it says something for my constitution and the wonderful treatment I had at Zungeru that I was able after only a five months' furlough in England to return to full work again in Nigeria.

In 1907 two Cambridge men, Lloyd and Fox, who had been greatly attracted to the idea of working among the pagan tribes of the Bauchi Plateau, in Nigeria, joined us in Zaria to see something of the work there, and to get all the help and experience that I could give them in language and other matters, preparatory to exploring the possibilities of a country at that time not well known. Jack Lloyd was a brilliant lacrosse player, and had taken a combined team of Oxford and Cambridge men to Canada. Both he and George Fox, son of the Honorary Secretary of the C.M.S., were ordained and had held curacies. They were splendid with boys; they adapted

themselves most delightfully to everything in Zaria; and in a few short months learnt a great deal of building and builders, African customs and etiquette; besides getting a working knowledge of Hausa.

I coveted these two cheerful, keen men for work with me; but they had no doubt of their call to a pagan district, and taking with them some of our best builders and the hearty goodwill of the people in Zaria, who had come to know and appreciate both of them, they said good-bye to us and went to what was a dangerous enterprise with high and gallant cheerfulness. This story must leave them here. They began a work which has spread far, and now, in the hands of two other societies, the Sudan United and the Sudan Interior Missions, I believe there is hardly a large tribe left, of the great number living on that plateau and speaking bewilderingly different languages, that is not being effectively evangelized. Where there were utter savages, and even cannibals, there are now many self-supporting churches which are themselves carrying the Gospel far afield.

This is one of the compact mission fields in which results are very obvious. There seems little reason to doubt that within this generation we may expect the plateau to have a solid Christian population. Certainly the day of Paganism is vanishing, and Islam, in the face of such a strong body of Christian men and thought, is not likely to gain much hold. Here the Administration, after the first early days of difficulty in subduing wild tribes who lived largely in the mountains, has given real help and encouragement. At a later stage in the development of the country considerable independence was granted to the pagan peoples, and some of their own chiefs were entrusted with government and the

maintenance of law ; only the paramount Moslem emir was retained.

A very interesting experiment has been made by Eric Mort of the Government Education Department, and now Acting Director in Kaduna. He has started a training college for selected young Pagans, many of them married, where they will get a good education and become able leaders, even rulers of their own peoples. Men of different tribes are living and studying together, and three of my old boys from Zaria are acting under the Education Department as head master and assistant masters in the college.

Jack Lloyd and George Fox both died and are buried in Northern Nigeria, as well as a younger brother, John Fox, a doctor. These three will never be forgotten. With Wedgwood, who joined them shortly after, they were pioneers of the right sort, and started a work which has reached far greater dimensions than they ever expected. The two societies already mentioned are continually advancing, and in addition to hospitals and important leper work have built a large sanatorium where tired missionaries can rest, and where most useful conferences meet triennially. At these conferences a considerable measure of union and a wise working basis have been reached between the many societies working in Northern Nigeria. The chief agent in the progress towards union, a man who never ceases to strive for fellowship in all possible directions among missionaries, is Bishop A. W. Smith, under whose greatly valued chairmanship these conferences are held.

The feature in any Moslem work most likely to prevent its increase and value is the great difficulty of reaching



the women and girls. Not many of them in Zaria were willing to take the step of public confession of Christ, in fact it would have been well-nigh impossible for them to do so. And yet if there was to be a church, if the young Christian men were to find wives, if there was ever to be a Christian conscience and public opinion, and the hoary evils of a country under the control of unreformed Islamic ideals were to be overthrown, it was essential that work should be started among girls, and a new, a Christian relationship shown to be possible.

Accordingly an experiment was made in 1907, and with the permission of the Administration three unmarried women, Dr. Wakefield, Miss Fox, and my sister were brought up to Zaria by Bishop and Mrs. Tugwell, who remained for some months to initiate the work. Some little girls came from the Freed Slave Home and one or two Moslem parents were induced to bring their children; and so a beginning was made. These English women were pioneers in a very difficult piece of work. Many of their early girls are now married, and as trained women and mothers of children have contributed untold stability and blessing to our Hausa Church, making it far more easy to have a community life in which alone is it possible for a mission among Moslems to grow.

Visiting among the women in the city was carried out with real success, and many friendships were made. It is not too much to say that these English women endeared themselves greatly to the people of Zaria. A girls' hostel was started, which has steadily grown and has been the home in which many really Christian women have been trained, and are now scattered all over Northern Nigeria, living as respected members of the community and useful members of the Church. Dr.

Wakefield and Miss Fox had to leave Nigeria before their second tour of service. They suffered much from fever, as did also my sister, and it seemed as if the effort would fail; but Ethel Miller returned later, and from then onward this work has been continuous. Miss Paddon, Miss Commeline, and others shared in it, and finally Miss Bryant took charge from 1921 onward. My sister later left the C.M.S., but worked independently in Kano as a pioneer, living for some years in a native Hausa compound, cycling and walking great distances daily in the sun to visit in the villages, and doing much useful medical work. Her example of heroic self-sacrifice has been and will be an example to the Christian Church in the Hausa country for all time. She is still in Kano, living in a tiny mud house, and carrying on her work.

The Administration during these years had effected far-reaching reforms, in gradually bringing the status and worst conditions of slavery and the slave trade to an end, in reforming the courts of law, and in making a start in educational work. One system of taxation after another was introduced, for the idea was at first to alter as little as possible the previously existing system, which, in its way, was fairly suitable to the country. The present system may more or less accurately be described as essentially an income tax, and it is in the assessing of this that so much of the patience and ability of political officers has been displayed. The introduction of a direct tax in many districts was, of course, a serious innovation; tax-survey journeys had to be made until each division, each hamlet, and even each individual was carefully assessed. Some of these surveys led to trouble and minor risings, but they have gradually ceased, and the

whole country is now under a definite, and fairly uniform system of taxation.

Personally I could wish that the farming class, who so often find it really difficult to make ends meet, much less get a decent income, could be less heavily taxed, and that other classes might make up for this alleviation. There are some trades and the large class of middlemen who could afford to pay far more; there are the numerous professional beggars, many of whom are very well off, ride magnificent horses, and are intolerable bullies, who go into the compounds and extract money by every means of wheedling, cheating, cursing, and everything short of positive compulsion. These should be taxed out of existence. They are often the sycophants of rulers who ought to know better than to keep such men; they are the plague of the villages, and by lies and foul abuse practically force the poor women of the harems and poorer families to give them quite unneeded alms, or purchase filthy, and quite useless medicines.

I should like to see the illicit distilling of beer and other native drinks dealt with far more severely. This is carried on to a considerable extent by aliens from the coast, and by cosmopolitan Pagans who live in the new settlements which are springing up everywhere around the native Moslem towns and cities. Connivance and bribery of the native police are not infrequent and should be recognized and stopped wherever possible.

A young Christian policeman, a convert from Islam, a man of great intelligence and who has risen rapidly from one grade to another in his promotion from the ranks until he is now a Cadet Inspector, a personal friend and old boy of mine, has worked hard in two large centres to get this thing stopped. The drink,

ostensibly made for and sold to non-Moslem aliens, eventually gets into the hands of Moslems, large numbers of whom are learning to drink in defiance of the laws of their religion. This and the sale of permits to non-natives need far more strict attention. To my certain knowledge Moslems who are able to purchase whisky, vermuth, gin, and other intoxicants are doing so to an alarming extent, and I have been positively informed that some of the emirs, notably the Emir of Kano, would welcome far greater stringency in dealing with this curse. A constant cause of friction in the family of Aliyu, one of the Emirs of Zaria, was the drinking habits of some of his relatives, who held high positions in the emirate.

In the early years after the occupation, in addition to several small risings in pagan districts there were a few rather more alarming Moslem insurrections. They were, however, with one exception, sporadic, unconnected, and never really dangerous.

The rising in the early days of a blind prophet and *soi-disant* Mahdi at Satiru in the Sokoto Emirate caused the death of three administrative and army officers and some native soldiers. The Sultan of Sokoto, cautiously sitting on the fence, might have thrown in his lot with the rising. This would have been serious, and at that time might have led to a more general revolt. Quick handling, a marvellous forced march, and the usual efficiency with which British administrators deal with such affairs, led, however, to its rapid suppression. The ensuing barbarities practised by the Sultan of Sokoto, who was at first probably secretly backing up the blind prophet, were horribly shocking. Perhaps they made another rising in the Sokoto Province unlikely.

The second was at Bima, where a half-Arab pretender, Malam Jibraïlu, raised the green standard of Islam and rallied to his flag many thousands of Moslems, chiefs and others. A considerable number of Moslem Senegalese ex-soldiers from French territory joined him, besides a vast horde of fanatical Moslems all too ready to seek a certain heaven by killing infidels. A large Hausa force, with twenty-six British officers, was sent to deal with this formidable attempt to throw off the British rule. It ended, of course, as they all did; and probably the terrific lesson, here learnt, of the impossibility of opposing any kind of valour to weapons of precision soaked into the intelligence of the peoples of Northern Nigeria. At all events, there has been nothing on this scale since, and if one may be so rash as to prophesy, I feel to-day, as I did immediately after Bima, that no rising among the Moslem states of Nigeria will occur again, unless some power big enough to break the French to the north of us should sweep down and carry everything before it. Even this is hardly to be thought of.

The third rising was at Hadejiya and shared the same fate. It is often said now that the British in Africa have in former days done what Mussolini and the Italians have sought to do recently. Granted; and granted also that by a higher law than that of nations and the League of Nations we may perhaps be judged to have broken the laws of God, yet there are two or three facts to be stated in extenuation, at least in West Africa.

The League of Nations and the Covenant did not then exist. No promises and no treaties therefore have been broken. At the beginning of this century and the end of the last there was a tremendous scramble for Africa. England was only one of the competitors,

though probably the most successful. Further, if justification can ever come after the event, I think posterity will say that to the English, and probably to one Englishman, is due the utterly new estimate of the value of Africans in the whole comity of nations. To this man, Lugard, will be attributed the honour of having conceived and carried out a system of colonial administration which was calculated to lead before long to Africans everywhere winning the right to rule their own lands, for their advisers and guides would be pledged to that aim. And lastly, it will be acknowledged that the author of *The Dual Mandate*, as well as of other great books dealing with the rule of semi-civilized rulers, has made it far more difficult for African peoples to be exploited.

He has given to every true lover of Africa the hope and conviction that one day this continent and its great, patient, and forgiving peoples will take the honourable place in the world's culture and progress that God meant them to do. Those of us who have lived our lives in Africa and have loved deeply, and won the love of Africans, will aim at, and pray for nothing less. We thank God for the men of vision who have not only seen, but guided their policy to that end.

Lugard found an African in Lagos who, as a churchman, a theologian, a mathematician, and a leader was in the front rank of men of affairs. Against the feeling of many other white men he made him Resident of the Colony of Lagos, after he had first been Acting Director of Education. I look for the day when in the North we shall have many men of the intelligence, genius, and culture of this African, Henry Carr, and that they may also be Christians.

If we sinned against the higher laws of brotherhood, and fell with others into the lust for power and land, we have tried to atone and to win forgiveness by a sincere and persistent effort to serve and work for those under us. May God ever keep us true to our ideals !

## CHAPTER X

### THE STORY OF AN EXPERIMENT

**T**HIS is a story of two tragedies, closely connected in cause and effect, but widely separated in time.

We must first go back to the beginning or middle of the nineteenth century, to the story of a certain Hausa malam in Kano, named Ibrahim. He was a court malam, in close touch and considerable intimacy with the Emir Bello ; he was a student and a real thinker. Knowing the Koran well, and having spent many years in studying the *Tafsir* (Exegesis of the Koran), he had become more and more struck by the constant references of Mohammed to Jesus, called Isa. He noted that while great honour was given to Him and to His Name, and lofty titles were assigned to Him – “ Word of God,” and “ A spirit, or breath from God ” – yet there was a strain of reluctance in these references, as if the writer were under another influence, and had not written as he would have chosen.

Ibrahim determined to make a careful study right through the Koran and collect all references to “ the Prophet Jesus.” As he proceeded he was more and more filled with wonder. “ Who is this of whom our own Prophet writes ? Can this be a man like the others mentioned in our sacred Book ? Is not this a greater than all, greater even than Mohammed himself ? ”

He became convinced, and very soon gathered a little crowd of students and thinkers round him, and told



them his conclusions. At first the orthodox in Kano ignored him and his teaching, but before long the movement spread and demanded drastic treatment. Malam Ibrahim was asked by the Emir Bello to explain his heterodox conclusions and teaching. Quite bravely he did so, saying : " You are a greater scholar than I, and must have known these things ; and yet you, who ought to have told me and all your people, have hidden this great knowledge from us." Bello replied that it was not well to discuss these matters, as they might be injurious to the Moslem religion, and he tried to restrain Ibrahim, at first in a friendly way. But this was no light matter for Ibrahim ; it was a question of essential truth, and he must pursue it. Bello became annoyed, then angry, and finally employed the usual means of bigots to stamp out truth by killing the seeker.

Malam Ibrahim was brutally murdered after being given one chance of repentance, and refusing it. In the market place of Kano he was impaled on a sharp stake fixed in the ground which passed right through his body. He endured many hours of agony before death came, and during that time, in language that they alone would understand, he warned his disciples to flee to the boundaries of the three provinces of Zaria, Kano, and Bauchi, where they would be safe. Before his murder he had prophesied that God would reveal to them the true faith later.

His disciples scattered. Many went to Ningi and there had some success in winning adherents, and one of them became chief of Ningi. But orthodox reaction and ignorant intolerance were too strong, and a time of great persecution followed, in which many of them and their children were cruelly maimed and killed,

partly for what they believed, and partly because they undoubtedly took the sword and so perished with the sword.

Among them was a learned man called Yahayya who soon took the leadership of the scattered remnant, and did what he could to keep them from failing in faith. Before his death he seems to have been inspired to tell them that God would certainly bring to them full knowledge of the truth about "the Prophet Jesus"; that this news would come through strangers from the West; and that his people when they heard were to recognize it, put themselves under instruction, and receive and obey the truth.

The families who had escaped the persecution and were scattered in villages near the boundaries of Zaria Province continued to wait patiently, year after year for many years. It is worth notice that these people knew no Christians and nothing of the Christian religion; that they had remained Moslems, performing all the Moslem ritual and holding to their religion and law, with some slight deviations, enough to make them "Nonconformists," while essentially Moslems.

The whole account of this interesting man Ibrahim, and his disciple Yahayya would take a volume to narrate fully. I have given sufficient to connect it with the rest of my story. In 1913 a further stage was reached, for we met the descendants of these very people.

I had returned from a long furlough in 1912, most of it spent in Bible translation, and then put in a few months at Oyo, at the college founded by Archdeacon (now Bishop) Melville Jones and his wife, who have been my closest friends in Nigeria for thirty-four years. Early in

1913 I returned to Zaria to take charge of the Hausa work under the C.M.S.

During the first wet season after my return I had been having a fast and furious game of hockey with my boys, and we were preparing to go in and have our baths, when we noticed two strangers, young Hausa Moslems, who had been watching our game and evidently waiting for it to finish in order to talk to me. They had walked a long way to our mission house in the town of Zaria and had brought most interesting news.

Here were two of the descendants of the people mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, people who were living on the confines of three provinces, Zaria, Bauchi, and Kano. These two men, when visiting a neighbouring market but a few days before, had heard two of our boys witnessing to the change in their lives through knowing Christ. They had made brief inquiries as to where we lived, and had then gone home to their people, with the words: "This is it; we have found it at last!" and proceeded to tell of the preaching. Without delay they had decided to come to us, and had walked to Zaria, about thirty-five miles, to find out from the white missionaries what this teaching meant.

We put them up for a week, making friends and doing all we could to help them to understand something of our faith. Then they disappeared, and we feared another of the disappointments so common in Moslem work. But before long two others arrived and introduced themselves as friends of the first two; they also had come to see and hear. They told us of a number of friends, all waiting and hoping for something to happen. There were many families, they said, living in various villages at distances of ten, fifteen, and twenty miles from each

other, all having the same keen expectation of some truth to come from western strangers.

All this was put before our little church of ex-Moslems, now Christians in Zaria, with the result that it was arranged for the members of the church to take it by turns to go to some central place to which all these inquirers might come.

The first member to go fell ill with dysentery on arriving, but in spite of this was so inspired by what he found that he spent four days and nights, almost without rest, telling to an amazingly keen crowd of people the story of Jesus. From his sick bed he wrote me such a letter as one felt St. Paul might have written on his journeys after some time of specially successful work. He told that there were men like Cornelius, only waiting to hear in order to believe; that there were whole families waiting to put themselves under Christian instruction, and some even in so short a time ready and willing for baptism.

From week to week some one or other of our church members went out, and the report was always the same. At last there came a deputation with a request from the heads of families: "Would it not be possible for us to get a grant of land, or some unoccupied village, where we could all come together, live, have a church, school, and be a community, giving our wives and children the same chance as ourselves of getting this wonderful knowledge?"

Through the Resident of Zaria our request went to the Governor. We had hardly faith to believe that it would be granted; the Emir and Resident had both discouraged any thought of the possibility of such a thing. But an encouraging letter came back from Sir Frederick Lugard; he was in favour of granting the request. It would give,

he said, a double opportunity: first, to the Christian community the chance of showing their loyalty to the Moslem emir, by paying their taxes promptly, and doing willingly all they were told to do; secondly, to the emir, the chance of showing his impartiality, and recognizing that all in his country, of whatever faith, were his own people.

Things moved ahead, and it was not long before my sister Ethel and I were out on the chosen site, helping the men to clear the ground and build their houses, and the women to make all the household preparations for their families. The bush soon rang with the cheery sound of axes chopping down trees. The whole site was alive with men and boys getting grass, plaiting it and also rope, cutting bamboos, and sticks for their huts. Day by day fresh families arrived with their earthly all, and animated by the same purpose – to settle and become members of the new community.

Within two or three months there were about one hundred and twenty men, women, and children. It was a heart-stirring sight to see the ground being so rapidly cleared, houses going up, including and giving precedence to a little mud church, the contribution of all, where God would be worshipped.

One thinks now of that happy crowd, of the land being divided into farms so amicably and with no quarrelling, of the first sowing and planting season, when all seemed full of hope; of the rhythmic sounds, so dear to the native, of the women beating and grinding the corn, with the prospect of a meal very near. All the bustle and stir of a healthy happy community, drawn together with one purpose, and that the highest; living in harmony as one large family, the concerns of one the concern of all.

It appeared so full of hope ; here seemed the embryo of what was almost unknown in the Moslem mission field, something longed for but rarely seen – a mass movement, so far on a very small scale, but a genuine movement towards Christ. Within two years our little church was always full ; baptisms were frequent, the school, where adults and children all came together, was thriving, because all were keen to learn. Better still the relationship between our village people and their Moslem neighbours remained very friendly, thus opening up the possibility of others joining us.

The elder girls and boys, the more intelligent, and those who could be spared from household work and the farms, were brought into our school in Zaria, just in time, and they proved the nucleus of the church which has grown and increased ever since.

My West Indian colleague, the Rev. W. A. Thompson, whose keen, patient work I can never exaggerate, came of a family who knew how to make sugar as well as grow the sugar cane. He conceived the idea of making use of the large quantities of sugar cane grown in the neighbourhood by irrigation, and very soon we had purchased from America crushing machines, and boilers in which to make and purify the sugar. The great war was upon us very soon after this, and sugar became almost unobtainable in Nigeria. Our industry was therefore just in time, and within a very short period we were receiving orders from all over Nigeria for our sugar, which soon attained a great popularity. Many Europeans gave us unstinted support and approval in our work on account of this excursion from the usual mission methods. The little community soon became moderately prosperous through the combined occupations of farming and sugar making.

For two years in succession, 1912 and 1913, the rains were insufficient, and came to an end too early to allow the corn to swell. This failure caused a terrible famine in 1913 and 1914 which took the Administration by surprise.

The cereals from which most of the food of the country is obtained are guinea corn and millet. These are sown during the first rains somewhere between April and June, according to the latitude of the province. In the pagan districts in addition to these there is a grass called *acha* which is cultivated and grows to a height of about two feet six inches; it bears a black seed, which contains a very nourishing substance, and is the chief food of many of the pagan tribes.

Rice, wheat, and Indian corn, known variously as maize, mealies, *etc.*, and yams are auxiliaries; but not more than auxiliaries. Failure of either of the two chief cereals is a very serious thing for Northern Nigeria; in fact before and during the earlier years of the British advent it meant famine. The provinces which suffered most in the famine of 1913 to 1914 were Sokoto, Kano, and Bornu, where many thousands of people died, and their corpses strewed the road from Lake Chad right down through Kano and into Zaria. An endless stream of these emaciated people, who had survived, came down into Zaria where, though the famine was bad enough, it was not nearly so intense as in the more northern provinces, because the soil was not so sandy and there were more roots, *etc.*, available for food.

We quickly organized some relief, and the Niger Company generously let us have bags of rice at cheap rates, and so we were able to feed a great many of these starving people. Other agencies were soon at work on

a far larger scale, and the worst phase was conquered, but not until a very great many had succumbed, and a serious warning had been given for the future. There has not been a famine anything like this in extent or fatality since that time. The chance of ministering to those in suffering gave an early opportunity to show the social implications of Christianity. In the little Christian village of Gimi there was great hardship, and most of the people lived on roots that they had to dig from the ground : none died, but they became very emaciated.

The Christians never lost their desire for the conversion of their Moslem countrymen, and much quiet, useful work was done, of witnessing and faithful evangelism. It used to be a great pleasure to go about from village to village getting to know the people, and quietly telling them of our faith in Christ ; friendships too were formed.

At first the health of the community seemed excellent. A people with open mind, so willing to be taught hygiene and sanitary living, were gradually becoming more and more amenable to the laws of health, and all seemed well. But all the time a secret enemy was at work, unknown and unsuspected. We were quite near to a very beautiful river, and long stretches of delightful shade were cast by great, overhanging trees with magnificent, luxurious foliage, flowers, and fruit, and teeming with bird and insect life. In the undergrowth of these trees, in the silent pools and the rank vegetation, as well as in the long grass, myriads of tsetse flies were being bred. These stung the people when they went to bathe or draw water ; flying up as far as the farms, they annoyed the men and boys, who were the greatest sufferers as they worked with bare legs. We began to notice cases of a peculiar, obscure sickness.



It seems amazing now that we did not recognize sooner the symptoms of the dreaded trypanosomiasis, commonly known as sleeping sickness; but none of us had had any previous practical experience of this dread foe. One after another of the older, and some of the young men were stricken, and when we woke to the fact of the presence of this plague it was too late to save the lives of many. Then it was that we thanked God for all the boys and girls who at such an early stage of the existence of the village had been taken to Zaria and so escaped, for few others survived.

We brought in some of the sick to Zaria to be nursed until they died; some were taken to the Kaduna government hospital where they were most kindly treated, but mostly in vain. It is always irksome to an African to persist in a long course of medicine. His history and heredity have accustomed him to believe in charms, potions, and rapid kill-or-cure methods. In a land where immunity is acquired by the few who survive the holocausts from malaria and other diseases, the people weary of, and hardly believe in the long, tedious acquiring of an artificial immunity and cure by painful injections over a long period. They object to being separated from their ordinary conditions of life; to living away from their own people, eating food to which they are not accustomed, and being deprived of the many incidents which to them make up a happy life. Is it to be wondered at that often when a patient was beginning to recover well, he would weary of the long isolation, and steal away to his village and die?

To those who have never witnessed this diabolical disease in its last stages, and have only heard vaguely of its course and end, there can be no conception of what a

loathsome thing it is. One sees gradually and insidiously the whole moral and social fabric of the patient disintegrating. Nice, clean, intelligent young men become foul, dirty, debased animals. It is the horror of this well-known end which has made this disease such a nightmare and object of loathing to Africans everywhere. In the latest stages of the disease even the dearest friends shrink from the strain and disgust of the continual nursing needed. I can only say that even leprosy and cancer, with their greater suffering, are preferable to this foul thing. It is not so much the pain, for that is not great, but the utter moral degradation, the fear of which makes the patient from the onset of the disease long for a speedy death.

And so our little community was destroyed. Most of the people died; two or three quietly stole away from the death-smitten area, tormented by the reproaches of those who attributed all this misfortune to apostasy from Islam. A few of the women drifted away, married Moslems, and were lost sight of; a small remnant of those who had more recently come to live in the settlement, unable to bear the taunts of their relatives and Moslem friends, also vanished.

In our suffering and sorrow at this calamity there was rebellion in our hearts. Could not God have spared this? Was it not His work? Were we wrong? Was it not up to Him to have saved this little community, who, out of the great mass of Islam surrounding them were alone confessing the Name of Jesus? Had He not called, and saved, and purified them for service to Him? And here was Evil, black, cruel Evil, triumphant.

How slowly we learn the strength of the entail of sin! How slow we are to realize that so much of God's good

creation has been reduced to suffering and infirmity thus ; and, above all, that He Himself in it all is the greatest sufferer for the sin of His children, which in the Incarnation He has shared. It was long before I could say : " Thy will be done." *Not* the passive acquiescence in the results of carelessness, and dirt, and consequent disease ; *not* the attributing to God of the consequences of sin through the ignoring of His holy, healthful, happiness-bringing laws ; but the determination that His will *should* be done, through and in us ; and that suffering and disease should be conquered – through education, hygiene, discipline, and war to the knife on the trinity of evil – dirt, ignorance, and superstition ; until in Christ the kingdom of righteousness and joy and peace would come.

Is it any wonder that the boys and girls, quite a number of them, whom we saved from this destruction, became, and still are after all these years, very much to us, and that we tried, often in spite of personal failure, by example and friendship to lead them to the higher life ? To-day many of them, scattered about throughout these large Moslem provinces, married, with children doing good work, and living a Christian life, remain as the result of Gimi.

It was natural, though hard to bear, that Moslems should reproach them for their apostasy. The name of " Kafurai " often produces a feeling of resentment and pain in even the strongest Christians. It was forgotten that on two previous occasions, long years before, attempts had been made to live in and farm this district, and that the Moslem community when driven out by the plague which they did not understand, attributed it to a personal devil to whose power our people were not

prepared to give way. This was then the third time that men and women had been worsted in the fight against parasitic disease in this small area, and now there are but the lonely, dark, haunted remains of the once prosperous village.

Gimi has returned to its desolate state ; and where there was gaiety and happiness, marriage and birth, work and jolly play, farm and trading, all is silent and seems to be filled with the ghosts of evil and of past memories. Was anything retrieved ? Was all lost ? Do those mounds, marking the sites of previous homes, church, school, and other buildings sum up the total results of this experience ? Surely not ! For there *was* a witness there for some years to happy and changed lives. All things had become new to some through the knowledge of Christ ; and His Name, as Saviour and Lord, was made known to many from there. There were temptation and sin ; disappointment and failure often, but Gimi stood for much that was good, clean, and true.

This was the first time, so far as I know, that in a community of Africans who had been Moslems, boys and girls had met on an equality and chosen their own mates, and had been able to live an engaged life as Christians, meeting each other freely without fear of reproach. Many of the boys and girls, now married, are doing credit to their old school ; they meet from time to time, and always as brothers and sisters, because the community was a family. Some are schoolmasters in government service ; two have been trained under the Government of Northern Nigeria, since leaving school, to become dispensers, and have done exceptionally well in their examinations. One, appointed by the Emir of Zaria, is the first head of the large Christian community at Wusasa

near Zaria, and holds, besides, an important post under the native Administration. The industry of sugar making remains among those who escaped, and is conducted honestly and fairly, and yet on a sound commercial basis.

There is one incident in connexion with the history of this group of people which shows how a Christian community, acting by itself as a church and depending on no foreigner, can yet discipline its members far better than a European can, and with much more effect. One of those from our church in Zaria who had been appointed to visit the scattered families which afterwards made up Gimi, and before they became Christians, was a young Fulah, of a good old ruling family, a man of some means, a prosperous farmer, and the owner of a herd of cattle. I knew him before his marriage; he was one of the first whom I led to Christ in Zaria, and he had become one of my closest African friends. On the Saturday that Yusufu was to leave his home for two days to visit and teach these people I received a rather curt note from him, too late to make any other arrangements, saying that he was not able to go; he had to look after his cattle, and could not spare the time. There was something behind this; so I consulted the chief members of the church in Zaria, and decided to leave the matter in their hands.

They sent to tell him that he should meet them after service the following Sunday; he obeyed, and walked five miles to our mission church. We met in the school-room, five senior Christian members of the church, three men and two women, and I merely a fascinated spectator. Searching questions came straight from the hearts of these men and women to their brother Christian,

who by a clear instinct they recognized was shirking, because he was not walking with God.

“Do you realize,” said one Christian woman, “that many men in our land leave home, family, cattle, and farms and all they possess to go perhaps for two, three, or four years on the pilgrimage to Mecca, and this purely for their own good and spiritual advantage?”

“These people to whom you were going,” said another, “are between light and darkness. Have you thought what it will mean to them to have a promise of this sort broken by a Christian?”

Another added: “Twenty or more men and women will come some fifteen, twenty, or more miles to meet and hear from you of Christ. Can we tell them that you preferred your cattle to giving them the message of life?”

Still further bombardment: “Would you not have left your farm and cattle for many other worldly reasons, just for three days?”

And last from a woman: “Can we consider you a member of our church, you who have so denied his Lord?”

Within fifteen minutes the young man, who had remained sullen and quietly obstinate while I had previously spoken to him during the morning, was on his knees weeping, and asking forgiveness from God and the church. I was about to break in and spoil the whole psychological process, but the senior member of our church, intuitively sensing this, signed to me: “This is our matter, leave it to us.” Yusufu was sent out of the room, and in the space of a few seconds these Spirit-taught Christians came to their conclusion, and he was recalled. His brothers and sisters, spiritual equals, told him unequivocally: “We have decided that you must

go to all these people, from village to village and ask pardon from them all ; spend seven days instead of two and entirely at your own expense, without any financial help from the church."

I was horrified. " 'This will break him,' I thought, " for he is a proud Fulah." But no ! Brimming over with joy, his face radiant with restored happiness, because in that short interval he had confessed to God and man and come back into fellowship, he stood up, went round the room, shook hands with us all, and then went out to do his duty. He *did* it, greatly to the strengthening of his own spiritual life, and returned to us the next week glad to have had his share in the work.

Thus the mother church at Zaria learned to exercise its God-given power of loving discipline without foreign guidance.

#### NOTE ON THE PROBLEM OF SLEEPING SICKNESS

Reports are still coming from all parts of Nigeria of the outbreak or discovery of trypanosomiasis, or sleeping sickness, in some district where it was not previously known to exist. The problem of dealing with this destructive parasitic disease is similar to that of the arrest of tuberculosis or cancer in England, but in some ways it presents an even greater difficulty. There would seem to be three possible lines of attack.

(1) To destroy the fly which causes it, especially in already infected areas. This would be a far harder task than to rid England of every single common house fly, but even so this is probably the least hopeless line of attack.

(2) To destroy all the breeding places of the fly. To

any one who knows or can picture the size and nature of the country to be dealt with, such a proposition seems out of the range of possibility.

(3) To treat in the hope of cure all cases of the disease as they arise. This would be very expensive, for the cost of treatment for large numbers of people in even one area is almost prohibitive. Moreover this treatment, which involves a number of injections over a considerable period, has been found unsatisfactory with the village population, among whom a large proportion of the cases occur. So many patients relapse, and this probably not through any fault in the treatment but mainly because they are unwilling to submit to the long and wearisome cure.

Those who read some of the literature on this subject will realize a fraction of the greatness of the problem which confronts the medical services in Nigeria and, in fact, throughout Tropical Africa. It is the glory of science, and especially of bacteriology, that men are content to go on working and to put in long hours of daily toil under most trying climatic and other conditions in order to make even a small contribution to the consensus of knowledge of the subject in hand.

I covet for our missionary societies a closer participation in this great work. Why call it secular? Dirt, disease, and superstition are hindering the Kingdom of God on earth, and in the incessant fight against these the missionary is bound to take his part. The question is whether he should take it in an amateur, haphazard way, or as one trained to think and work scientifically. A three months' course in hygiene and public health would not be wasted in the preparation of every missionary. Some knowledge of tropical diseases and in the use of



the microscope should be an integral part of the curriculum. In the last analysis preventive medicine is greater than healing.

The missionaries of science (and in their ranks are to be found many servants of the Cross) are slowly but surely wresting victories one after another from the microscopic, but extremely potent, enemies of the human race. When I think of Ryder and of the others whom one has known dying of amœbic dysentery because we had not then the knowledge of emetin ; of the millions who died of trypanosomiasis before it was thought possible that this loathsome disease could be fought and destroyed ; of the fight with leprosy which even now is by no means won ; of the wonderful result of all the patient work associated with the names of Manson, Ross, Naguchi, and others which has resulted in malaria and yellow fever being added to the list of those diseases now brought under control, I begin to understand a little more of the meaning of the words : " He was manifested to annihilate the work of many devils."

## CHAPTER XI

### ALIYU : PRINCE, EMIR, AND EXILE

I CONFESS to a very warm place in my heart for the picturesque old tyrant who ruled the Emirate of Zaria for eighteen years while I was living in his capital. A scholar, a cultivated gentleman, a strong ruler, and a charming friend, Aliyu held a handful of trump cards. Up to the age of forty-five hardly a good influence had come his way. Race, heredity, and circumstances had badly moulded a character which might have given great things to the world. He was a product of Africa, of Islam and its culture, of a reigning family, and finally, of the disintegrating influences of a super-imposed British rule and of modern civilization ; yet in this brilliantly able man can be traced much of the life history, psychology, and experience of the Fulani and Hausa people.

Aliyu's grandfather, Malam Musa, a learned man and a Fulah, was one of the group of successful administrators, soldiers, and adventurers who gathered round the great Sheikh Othman Dan Fodiu, and who, like him, turned from the nomad life of cattle herdsman to become rulers of large kingdoms. (The province of Kano is larger than the whole Kingdom of Buganda, and has a much larger population.) Sent by Othman in company with another adventurer, Ya Musa, Malam Musa went with the green flag of Islam to Zaria to

win a territory composed mainly of pagan villages, but with some Moslem towns among them.

By a clever ruse this Fulah, member of that scattered and strange race, a branch of which, known as Malles, came originally from the upper reaches of the Niger River behind Sierra Leone, duped his leader, Ya Musa, who had the prior claim, and obtained from Othman the throne for which the two together had fought and, after a long struggle, had won. This Jacob-like quality seems to have been a characteristic of the Malles, and Aliyu later was no exception. Ya Musa apparently accepted quite loyally the position of second in command; and at the death of Malam Musa he succeeded to the throne, and founded a dynasty which, with only a few brief intervals, reigned in Zaria Province for eighteen years. One of these intervals was occupied by Sidi, the father of Aliyu.

Sidi's soubriquet in Zaria was "The bloody"; for like the Queen Mary of ill-fame in English history he killed a great number of his people during a very short reign. His outriders used to announce his approach with the cry: "*Sidi! Foro da yanka* (Sidi! You who know no punishment but the knife)!" So ruthless was his character and lust for blood that in six months, before he had exasperated all his subjects and was recalled to Sokoto, to die as a madman, he is said to have either executed, or cut off the hands of over a thousand people. This was the father of Aliyu; and such was the horror of the very name of their dynasty - the Malle - that it was over forty years before they again came into power in the person of Aliyu, the first emir instituted by the British Administration after the occupation.

It is amusing to note how this astute intriguer, following the example of his grandfather, obtained the emirate. A very strong Moslem, and a bitter opponent of the new British regime, he had cast off the dust of his feet upon Zaria, and gone to the Sultan at Sokoto. "I am the only member of the reigning families of Zaria," said he to the Sultan, "who has remained faithful to Islam, and to the House of Sheikh Othman. All the others have followed the infidel. I alone curse the invader, and seek refuge in Sokoto."

Luck was on the side of the wily, ambitious prince; for before long the reigning Emir of Zaria, Kwasau, was deposed for various irregularities; and Sir Frederick Lugard, still doing all he could to preserve correct relations with Sokoto and avoid hostilities, asked the Sultan to nominate a successor to the Emirate of Zaria, and to Kwantagora, now also vacant.

The Sultan accepted the invitation and nominated Aliyu, thinking him to be the only Zaria prince loyal to the old regime. And so was acted the amusing comedy of this "slim" Fulah coming back to rule under the infidel whom he had cursed—and the choice of his Moslem overlord!

Previous to this Aliyu had held the office of "Wambai," usually given to an emir's son; and had used his position to collect a dangerous gang of highway robbers, whom he frequently accompanied on their depredations. On one occasion when one of his lusty thieves had not given the Wambai his full share of the booty, the little man of iron sinews had laid out his brother bandit, cut his throat, and left him on the road to die, while he departed with the whole takings.

Such an evil name had he made for himself that the

previous emir, Kwasau, before his deposition, had driven Aliyu from the capital, and only under *force majeure* from Sokoto consented to let him return to his home. Aliyu never forgot this; and on his accession he subjected to cruel humiliation every member of his predecessor's family, deposing them from their rank, robbing them and their wives of their possessions, and bringing most of them to utter penury.

I remember my first point of contact with this clever little man. While living in Girku in 1902, and shortly after the deposition of the Emir Kwasau, a messenger of Aliyu came to me bearing a letter in Arabic and a turkey! It puzzled me greatly to understand the import of this, for I had barely heard his name!

Said I to the messenger: "Why this present and letter? I don't know the Wambai, or he me."

The messenger came closer to me, looked carefully in every direction, and then whispered: "Aliyu knows that you are a most important person . . . the throne of Zaria is vacant . . . his father was emir . . . he believes that your influence may be used!"

I sent back a short note to the Acting Resident with the price of a turkey and explanations; thus greatly outraging native etiquette. I felt it was the only thing to do in such very strange circumstances, and later events proved me right.

The Acting Resident, on receiving my account of the incident, called up the Wambai and in front of the other chiefs in Zaria asked him sarcastically: "Do you imagine that the road to Zungeru (at that time the head-quarters of the protectorate and the seat of His Excellency) passes through Girku?" Dead silence! And then: "Is not a turkey rather a small present with which to seek a

throne?" And, in a loud aside: "What *is* the market value of a turkey?"

But Aliyu could well afford to ignore the smiles which these questions caused; for shortly afterwards he had his desire and was made emir! No doubt he thought there was a lot of hanky-panky behind the whole affair, for he often used to assure me in later days (I wonder with how much of his tongue in his cheek!) that it was my good offices which had secured for him the emirate.

Then began a reign of eighteen years which was a long drawn out torture to the people of the province. It was commonly said that but for the British Administration there would have been a repetition on a larger scale of the terror of his father Sidi's rule.

But Aliyu was not all bad, or he would not have won the regard and even affection of some of the best Residents. Captain Orr, R.A., an Indian Frontier officer, and one of the best Residents ever appointed to Zaria Province, often told me that there were great qualities and latent powers for good in him. Mr. E. B. Laing, Resident of Zaria and a good judge of men, knew Aliyu well and thought highly of him. Orr, who afterwards became Governor of the Bahama Islands, deeply regretted the frequent furloughs necessary for administrative officers in Nigeria, whereby it became impossible for one man to exert a continuous influence for good. He believed that with five consecutive years, as in India, a Resident could patiently do much, through friendship, conference, and gentle pressure in the right direction, to effect very wonderful results in character, statesmanship, and mutual trust between ruler and people. Fremantle and other Residents also had a high opinion of Aliyu's abilities as a ruler. That he was able to

live such a double life, combining so much that was useful and efficient with what was so terribly evil and oppressive, yet remain largely unchecked by the able Residents mentioned, is a tribute to his skill in avoiding detection rather than a reflection on their ability as rulers. Some, I know, felt that even such a reign as Aliyu's, with all its wrong-doing, was an inevitable part in the evolution which was finally to produce the desired results of the system of indirect rule.

Aliyu worked hard for the country in many ways and was never indolent or slack. Spartan in his discipline of himself, he hated laziness in others. He once showed me a heavy box full of stones which he used to lift several times, morning and night, to keep his muscles strong. He ate little and had only two meals a day; once he jestingly said to me: "You know I never want to get as fat as many rulers in this country!" As a Moslem he did not drink, and I do not think he smoked either. I well remember how on one occasion, hearing that his second son, the highest ruler in the province next to his father, had been having an orgy of drink in the district over which he ruled, Aliyu sent for him; on his arrival, he fell on him, in a fury, and was only prevented from strangling his own son by the interposition of some palace servants.

At a time when a so-called Mahdi, Malam Jibraïlu, had raised the green flag and proclaimed a jihad against the Christian rule, and scores of chiefs and not a few emirs had gone to serve under this Mahdi, Aliyu was loyal to his oath. Not only did he remain in Zaria, but he warned all his chiefs of the penalty of leaving the city to join the Pretender. By this means a number of aspirants for *Aljana* (the Moslem heaven), were saved from going

there before their time. I think he was shrewd enough to realize what would be the inevitable result of this rising, and on which side of the bread was the butter.

Aliyu spent considerable sums of money yearly in keeping a body of spies and trained servants to prevent any news of his misdeeds and oppression from reaching the political officers. I knew of men who were actually in the pay of the Residents and at the same time were receiving large sums of money from Aliyu to keep things healthy – for him!

At intervals, too, to sustain the impression of his passion for justice and desire to secure a full chance for all plaintiffs, he arranged with specially-selected and well-coached men to take accusations against himself to the political officers; it was of course understood that the faked case was to break down when referred to the law courts! By this device the astute ruler achieved a double credit which stood him in good stead when more serious and genuine cases were brought against him.

It was a pretty picture to see this ruthless old tyrant surrounded by his own tiny children, some grandchildren of the same age, and children of his favourite servants. He loved them well, and they loved him. There was no sign of fear as they climbed up on the knees of the bespectacled old gentleman, and sprawled all over him. One got the impression of the mildest individual, who would never have hurt a creature. This side of his character was, I believe, no less real than the other.

His carefully-drawn plans for a new and extensive market place, to supersede the previous rabbit warren which for centuries had done duty, were excellent; and the market place in Zaria city to-day is a witness to his continued interest and hard work. At one time when it



was necessary to bridge a river, he rode many miles on survey with some of his chiefs, tireless in his endeavour to find a place where the narrowness of the river, and the rocky nature of the banks, would ensure the construction being as cheap and solid as possible.

He knew the haunts of the big highway robbers and not infrequently walked the streets of the city in disguise at night to obtain information. Always alert; quick to gauge an opportunity; wise in counsel, where he was not personally concerned; fearless and determined, Aliyu had most of the qualities of a great ruler. He filled the rôle of dictator better than that of a constitutional sovereign, for the latter was alien to his hereditary instincts.

Upon the question whether a Fulah will ever be able to work in council, and sit in consultation with his chiefs as *primus inter pares*, and rule constitutionally, seems to me to depend the ultimate success or failure of indirect rule in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria. Time is in our favour; and there is a splendid set of men in the Nigerian Service. But I am afraid of the innate conservatism of Africa; the inadaptability of Islam; and the backwardness of the people of the Northern Provinces. Parts of Africa have been accustomed to tyrants and autocrats for centuries, and it may be a long time before the slow growth of an African democracy will make any other type of rule advisable. The ideal must be kept steadily in the foreground; and, though slow, there must be a continuous advance in the right direction.

Aliyu did not neglect the strict attention to religious duties and functions expected from the head of a Moslem state, and he seldom failed, unless prevented by illness, which was rare, to attend the mosque on Fridays for the

great weekly service compulsory for good Moslems. He had some literary ability also, and wrote a great many verses, some comic, some religious, on the events of his reign.

But in spite of his learning and piety Aliyu had pagan instincts and fears. Always once a year, and at other times when political affairs gave him some misgivings, he would make a journey to a black rock at no great distance from Zaria, accompanied by the *liman* (chief priest of Islam) and a few other chiefs and retainers, in order to sacrifice a black he-goat with definite pagan ritual. As is not unusual, he was profoundly superstitious, had great belief in charms, and was reputed capable, as well as guilty, of making powerful potions with which to injure his enemies. Finding a curious object close to the veranda of my house one morning I exclaimed: "What is this filthy mess, and who has put it here?" The mess in question was composed of a rag, a fowl's liver, some vulture's feathers, and a bit of paper with Arabic writing on it, having no definite meaning. I was informed by those who knew that it was "a deadly medicine," and that Aliyu had paid large sums of money for its concoction. Other most ludicrous and childish objects were periodically thrown into my compound, and were traced to some one or other of his agents. But I am inclined to think that the astute old man relied far more on the psychological effect of these potent charms on the people who visited me from among his own subjects, than on their actual power to injure me.

Towards the end of his reign, when he had become alarmed at the amount of open hostility being shown towards him for his ruthless policy, he spent large sums of money among the less reputable malams in Zaria,

that they might protect him against all the mischievous designs of those who were tired of him, and cast spells over the Resident. It became pathetic near the end to see the indomitable little man, with his back to the wall, deserted by most of those whom he had raised to honour and wealth, hated by most of his people, and yet fighting hard for his life, and reputation and crown.

I do not believe that Aliyu really hated me ; so often he used to ride down from his house to mine very informally with just a few mounted retainers ; and here he would sit for hours, chatting most pleasantly and affectionately with me. On one occasion about the year 1913, when I returned from leave in England, I called to salute him before going to my own house. He seemed pleased with this sign of friendship, kissed my hand and rather fawned over me, expressing his pleasure at my return. I felt doubtful about this, and after formal greetings said rather cryptically : " I have come to-night, before going to my own house, to salute two people at the palace."

With some surprise he said : " How so ? who else do you propose to see here ? "

I replied : " My very dear friend Aliyu dan Sidi, and a rather hostile person, the Emir of Zaria."

He burst into merry laughter, although he seemed somewhat perplexed as well as amused, probably recognizing the fairly accurate diagnosis I had made.

The policy of nepotism, always combated by Sokoto, reached its climax in Zaria under Aliyu. Almost all the members of the three other dynasties were removed, and the chief posts were given to his sons, brothers, and servants. This alienated a very considerable section of the population who were supporters of one or other of

the rival houses ; and before his end the enemies Aliyu had made were legion. Two of his three sons were raised to the highest positions in the province, but subsequently were deposed and imprisoned for irregular practices of various kinds.

Aliyu was not insensible to the charms of a pretty face, and had some serious disputes with his religious and legal advisers on the subject, when he tried to exceed the limit of four official wives prescribed by the Koran. No limits were put on the other class of wife.

On one occasion he caused a young girl who had taken his fancy to be abducted from her home and taken to the palace. She was under nineteen, and a freeborn daughter of free citizens. This was bound to raise a storm. The parents begged, pleaded, threatened. Malams told him that he must either divorce one of his present wives and marry this girl according to law, or let her go back to her parents ; it was contrary to Moslem law for him to hold her on any other ground. Aliyu, as was his wont, when he had his back to the wall, consigned them all in lurid language to the nether regions. " No one shall take the girl from me," said he, " neither will I give her up." In spite of these bold words of defiance to both parent and malam, Aliyu realized that he had gone rather too far, so retired to his country seat a few miles away, and at the same hour fire destroyed the hut in which the girl was impounded, and burnt her to death. Had Aliyu kept his word ?

During the next two or three days he was busily engaged in receiving the commiseration of sycophantic sympathizers on the loss of his property ; and with beautiful, pious resignation kept reiterating, "*Allah shi sawaka* (It is of the Lord) " !

People in Zaria still believe that some day hoards of Aliyu's money will be discovered. He was a well-known miser, and supposed to have accumulated considerable sums, much of which, according to the custom of the country, would have been buried in some place unknown to any but himself, and perhaps to one or two faithful servants. He certainly knew how to reap a harvest out of every opportunity that presented.

Sixpence per man per day was allowed by the Administration at one time out of the revenues to feed prisoners in the native gaol. Aliyu saw here a golden mine in prospect. Tons of corn, bought for the prisoners, were carried to his private bins ; in addition to this instead of paying the usual women to grind the corn, sift, and make the flour into food for the prisoners, their services, being expensive, were dispensed with ; and the wretched prisoners received two handfuls each of parched, unground corn morning and night. Many died, and many more became ill, their complaint, by an ironic euphemism being called "beri beri." I drew the attention of a new and energetic medical officer of health to this state of affairs, and he quickly took steps to investigate the cause, which I already knew. It was easily discovered, the outrage was exposed, and Aliyu was . . . censured ! But he did not give up the corn, or restore to life the starved prisoners !

I was sitting at dinner in my compound in Zaria with Bishop and Mrs. Melville Jones, who had come to visit me, when a boy rushed into the house saying : " A man has been murdered in So-and-So's house, and is dying ; will the Likita [my name] come at once, and see if anything can be done ? "

Without changing my dress clothes I hastened to the house of the father of the victim and found a young fellow lying prone on the ground, breathing stertorously, and blood coming from every aperture, nose, ears, and mouth, *etc.* He had been flogged, thrown on the ground, and finally stamped on by Aliyu's messengers.

It was a question of forced labour – always a thorny subject in new colonies or protectorates. According to an ordinance of the Administration for securing a regular supply of labour for railway construction, men were taken on at fixed low wages, and only kept for a stated definite period, so that they might return at short intervals to their homes and farms. This system would have worked quite well had not the poor unlettered people fallen victims to sharpers of every description at every turn.

One of the most valuable provisions, by no means always adhered to, was that if there were only one son he should be exempted from conscription; and that if there were two or more sons one should always remain at home. In this case two sons of the family had gone to work on the line at some distance from their home, and would not return for about three weeks. The youngest son, when he was arrested by native police under Aliyu's order, protested that he should be allowed to remain with his old father. This was the signal for the brutal attack on him which I have described.

I gathered all these facts, and sent a report to the Acting Resident as well as a medical statement of the case. The whole matter was referred to the Emir for trial, and the next thing I heard was that the old father of the now dead son had been arrested as an insurrectionist and imprisoned. I am afraid I saw red! But

composing myself, for nothing would be gained by hasty or unconsidered action, I went early the next morning, my last day before proceeding to Lagos *en route* for my leave, to call on the Emir. I was prepared to eat any kind of humble pie and any amount; to sacrifice position, prestige of colour, even respect, by begging for the old man's life; for it meant almost certain death to him to be away from the warmth and comfort of his own home, and exposed to the rigour of a prison life.

All was in vain. Aliyu received me most kindly, and listened.

"Will you not spare this old man, now over eighty years of age? How can he be guilty of any serious crime?"

"You little know," said Aliyu, "how I love my people, far more than even you do, and how it hurts me to do anything like this."

"Then why not use your prerogative of mercy, and let this old man out of prison? Surely no harm can result."

"I fear it is now impossible. The matter is out of my hands; my report has gone to the Resident, and I await his decision. You must understand that he has been imprisoned for insubordination and truculence. I am very sorry."

I could see that he was playing with me; that the charge was entirely a trumped up one; and that Aliyu intended to carry on. I played my last card, perhaps not a wise one, but one I felt compelled to use.

"I have come also to say good-bye. I leave to-morrow for Lagos, and expect to be seeing the Governor there. I have left instructions here that I be kept in touch, by

wire, with all the details of this incident before I see His Excellency.”

We parted with a handshake, a smile from Aliyu, and a merry twinkle in his eye ; he was never angry with me.

I found the telegram awaiting me in Lagos. The old man had been released !

Matters at last came to a climax and it became evident that either Aliyu or I had to go. An outward pleasant demeanour now only covered real antagonism. At an interview with the Governor, Sir Hugh Clifford, who was visiting Zaria, the Emir put this alternative to a test, and presented a minute drawn up by himself, but with the consent of the Resident, asking that I might be deported. Sir Hugh Clifford told the Emir that it would be necessary for him to produce evidence of some far more urgent cause than he had done, before such a step could be considered.

As a result of two private interviews which Sir Hugh Clifford was good enough to give me at Government House, Lagos, and confident of his backing, I had begun to prepare a full case against the Emir of Zaria. There were twenty major counts, of which murder was one. For three months I hardly slept. My house was surrounded by spies, some of whom I recognized, and it became exceedingly difficult for people known to be bringing information to get near me. I was informed that my cook had been bribed to poison me, and an evil fate awaited any one known to be helping me. And yet, taking their lives in their hands, some real patriots brought me all their evidence, supported by witnesses. Strange devices were adopted by these people to get into my compound at all hours of day and night. One



of those who helped me most was a member of a very old Zaria family, whose uncle had been one of the most staunch friends and helpers of the British Government from the beginning. The nephew had been the very special object of Aliyu's dislike, and his life at the time was in great danger. Afterwards he was raised to the highest rank in the province, that of Waziri, and his name was even proposed for emir, so highly were his character and services valued by the Administration.

The case was at last complete. Eighteen sheets of foolscap, in close type, went to Kaduna. Moslems and Christians were praying and longing for some strong action to be taken.

After many preliminaries a representative of the Governor was sent up to Kaduna to investigate these and other charges. The Emir was summoned to Kaduna, the capital of the north, and seat of the Lieutenant-Governor. As he failed to make any satisfactory defence, Aliyu was offered deportation for life with a grant of £100 per annum, or to go to Lagos to be tried on a capital charge of murder. He chose the former, and went into exile where he lived for some years.

So ended a reign marked by ability, but by cruelty and oppression of a nature that is difficult to depict to the readers of this book. Many of the people of the province were intensely thankful for the result of the trial, though it is fair to add that Aliyu had many friends, African and European. Few had expected him to be convicted, so great had been his capacity to extricate himself from every difficult situation. In simple ways many expressions of gratitude were made to me, but I could not feel any sense of victory. The only possible victory would have been for Aliyu's life and character to have been changed.

After this I never again touched political matters ; they were too costly to health, peace, and life. Deeper and more permanent results are won in the ways that Christ taught.

But I put it to my readers : How would they have felt and dealt with a situation deepening in intensity from year to year, becoming more hopeless as success in crime made crime more easy ? I had no personal axe to grind. There was nothing but suffering in all this. Weariness and depression and loss of sleep are not to be lightly risked when other and more constructive work than a contest with an emir is involved. I have become more and more convinced, from experience, that prayer and continual waiting on the guidance of God effect more than force or resistance. It was hard to see this at the time, and probably I was not myself ready to see it ; but I know now that there was a better way, " Love never faileth."

I end as I began this chapter. I shall never cease to think of Aliyu as a friend and one whom I could have loved well. His failures were those of his ancestry and environment. But he was a man, and a leader of men, with great qualities ; such a man as one feels that Jesus of Nazareth, seeing, would have loved and called to Himself, with the words : " Follow me."

And he would have followed.

## CHAPTER XII

### BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

**I**N 1914 Leonard Stanley Kempthorne and Harold Earnshaw-Smith came to the Hausa States. Either of these men was more qualified to lead the mission than I, but they gave me the most perfect friendship and the most loyal help, and made themselves greatly beloved in Zaria. Kempthorne has since become Bishop in Polynesia. During his stay with us he contributed much to our church life and service, and by his dignity combined with great friendliness endeared himself to every one.

No one learned Hausa more quickly than Earnshaw-Smith, and some of the best of our Hausa hymns showed how far he went in appreciating the possibilities of the language. He was a great favourite with our boys, indefatigable in itinerating, and loved the people very genuinely. It seemed impossible for him to understand how Moslems could withstand the love of Christ, or how they could resist the love with which he himself longed for their salvation. A man who felt so deeply and whose love for men and for their highest good was so intense could only be satisfied by seeing their lives changed. Lack of response and the seemingly impossible walls of opposition affected his spirits and health. His is not the first or the only deeply affectionate nature that has been overwhelmed by the problem of Islam. Subsequently he did good work at the Lagos Grammar

School before he returned to England after five years of missionary service.

The last ten years of my work in Zaria were greatly helped by a wonderful colleague, Miss Nancy Bryant. Her brother had been in the police and administrative service in Nigeria and had died there. She felt the call to come and give her life for the land where he died, and as an honorary missionary has spent strength, health, money, and gifts for the sake of Nigeria. Although she arrived later than was wise for the learning of the language she made sufficient progress to understand and be understood. Her dignity, love, sympathy, and knowledge of the people have made her one of the most loved missionaries in Nigeria.

A Fulah whom I have known for years and who had been quite impervious to my attempts to teach him of Christ, though devoted to me as a friend, was completely stormed by her saving of his life. An inexperienced boy in our dispensary had given him some dangerous medicine when I was away. He had gone home and drunk at one dose medicine intended for three days, containing far too heavy an amount of strychnine, with the inevitable result. That he was not killed outright does more credit to his Fulani physique than to his sense. Miss Bryant was called after midnight by a small boy from his house to come at once. Four miles along a lonely bush track infested with wild animals, she who had had no medical training took the only remedies she could think of. She found him in convulsions, and nearly rigid, and more, I think, by God's goodness than the efficacy of the treatment his life was saved.

The man told me soon after that he could now understand my doctrine through her practice : that she, a

white woman, should leave home in the middle of the night, fall off her bicycle on an impossible road several times and hurt herself, and yet come to save his life was a parable of Christ and His love to us. He was baptized, and his son is now a medical student in England. This is only one of the acts of such women as Miss Bryant, and they do not like them to be mentioned even in books. It is not too much to say that Miss Bryant is the mother of the Hausa Church in Northern Nigeria which has resulted from the C.M.S. work, and to many girls and women, both Hausas and Fulanis, she is the embodiment of what a Christian woman should be.

Any one who has visited Lagos and seen the magnificent pile of buildings belonging to the C.M.S. Bookshop will not be surprised that this enterprising agency turned its eyes to the Northern Provinces. Mr. C. W. Wake-man, whose business capacity and great faith had already made him a power in all kinds of good works in Lagos, saw the possibility of extending up-country. With the permission of the Administration and on the basis of certain definite conditions, branch bookshops were started at Kano, Zaria, and Kaduna. The Rev. and Mrs. J. F. Cotton came up in 1921 to start the shops, and laid the foundation of a very useful work. The business has grown, especially in Kano, and the premises there have been most useful for visitors. The main purpose, however, from the first has been to secure good literature for the colony and protectorate, and to circulate all publications of religious and other healthy literature, whether translations into the various languages or works in English which were suited to the education of the country.

It was hoped that these bookshops in the Northern

Provinces would form a spearhead of work ultimately to be started with a direct purpose of evangelism. From the beginning Mr. and Mrs. Cotton kept this aim in view, and by various methods got into touch with the people of Kano and the *Sabon Gari* (alien quarter). A few boys came to live with them, and after a while they formed a small church consisting chiefly of aliens but with a few Hausas among them. Mrs. Cotton was able to help many of the women who had been attracted by the money of strangers from the coast, and having given up their own Moslem homes had come to live in all kinds of irregular ways with alien husbands. A breakdown in health obliged Mr. Cotton to return to England in 1930.

People often forget that Nigeria is still not a health resort, but is taking heavy toll of the life of Europeans. Malaria, dysentery, blackwater fever, even yellow fever, still claim their victims, to say nothing of lesser ills such as heart trouble, asthma, and general breakdown. I fear that Northern Nigeria will never be a white man's land. It is all the more necessary, therefore, that those of us who can do so should give our very best to the people of the country, even at the sacrifice of health.

Cerebro-spinal meningitis, influenza, and what is usually known as "the plague" have come into the protectorate and caused great mortality among Africans. Smallpox also is always with us. An influenza epidemic in 1918-19 had a particularly malignant effect upon the people, who had never before been attacked by this almost universal scourge. It seemed as if whole populations would be wiped out. No house was exempt, and the onset was so sudden that it defied treatment. Practically every member of our little church and school was struck down for three weeks. Thompson and I nursed

our boys and other members of the church in our big schoolroom, where they lay in rows, some unconscious, some dangerously ill, others, like myself, just able to move about. In the end every member of our church and school recovered. This seemed miraculous, for throughout the city there was scarcely a house without its dead, and in some houses almost all succumbed.

During the years 1913-25 our educational work grew apace. From a tiny school we reached a total of forty-five boarders besides day boys, and there were also a number of girls at the hostel. These all studied together, and I am sure that our experiment of co-education, apparently so rash a venture in a Moslem country and so contrary to recognized ideas, proved a real success. It was this feature of our work which particularly impressed some most interesting visitors who came to us in 1920, Dr. Jesse Jones, Dr. Wilkie, and Dr. Kwegyir Aggrey, of the Phelps-Stokes Education Commission. In the few hours they spent with us they questioned us closely about all our work, especially the educational aspects, and they spoke of the happy, friendly spirit between European and African staff and scholars. It was a great pleasure to meet Dr. Aggrey. His reception in the town by Moslems and others was surprising. They received him as a great African, and there was no doubt of his unusual influence with all sections of the people.

The visit was all too short, but we learned much from the Commission in the time they were with us, and were greatly surprised when later we received the full report of the whole African tour to find ourselves warmly commended. Their visit and that of the Rev. A. G. Fraser in 1925 gave us just that sense of possibility for

our own future which we needed, and encouragement to believe that something had been done and that we were on right lines. I have no doubt that the impetus, of which we were conscious after these visits, was due to the courage that was put into us by their kind and generous appreciation of the results achieved, though these seemed to us so slight. We began to feel that with our small school and church we had a contribution to make to the country, and that influence need not be reckoned in terms of numbers.

Our boys were taught farming and irrigation. We grew the ordinary crops as well as a few which needed watering in the dry season. In Gimi and in Zaria we did some road making, and often helped to put out fires. The sugar manufacture<sup>1</sup> afforded a splendid training. We not only crushed the cane and made the sugar, but acted as forwarding agents to all parts of Nigeria. Regular orders came to us, from Lagos to Sokoto. This started a very useful industry which is still kept up, I fear almost as a monopoly, by our Christians.

At first, like Canon Tyndale-Biscoe in Kashmir, we had great difficulty in teaching team games. Football, however, soon became popular, and those who were too cowardly to play the game had sometimes to be forcibly encouraged. This may seem a little crude to those who know how *esprit de corps* and natural boy instincts in England are enough; but I think that hardly a boy passed through the school without thanking us, either at the time or years afterwards, for the dragooning that was sometimes necessary. Those who joined the European staff later on had little conception of what the years of training meant, and how much was involved for the

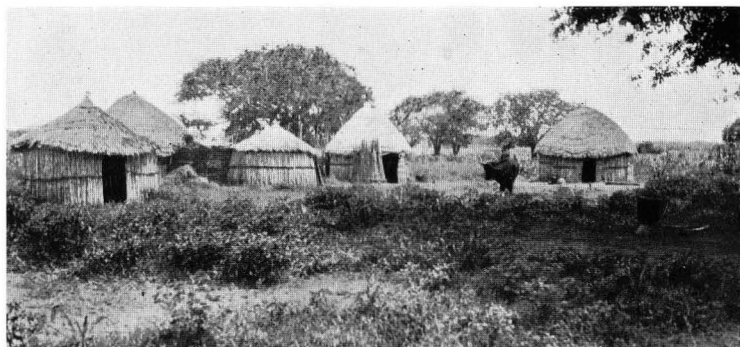
<sup>1</sup> See p. 112.





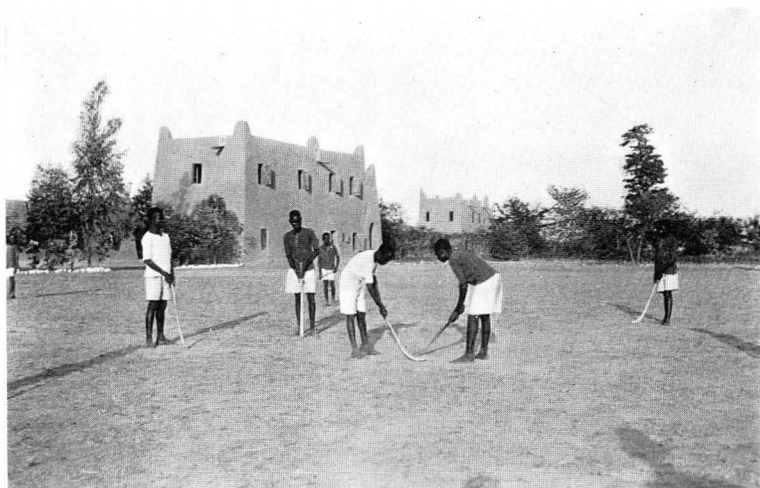
TYPICAL STREET SCENE INSIDE KANO CITY

*Photograph by Mrs. Hickin*



A VILLAGE IN KANO PROVINCE

*Photograph by Mrs. Hickin*



C.M.S. SCHOOL, ZARIA, BOYS PLAYING HOCKEY

*Facing p. 147*

trainers in producing teams both at hockey and football which were rarely beaten in Nigeria.

When in 1925 Alec Fraser came to stay with us and saw the teams that Thompson and I had trained, with the help of Earnshaw-Smith and one or two members of the Government who used to come and play with us, he was so pleased that he actually sent me from Achimota £100 contributed by the members of his staff to enable our boys to travel the thousand miles by train and sea to the Gold Coast and play some teams there. We gave a good account of ourselves, and in the great match against the European staff at Achimota we drew a very good game. None of the team will ever forget the kindness, courtesy, and warmth of welcome which they received, and the wonderful care taken to give them a happy and never-to-be-forgotten visit. The outstanding memory to me was the report given by the games master at Achimota concerning the character, team spirit, and gentlemanliness of the boys. Some of the members of the team had been in the school for ten years or even longer, and I have no doubt that the discipline of the playground contributed much to the strength of character which many of them evinced.

A short sketch of one member of the team may be of interest. The son of one of the richest men in Zaria who was a learned assistant judge, Mijin Yawa first came to my notice as a lad of twelve through a very severe accident to his face from the kick of a horse. He recovered and we became fast friends. For some time I had to prevent him from coming to school because of his father's protests, and it was a great conquest when the old man himself, won by the boy's greatly improved character, gave his consent. Mijin Yawa then came to

live with me and worked his way steadily up the school until he became a master. One Sunday afternoon in 1916, while I was reading, I heard a voice close by : " I have made up my mind to be a Christian, and I want to be baptized." The speaker was Mijin Yawa.

" Do you know what is involved ? "

" Partly," was the reply.

" Your father will disinherit you. As a Christian you could not inherit under Moslem law."

" I know. I don't mind that."

" You will be turned out of your home."

" I am not sure, but I am prepared for that."

" You will have to face great temptation by marriage at once for which you are not ready, and far worse difficulties than that. Can you meet them ? "

There was silence for a while, and then : " I think so."

He went away to see his father, and make full confession of his faith. After an hour, during which Earnshaw-Smith and I had been praying for him, he returned looking radiantly happy, and said : " I have had a talk with him and it is partly as you said, but he has not forbidden me, and I shall be baptized." After due preparation he was baptized. A year or two later in a football match against a European team he played full back for us. Later I heard from one of the players, a first-class forward and a league member in England, how much impressed he had been by this boy's character and skill on the football field. Since then Mijin Yawa has been employed in the C.M.S. Bookshop in Kano, and by the United Africa Company, for which he is still working.

I keep in touch with him, and in a recent letter telling of his father's death he said : " The alkali has wired to ask, in connexion with the inheritance, what religion I

profess. I felt I had now the chance of either refusing Christ or confessing him openly a second time. I replied by wire: 'Religion profess Christianity.' Like St. Paul I count all but loss through the grace of Christ in me. I am even glad to have no earthly inheritance because of the inheritance which Jesus Christ has prepared for me. To follow Him is sufficient reward." He went on to say: "My hope is that God will somehow bring you back to us again. I cannot think, nor can many of us, that it is God's time for you to leave us here in Nigeria. We feel that you have a work to do for your sons and daughters and friends in the faith more than in England. Christ gave them to you to feed."

During the early days of the great war I mentioned to our church members in Zaria, both men and women, the possibility of a tour throughout three of the provinces of Northern Nigeria. The aim would be to get in touch with Moslems to show that some Moslem men and women had been brought to know Christ as their Saviour, and by conversations and friendly contacts to try to influence people in these three provinces. I wrote to the Governor, Sir Frederick Lugard, and received permission from him for this journey on condition that I would be exceedingly careful and remember that Britain was at war with a great Moslem Power, Turkey.

This extensive tour lasted several weeks, during which we visited twenty-five towns. It was the only tour of this kind that I was ever able to make, because considerable opposition was shown by some members of the Administration. To my amazement we found in no single place of all the towns in which we stayed the slightest hostility to our message, but an intense desire

to hear more and ever more. Chiefs, malams, traders, even alkalis and limans all seemed keen to hear what we had to tell. At first we contented ourselves with staying a day or two in a town and speaking of the facts of our faith in small meetings by invitation and in little groups indoors or under a tree in a compound, but we had only been a very few days on tour when news of our coming went ahead and we were asked, even pressed, to give all the people an opportunity to hear.

In one town, by a chief's special invitation, a notice was given to all the people under his rule that there would be a service outside the town by moonlight. To our amazement we found many hundreds assembled, and for hours we continued to tell the gospel story. Several of our Christians from Zaria gave a clear witness to what Christ had done for them. When, tired out, we were starting back to our lodgings we were implored not to go, and some of the leading men said: "We would gladly stay here all night." We often continued till after midnight. In one large town over a thousand people assembled, and listened in tense silence as one after another of us spoke without any attempt at compromise of the necessity of repentance and the forsaking of sin, and of the only One Who could give the power for this. Once or twice little groups came to us after we had gone back for the night and said: "We want to know more." On one such occasion two of the chief Arabic scholars and malams of the town remained with us in earnest conversation seeking the truth until the early hours of the morning.

I was advised not to enter one town because of its bigotry and of the number of hajjis living there, so I decided to visit the chief alone and salute him while awaiting

further guidance. He was surprised at my Hausa, and asked permission to call several of his chiefs and malams, and we had a very wonderful talk. I found invariably that if one avoided argument and kept to facts of experience and common knowledge relating to sin, repentance, forgiveness, holiness, there was no antagonism, and we drifted slowly but surely into the essential truths of Christianity. A group of these hajjis and other malams escorted me to the edge of the town, and this was our farewell conversation:—

“ Good-bye, good-bye.”

“ Come back, come back again.”

“ Do you want me to come back? Are we friends?”

“ Yes, indeed we are. If you will come back we will build you a house, we will send our children to school, and we will come ourselves.”

“ You amaze me. I am a white man, not a Moslem, and I am a Christian. How can you say these things?”

“ We know you are a man of God. We like you and you have been kind to us, and you speak our language as one of ourselves.”

Oh, the tragedy and pain to a missionary who loved these people and felt towards them as to brothers, never again to be able to go to those who were so honestly and obviously ready to receive him.

Rumours of this tour which omitted some facts and added others reached the Governor at Lagos, and I had to go and see him to explain my reasons for having apparently broken my promise. I was able to show him that if I had broken the letter I had certainly kept the spirit of my engagement with him. With his usual readiness to recognize sincerity, he accepted my explanation.

A few years later Archdeacon Ogunbiyi of Lagos, who

had been brought up as a Moslem, came to see us in Zaria. He became a close friend of all the members of our church, and was so impressed with the clear, able witness of these men and women that he raised the money necessary for travelling expenses, *etc.*, and invited a party of eight or nine, including three women, to go to Lagos. There were crowded churches in Lagos during those two weeks. Many Moslems came to hear a thing almost incredible to them – men and women who had been Moslems telling in unmistakable language of their conversion to Jesus Christ. What a witness to the power of the message of Christ, that well-educated, well-dressed, cultured congregations in Lagos should have listened with deep interest and sympathy to these strangers from the north, in their native clothing, unable to speak English, but vitalized by their new faith !

We were greatly encouraged by the arrival of three men from the Kano town of Gerko. They were Moslems ; one of them, Malam Hasan, was a very learned man. They desired to know about the Christian faith, and also to learn the Roman character so that they might be able to read our Christian books. For a few weeks we met daily in my room to read and study the gospels and St. Paul's epistles. Malam Hasan would bring his Koran also. Within a year these three men were baptized. So clear was their faith, so simple their desire to witness, that there could be no idea of making them wait for the usual longer period. Their children were given to us to educate, and were some of the brightest we have had. Isiya, one of the three, was the keenest evangelist in seeking to win other Moslems, but he relied too much on argument and not sufficiently

بِسْمِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ  
سُوْرَةُ اَبْرٰهِيْمَ

۱. اٰتِيْكَرْ قَبْرِكُوْ اَكُوْرْ كَلِمَ كَلْمَرْ كُوَا  
 تَبْرِيْرْ دَ اللّٰهِيْرْ كَلْمَرْ كُوَا اللّٰهِيْرُو: ۲ وَنَسْ  
 اٰتِيْكَرْ قَبْرِكُوْ تَبْرِيْرْ دَ اللّٰهِيْكَو: ۳ تَاوْرِيْسَا  
 اَكِيْعِ دُكَرْ اَبِي: ۴ اَبِيْعِ كُوْمِيْعِ بِلْ اِيْكَرْ اَبِيْعَا  
 اَبِيْعِ نَسْرُ تَاوْرِيْسَا: ۵ اِيْكَرْ نَسْرُ اَكُوْرْ تَبْرِيْرْ  
 كُوَا تَسْكِيْرْ مَتْبِيْرْ اَبِيْعَا: ۶ كَمَا تَسْكِيْرْ  
 يَرْتَسْكِيْرْ كُوَا اٰتِيْكَرْ دُوْ دُوْ كُوَا تَبْرِيْرْ  
 تَبْرِيْرْ سَبَا: ۷ وَنِيْعِ مَتْمِ يٰ اِسُوْ اِيْكَرْ اَبِيْعَا  
 دَعْمُ وِيْرْ اللّٰهِيْ سُوْنَسْرُ يَجْنَسْ: ۸ وَنَسْرُ يٰ اَبِيْعَا  
 دُوْمِيْرْ شِيْعَا شِيْعَا شِيْعَا كَرْتَسْكِيْرْ دُوْمِيْرْ  
 دُكَرْ مَتْبِيْرْ سَبَا غَسْكِيْرْ اَتَاوْرِيْسَا  
 : ۹ شِيْعَا كَنَسْرُ بُوْنَسْرُ تَسْكِيْرْ اَبِيْعَا يٰ اَبِيْعَا  
 دُوْمِيْرْ شِيْعَا شِيْعَا كَرْتَسْكِيْرْ: ۱۰ اَكُوْرْ تَسْكِيْرْ  
 مَرْتَسْكِيْرْ وَنَدِيْرْ تَسْكِيْرْ كُوْوِيْرْ مَتْمِ يَرْتَسْكِيْرْ



on the persuasion of love. As an honest, upright trader, however, he has been unanswerable.

Hasan, the scholar, has done a piece of work which is already proving invaluable. A request was made that at least one of the gospels should be printed in the Aljami script<sup>1</sup> for the sake of the large number of Moslem scholars who would read it in that form. Malam Hasan and my boy Tafida and I started on this work. A page of it is inserted in this book. Many a time it seemed as if the attempt would end in failure. Malam Hasan, who could write the whole of the Koran by heart, and on one occasion presented me with a copy which he had written, could not understand that erasions, smudges, adventitious marks and corrections, however neatly made, were absolutely inadmissible in pages which had to be photographed and made into one flawless book. He was a beautiful writer, but his patience was not equal to the quality of his writing, and on many occasions I thought the work would come to an abrupt end. Exasperation reached high-water mark one day when the seventh attempt to produce one sheet had still a mistake, and his acute appreciation of accuracy was not sufficient to induce him to do an eighth. In despair I offered to try. I have not a great knowledge of Arabic or Aljami, and it is not easy to make sure of getting every letter, every vowel mark, and every stop right at the first attempt. But I was lucky, and the situation was saved, for Hasan, realizing the humour of the position, said: "If you can do it, I'm sure I can."

Eventually the work was finished. The British and Foreign Bible Society had the sheets photographed, and

<sup>1</sup> A modification of Arabic, used in the schools and for general purposes by educated people.

at great expense produced a really beautiful Gospel of St. John in Aljami, which is widely sought and has, I understand, been taken across the Sahara and has even reached the Mediterranean coast. The three of us gave many sighs of relief when the work was completed. We have often had the happiness of seeing Hausa Moslem malams who would never have consented to read it in any other script, poring over the leaves and evidently enjoying the message of *Al Injil*, as the testament is called.

Malam Hasan, as a Christian, lost most of his means of earning a livelihood, and from being well-off and a man of considerable position, became very poor and is content to be one of no reputation. He reads the lessons in the church at Zaria, and has real happiness in his three daughters, two of whom are married to young Hausa Christians.

Another and very different illustration of personal contacts may be given here. When the Emir Kwasau was becoming very insecure in his tenure of office in 1902 (for there were many counts against him with the Administration), he said to me one day: "Likita, I do not expect I shall be here much longer. My eldest son is young, and has not much sense. Will you be a friend to him, and one day do him a kindness?" I could not at the time see in what way such a deed would be possible, at all events in the sense in which he meant it, but I gave my word that I would do my best. Sixteen years later I got my chance and took it.

The young prince had suffered all the ignominy possible to the eldest son of a dethroned king when the successor was his father's particular enemy. In 1919 the Resident in Zaria was talking to me one afternoon,

when he suddenly said : " You know a lot about these people, Miller. Is it not true that there are four dynasties in Zaria, and that the chief positions in the province have usually been divided between them ? " I told him that it was so, and explained the present state of affairs ; that the Emir Aliyu had given all the important and well-paid appointments into the hands of his sons, nephews, servants, and friends. The Resident asked if any of the other people were there then, and I remembered my promise. I told him that there were two outstanding men both of the family of Emir Kwasau. The elder, a man who had held the rank of Magaji, had a reputation for being just, kind, and an able ruler. The younger, Madaki Ibrahim, held the highest rank under his father, the late emir. He was weak, but much beloved by the people, and had never been known to act oppressively or cruelly.

The Resident took notes about both these men, and within a very short time when two vacancies occurred, he put them in office although considerable pressure had to be brought to bear upon the Emir before he consented. This was an amazing piece of luck for these two men. Within a short time the Emir Aliyu was deposed, and the choice of another emir was very restricted, for it must be a man of a reigning family who had held a chieftainship, and against whom nothing serious had been recorded. The Magaji fulfilled these requirements and was made emir. He reigned for five years and was succeeded by his nephew, Madaki Ibrahim, and so at last my promise was fulfilled. The afternoon on which Madaki Ibrahim received his insignia of office he *walked* from the palace, accompanied by only two or three servants, to call on me before carrying out a single domestic or political act.

His greeting was very touching : he kissed my hand and thanked me in his father's and in his own name, though I had never told him of my small part in the steps which led to his elevation. Most happy relations existed between us for the remainder of my time in Zaria.

These were days of consolidation for the mission. Some of the Christians exerted a real influence in the life of the city and were much respected for their character. One trader, a dealer in skins and general middleman, acquired such an amount of trade because he was recognized by the country people for whom he bought as absolutely honest, that he became rich and an object of envy to less successful and less honest fellow-townsmen. This was a kind of evidence very hard to gainsay. Any church in the midst of criticizing and would-be hostile people is happy if it has many of this type of member, for as disciples of Christ, especially among Moslems, we need to be those who win others by kindness and friendship rather than smother by argument and logic.

## CHAPTER XIII

### MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND PROBLEMS

**T**HERE is probably no question upon which the truly Christian English and the African mind are in such sharp antagonism as that of marriage. Putting on one side the African who, through education and long association, has acquired to some extent the view point of the Romantic races, I think it is fair to say that while the Christian Englishman thinks of marriage sacramentally, the African, even if he is a Christian, thinks of it chiefly from a utilitarian angle.

Only too often for the Pagan, the wife is part beast of burden, and part instrument for obtaining children and cooked food. Failure in either of these for her is fatal !

Moslem marriage is based on a somewhat higher civil code ; the woman has well defined rights, and her influence and powers are not infrequently considerable. But they are the privileges of seclusion ; and in the last analysis it is doubtful whether the position of a Moslem woman, considered morally, mentally, and spiritually, is much superior to that of the Pagan.

I doubt whether the African Christian, generally speaking, has yet been able to emancipate himself wholly from the essentially low view of marriage which he has inherited from his forbears. Upon the possibility of Christian Africa being able to evolve a high realization

of marriage, civil, social, moral, and religious, yet truly African, depends the future of the Church in Nigeria and throughout the continent.

To a class of communicants in Kano of varying but considerable intelligence, and genuine Christian experience, I put these questions recently : —

1. “ What do you think should be the relation of the woman to the man in marriage ? ”

The answer came clearly and with no doubt : “ That of obedience ; there must be fear or we shall never keep our women from despising us.”

This was to me strangely reminiscent of the “ heavy father ” of the mid and late Victorian times in England. Many of us remember the pious, lordly, English husband who thought and spoke of his wife as “ the weaker vessel,” to be alternately protected and bullied, to bear children, keep the house, and be generally submissive ! Those who have read *The Golden Years* by Gibbs will recall the home of the evangelical English peer.

2. “ What do you think is the chief value and object of marriage ? ”

*Answer.* “ To obtain issue.” This from a less educated member, but one evidently well trained in the Prayer Book !

3. “ Do you think that God’s idea as revealed by Christ, that two human beings, a man and a woman, should become really one, is possible on earth ? ”

*Answer.* “ Ideally ; but not in Africa. Our women are not yet fit.”

4. “ When are you going to begin to aim at this ideal for marriage ? ”

*Answer.* “ Who knows ? ” (And, implied . . . “ Who cares ? ”)

“ *Amren ya mutu* (The marriage has died),” is a sentence one hears repeated in the Hausa States with weary reiteration. “ *An kashe amren* (The marriage has been killed),” meaning divorce, is rarer. But to the Hausa Moslem, and unfortunately still to a great extent to the Christian, the two terms imply but little difference, inasmuch as the result is practically the same. If it is largely the Christian conscience which prevents the difference diminishing to the vanishing point in England, what is to be expected in Africa ?

If through neglect, mutual dislike, or a bad quarrel, one of the contracting parties has left the other, then “ *amren ya mutu* ” is claimed. If there have been no children as the result of the marriage, and the husband, although a Christian, is not content to leave matters so, and takes another “ wife,” the first wife may not be content with her new position. After protesting and arguing to no purpose, she leaves him, and, “ *amren ya mutu.*”

Any number of reasons, legal fictions, religious appeals may be brought forward, but, to the average Hausa Moslem, and, to a less extent, to the Christian, the matter is settled. “ *Amren ya mutu.*” Only when the love has been strong, and the conscience responsive to truth, is the attempt at persuasion successful. Without these “ the marriage has died,” whether the law or the Church agrees or not.

The question then which forces itself upon senior missionaries is : What must be our attitude to those who flatly kick over the traces, and seem to refuse the laws of the Church ? Take four cases, selected at random, each with different detail, but all equally opposed in their attitude to the ecclesiastical laws.

The first is a young Christian clerk who has come from some part of the coast to Northern Nigeria. The majority of the girls of his country are not willing to go to this "bush and foreign life," and he finds himself hundreds of miles away from his home among strangers in a land whose people, language, and religion are strange to him. His work occupies all the day time, and he can only get scallywags of "boys" to look after his hut and belongings, and cook for him. For some time he is true to what he was taught at the mission school from which he came; but at last, tired of ill-cooked food, and of coming back to his forlorn hut only to find that his "boy" has fled, and that a part, if not all of his possessions have been stolen, he decides that it is not good enough.

There are no girls of his race and religion available; but there are lots of young Moslem Hausa girls who have broken loose from their seclusion, and if not actually "on the streets" are certainly at his disposal for the asking. They get "married" in native fashion, which means that a few friends come round; there is a feast, some money passes hands; quite possibly a malam will say a prayer in Arabic, and the matter is settled. They are very happy; they have four children, and the little home is, after its kind, a model one. The relationship, though not pledged as "life-long," nevertheless has elements of real faithfulness.

*De facto* the young man is excommunicated from his church, and his children cannot be baptized unless his wife gives up her Moslem faith and consents to become a catechumen. This way often lies hypocrisy and fraud. Should she refuse, he is liable to be bullied about his "living in sin." He frets, and is on the point of



abandoning his wife ; for he has been put out of the church, and fears that at death he will not receive Christian burial (a very terrible matter to an African). Is this right ?

The second is a Fulah, well-born and very proud. While still a Moslem he marries a widow from among his own people. She refuses to become a Christian when he does, but continues to live with him as his wife. At their marriage she told him that when her two sons by a former husband were grown up, she should leave him, and go to live with them and their wives. That time came, and she left him. Imagine now a house with no wife, no cook possible, no housekeeper, and a middle-aged man unable to find a suitable Christian girl to marry. Flouting missionary opinion he marries a cousin, a woman about his own age, who is a Moslem ; and is promptly excommunicated. He pleads that the first marriage was not "Christian," and that following Moslem custom it had "died," and that he was therefore free. No ! the second wife must become a catechumen or he must cease to come to the Sacrament.

The third is a Moslem boy who in my school at Zaria became a Christian, and seemingly a very good and real one. He married one of our Christian girls who was better educated than himself. For some few years all went well, but there were no children ; and after waiting a long time this young man, feeling acutely the shame of having no child, which is very real to an African, "married" another woman, in fact committed bigamy. Finding himself no longer considered a Christian, in sheer revolt he returned to his old faith, or rather pretended to do so. Was he lost to Christ ? Should he have been lost to the church ?

The fourth is that of a man of fine and noble metal. A determined Moslem until he was twenty, he was one of the little band of those who in our early years in Zaria came whole-heartedly to love and serve Christ. Some time before the war in the Cameroons in 1915 he became a soldier, and it seemed practically imperative for him to have a wife to live with him. There was no Christian girl available, and after much heart-searching he married a Moslem woman, with the determined purpose of winning her to Christ. For many years he was put out of all the communion of the church. But he held on; and at last, through the example of his fine life and clear consistent witness, the wife also came out of Islam, accepted the faith of Christ with all her heart, and the two became one. He has been the leader of our Hausa church in Kano, and for years has won the respect of Moslems and Christians in Zaria and Kano. Farmer, soldier, barber, evangelist, and now pastor of a church, and a town councillor under the British Administration! But when he and I have had heart to heart talks, he has told me how terrible was the strain on his loyalty, and how nearly he wavered.

These four are not fictitious cases; and they are typical of many more of the same description in Northern Nigeria.

Two things stand out plainly to me as a layman. First, there must be far greater concentration on the education of girls. And it must be an all-round education: literary, for the young men in Northern Nigeria are fast becoming keen on education both for themselves and their wives; domestic, for the home is the citadel in African life. Hygiene and child welfare must be among the most important subjects, for preventable diseases

carry off a terrible number of mothers and babies on account of ignorance.

All the experience of other workers and other missions must be pooled to find some way of tiding over those critical years between fourteen and eighteen, when most African girls cease to think of much else but their future marriage. And the effort must not be relaxed after marriage, however great the difficulty. One has seen, oh ! so many times, girls well-trained, thoughtful, true, and possessing apparently all that was necessary to make good mothers and wives ; and then the first year of married life seems to have broken everything down, and a complete disintegration of character has taken place ; because the work, begun in the school, was not kept up.

It is best as a rule in West Africa, and specially in Moslem West Africa, that the training of girls should be in the hands of not-too-old married women. Most African girls will respond more intelligently to the teaching of such in matters relating to family life. However, in my experience some of the very best African women in our churches now in Kano and Zaria were trained by my sister Miss Ethel Miller, and later by Miss Nancy Bryant. There are among them some who have reached a high stage of Christian womanhood, and are good mothers ; and it is touching to hear them speak of these two English women who acted towards them as mother and friend, and prepared them for their life work.

Political, social, and economic influences are helping us along the lines of progress in marriage problems. Cessation of tribal wars has neutralized the excess of females over males. Trade, travelling, and elementary education, together with the inrush of everything

connected with a wider world-consciousness, are in most parts even of Moslem West Africa, making it easier for girls to break through the evil traditions and type of marriage to which their parents were accustomed. Polygamy is becoming much more difficult. Divorce is not nearly so hard to obtain for the woman; in fact it is becoming too easy among Moslems. I have known a girl under nineteen divorce three husbands, and get a fresh sum of money from a fourth for her marriage to him.

The greater mingling of races and tribes is leading to far more intermarriage; and this is tending to break down old local prejudices and customs. But in some ways, notably in the increase of prostitution, the price to pay for this gradual infiltration of new ideas is heavy. The little Christian community is undoubtedly making a real contribution to a healthy advance; markedly so through the influence of better homes, greater fertility, and a better prospect of life in young children.

Missionary societies at work in pagan and Moslem West Africa will have to approach the question of African marriage from a less national and romantic point of view. A Christian conscience and an English conscience are by no means synonymous. We need to throw the onus of raising the status of marriage upon the whole membership of the African Church, lay and clerical, rather than upon the missionaries and clergy alone. What is not yet recognized as sin must not be treated too harshly as such before the Spirit of Christ has brought enlightenment. It is always difficult, and usually harmful, for the people of one race to judge the morals and customs of another race, or even to outline for them new codes.

In Zaria some twelve years ago, in response to a strong feeling among the members of our little church there, a meeting was convened, with no European present by my express wish. The whole gathering of baptized persons of adult age, men, women, boys, and girls, passed a resolution which remained in force as long as I was in Zaria, and probably holds until now, that girls should not be engaged under the age of seventeen, nor married until the age of nineteen; and that the corresponding ages for boys should be nineteen and twenty-one.

Criticisms may be passed upon the infringement of personal liberty, and the steam-roller action of such a resolution, but I know that it was loyally adhered to, and resulted in far better homes and less quarrelling. Its strength lay in the fact that all felt it to be their own legislation, and not something imposed by outsiders. Bishop Oluwole was present at this little meeting in Zaria, and it was largely due to his wise, fatherly counsel, without any attempt at the use of authority, that the result was obtained.

The second, and far more difficult question upon which I have had to make up my mind, in company with many others in Northern Nigeria, is that of the relation to African marriage of the law of the State, and the discipline of the Church.

We do not consider that the Marriage Ordinance Acts are a success. We do not think that the status of marriage in the eyes of African converts from Paganism and Islam has been raised by the enforcement of these Acts. Their conception of marriage is not that which obtains in England or America, and they have not yet adopted the attitude toward marriage which we have.

Similarly many of us think that the time has not yet come, if indeed it ever will or should come, when such a result can be obtained through synodical rules, church discipline which includes excommunication, and the application of European codes which are western and not essentially Christian. It is becoming obvious to an increasing number of thoughtful Africans, both in Northern and Southern Nigeria, that if the attractive power of the fellowship of the Church is not strong enough to hold its members to the ideals of that fellowship, including holy Christian marriage, then the Church must seek other means than discipline with which to obtain that end.

Overflowing life and fellowship attract. Discipline expels. Which is more Christlike? If the Sacrament of Holy Communion is the highest expression of the love of Christ and His members, expulsion from it should surely never be used as a means of discipline. The secret is for the corporate sense of sin of all kinds, of failure, and anything less than the highest Christian life, to be so intense and burning as to lead either to quick restoration or *self*-condemnation. When this is the aim and experience of every member, and not only of a few of the clergy, then surely the present methods of discipline will become obsolete.

Does the present attitude and action of the Church in West Africa towards breaches against the moral law have the desired effect? I believe the answer from most candid clergymen and laymen would be, "No."

Quite recently in conversation with a cultured and keen African clergyman I spoke of these things, especially in connexion with the discipline practised in expelling offenders from Holy Communion, and told him what I

felt. I give the substance of his answer practically word for word:—

“I am finding that the Sacraments are *the* great hindrance to the spiritual life of my church. Often I have to discipline those who are the truest Christians, though perhaps irregular from a synodical standpoint, while I am forced to ignore the really sinful and immoral, who are cleverer, and come to the Holy Communion with no conscience, and I cannot prevent them!” What a confession!

Only when the fellowship of the Church is so compelling in its quality of life, activity of service, and character of witness, will men and women be kept to their higher ideals; *and* inside the Church. The effect upon many Africans of any other compulsion is either to drive them to view the Sacraments as fetishes; or to cease to value them at all, when the price asked is something from which their human instincts revolt; and they drift from the Church.

I am wholly loyal to the ideal of monogamy, in Africa as everywhere, and to a life-for-life union in marriage. I aim at a higher, not a lower level for marriage; and among the people with whom I have worked for thirty-five years in Nigeria many will bear witness to my teaching on this subject.

I have had evidence of real results where African boys and girls have been taught quite early that in true marriage three are concerned—the man, the woman, and God; that there must be no possessiveness, no jealousy, no rights or claims other than those of the Kingdom of God; that to each separately and to both together must come guidance from God about all the details of life. When this becomes general, then, and then only, shall

we have a Church in Africa which is a real fellowship ; where sin, irregularity, falling from the ideal, and back-sliding generally, will not need to be punished or disciplined, but will be overcome by deeper love and the more chiselled witness of the members.

Where the church has become a system rather than a fellowship men will follow their own counsels outside the church.

It is futile to argue that we have to deal with men as they are, imperfect, unholy ; and that we cannot follow the highest, because men are frail and not angels. This is inferior thinking, and that is sin. It has also been the cause of the blocking of all idealism and reform. War, flogging (and by the Moslem and Pagan the flogging of their wives), crookedness in business, brutality in prison methods, all have been justified by these arguments. And the Church has followed suit by acting according to such semi-Christian standards.

Is it not a matter of urgency that while our young churches in Nigeria are in their spiritual infancy ; before methods become stereotyped and static ; before more thinking men and women and boys are alienated, there may be a willingness on the part of our leaders to rethink the whole position ?

As an old retired missionary I would plead that more opportunity be given to the younger clergy and laymen to express themselves ; especially those working in Moslem districts in the north of Nigeria, where the Church is hard pressed to hold its own against very different standards in Islam and Paganism. I would plead also that the anthropologist and sociologist may be listened to ; that even other systems and religions may be reviewed. By such means we may arrive at



something which, without lowering our *ultimate* ideal, or abating one detail of Christ's *authentic* teaching on marriage will draw men and women to Him and to His Church, and not expel them from it.

## CHAPTER XIV

### MORAL STANDARDS

**I**F a Meccan Arab, who had visited and stayed a year in England, were to harangue me on the enormous revenue annually obtained from the excise customs on intoxicating drinks ; and then to go further and quote statistics showing the amount per head in money and gallons of drink consumed annually in Great Britain, I should be greatly annoyed with him, and proceed to repudiate his conclusions if, from these figures, he accused our people of being a race of immoral drunkards ! Similarly when I hear wholesale sweeping accusations of sexual immorality made by westerners and visitors against the people of Africa, and specially the people among whom I have worked all my life in Nigeria, a strong indignant protest arises in me.

If we realize the absence of all Christian moral standards among non-Christian peoples, the charge appears all the more unjust. And if by moral standards we mean actually custom, usage, accepted ways, then I think that a general charge of immorality against Christian England is more just, for *our* morals are Christian morals, our sanctions are those of ages of Christ-governed thought, and usage is based upon Christian principles. So, being judged by a higher standard, we are found to fail more completely. We depart far more seriously from *our* accepted code than the pagan or Moslem Hausa does from his.

In dealing with questions of sexual morality in a country like pagan or Moslem Nigeria, one has to remember that innocence, as we understand it, is unknown; that prudery, sophistry, and reticence are simply absent from the Pagan, and for the Moslem only exist to a degree sufficient to complicate the issue, but not to lead to higher things.

In a country where donkeys, dogs, goats, and turkeys wander freely about, and without restraint carry out all the dictates of their animal nature, it is not to be expected that the tiniest children should grow up with any feelings of prudish modesty; especially when one remembers that it would never enter into the heads of their parents or guardians to see why they should have such feelings. Children of both sexes up to the age of seven years wear no clothing at all in pagan areas and Moslem villages, and the same applies to a considerable extent in Moslem towns also. In many pagan tribes men and women are absolutely naked: and these are *not* the tribes where, from any standpoint, immorality is most flagrant!

None of the functions of nature are thought, by such Africans as are yet wholly unsophisticated, to be improper or needing to be covered up. He blows his nose and expectorates straight on to the ground without the intermediary of a handkerchief, and is probably thus far more sanitary in a hot climate! To the European newcomer there are constant shocks at first as he sees how completely the calls of nature of all sorts are responded to in public without any feeling of shame or reticence. Young children, following the habits of the goats which live in every compound, practise intimacies which seem shocking to the European; and, as they grow a little

older, pair off, and sleep with each other according to a custom known as *tsaranchi*.

I have noticed that when in missionary committees the case of some young African teacher is being discussed, and reports of immorality are brought against him, the African and the English missionaries look at matters from different points of view. The African is saying in his heart : " How well we understand this sort of thing ; it's all wrong, but how like a young man and woman ! This time they have not been able to keep it dark, and are found out ! " The Englishman is saying : " This is too awfully sad ; these are the boys and girls we have trained to think differently about such matters, and now they have fallen. " Both feel sad ; but the African is thinking more from his own traditional tribal point of view, the Englishman from the Christian. The African would be far more shocked at a flagrant piece of ingratitude towards a friend, an exhibition of temper from an old and experienced Christian, and a cruel or harsh judgment upon a young sinner whom he feels Christ would have saved and not condemned, than at some sexual irregularity.

A girl's purity unviolated is not considered as a matter of moral, much less spiritual, value ; it is a marketable commodity. Where things have become unusually bad, and all have " wandered from the narrow path " together, and therefore the market value has gone down, in fact, slumped, then the best has to be made of a bad bargain. I knew one large district in a big Moslem city in Northern Nigeria where I was told, on authority that I could not doubt, that there were not in all the quarter of at least two thousand people half a dozen girls over twelve years of age who were virgins.

The dislike of any tendency towards sexual perversion or degeneracy among Hausa Moslems is so severe and intolerant that cruel laws exist and were carried out until recently upon offenders. I remember how a thrill of horror went through the city of Zaria, before the British occupation, because the then emir had discovered two women of his harem offending against this law. The head of one was ordered to be cut off with a carving knife, and the other woman, previous to being executed, had to fan the bleeding head of her friend in a calabash to keep off flies until sunset. This was no moral indignation of a good man because of sin, but only the vengeance of an autocrat upon those who, in his household, had cheapened his own prerogatives.

At the deposition, later on, of this same emir for offences against the British Administration, his successor to the throne (and harem !) found several women there who had never been allowed outside the walls, but were still in the state of virginity in which they had entered as small children. I do not know how it will ever be possible, until there is a new conscience born in such quarters, for poor women to be delivered from the evils of a life like this, but from the true stories that have been told to me by sufferers one thinks that this whole system with its victims must be crying to heaven. "Their customs and religion are good enough for them," is the language either of crass ignorance, or of those who little value their own !

Seclusion of women has been claimed by Moslems of enlightened views as a proof of love and the desire to shield, and the persistent jealousy is deemed merely an outcome of this care. Some Englishmen seem to see something praiseworthy in it, but I emphatically deny

this. It is nothing more than an intense possessiveness, similar to that shown by some people in England towards their own cars, but which ceases when the cars become old and worn out. They are then discarded. So with most women in harems.

Christ's teaching on adultery and sins against the marriage state seems to make it clear that He looked at such from the point of view of the injury done to the woman. I believe that it is only when the true status of women in Nigeria is assured and women come to value their own honour and purity, that we shall begin to see a deep change from a society in which moral standards are held to be merely matters of custom to one in which is recognized the sanctity of the body as the temple of the Holy Ghost. It is only then that the intrinsic evil of all declension from high standards will be appreciated.

An incident that happened under my eyes in Zaria illustrates this point. A man of mature age was convicted of a brutal assault and violation of a little girl of four years of age. The judge, a Moslem, and reckoned clever in Islamic jurisprudence, sentenced him to three weeks' imprisonment! I shall not soon forget the loathing and disgust of the young English political officer to whom lists of offences with their sentences were sent regularly, as he read this one and told me of it. His indignant expostulation to the Moslem judge elicited the answer: "I gave a light sentence because I considered that it was adequate to the amount of satisfaction which the man got out of his deed!" The inadequacy and callousness of this sentence strikes us; but it is well that we should not call it "immorality," but "non-Christian morality."

Hearing the cries of a poor goat that was in labour

during my early days in Zaria, I remarked to a Moslem man of some position who was with me at the time : " I must go and see what is the matter." Said he : " What business is it of yours ? " I replied that as a doctor, although not a veterinary, I could not leave the poor thing to suffer alone. He thought further discussion with such a poor fool was useless, but nevertheless accompanied me. I saved the life of the unfortunate creature and that of her triplet ; she must have died had I not operated.

My Moslem friend was disgusted beyond measure ; although he would have welcomed surgical aid himself if in pain, he evidently thought that females, whether women or goats, should be left to God. When in my further foolishness I ventured to ask what he would have done with his own wife in similar circumstances, he was too outraged in feeling to answer me properly, and merely said in contempt : " Any Moslem would rather his wife died, however much the suffering involved, than be touched by any one, much less a man and an infidel ! " I actually did see such a case one day, and, with Dr. Arthur Druitt, was able to save a woman in too terrible a predicament to be even mentioned in this book. No English woman could have lived through the two awful days she had had ; probably if we had not found the husband away from home, and entered the house at the invitation of a distracted sister, she would have met the death that comes to hundreds of Moslem women. Again, do not say " immoral " ; but rather that the love of Christ has not yet broken down the barriers and created the only Society of which it is claimed that " There can be neither bond nor free . . . male or female . . . all one in Christ Jesus."

I have referred in an earlier chapter to the importunities of the swarms of beggars who infest the Hausa States. The measure of their success, which is considerable, is proportionate to the ignorance of the poor women in the homes, and their dread of losing the love of their husbands through not bearing children. Amulets, charms, potions, and all the other deceptions which are sufficient to wheedle money out of these poor creatures are supplied. Nothing is learnt by experience ; failure only seems to make the belief in such superstitious follies stronger. On every new-born baby girl are tied small amulets enclosed in leather, said to be potent to ensure the winning of a husband. Youths go about with several of these charms tied round their waists, arms, *etc.*, for the same kind of purpose ! From the cradle to the grave men, women, and children live in one ceaseless atmosphere of sex ; it tinges all their thoughts ; it encompasses all their pursuits.

Moslem law has always recognized the heinousness of adultery, but has made its punishment extremely difficult, because it is practically impossible to fulfil the necessary conditions for valid evidence. It has in fact become the commonest of all the Hausa sins : and it is recognized as a sin !

Venereal disease is fearfully common, to such an extent that it is practically ignored, with shocking results to the health and stamina of the people. Mortality among babies due to this cause is responsible for a veritable holocaust of human life. With malaria and intestinal complaints due to neglect and ignorance, it constitutes the chief hindrance to the required great increase of population.

It has been variously estimated by the staff of the



Northern Nigerian Medical Service that nearly fifty per cent of children die before reaching the age of two years. I do not consider this at all a high estimate. Personally also, from observation made over a long time, I do not think that among city Moslem women there is an average of over one child per woman. The average is better among the lower classes and in country villages.

I took the trouble to collect the statistics of the marriages, births, and deaths of the children over two years among the married Christian young people of our mission : nearly all the boys had come from my school, and the girls chiefly from the hostel. It worked out at nearly three children per woman, and the death rate of children under two years between sixteen and seventeen per cent. This was for twenty-five marriages of those born Moslems and converted to the faith of Christ. The death rate is still high, but is improving rapidly.

Two women converted from Islam stand out as cases which prove the power of the new conscience born through faith in Christ.

One, married young, as a second wife to a Moslem, found herself bound after conversion to cease living with him for various reasons. She afterwards refused all marriage, though only a very young woman, and lived a spotless life, to the amazement of the Moslem population of Zaria who thought such a thing incredible. At first she had to bear insult and obloquy, but gradually, by kindness and dignity, won for herself the respect of the whole city. As a Bible woman she visited the homes of the people she knew well, and told them of her Saviour. At her death a few years later there was quite unusual mourning among a great many of the Moslems

of the city for a woman who had lived a holy life, contrary to all the expectation of those who had never seen a woman controlled by the power of Christian sanctity.

The second woman is still living in another large city. She has three grown-up children, though still a young woman, and she is living alone a life of such obvious purity that she is a wonder and miracle to all the Moslem population. As a sanitary inspector she has studied hygiene, midwifery, and child welfare, and is invaluable to the medical authorities of the city.

One often hears discussions in missionary circles as to the advisability of encouraging dancing in Christian mission schools, and its value generally in a Christian mission community. In view of the sound reasons given for both sides of this question, I would not like to attempt to give any emphatic judgment, but I would say that it is well for young missionaries to consult, and be guided largely by the advice and experience of the older African Christians in this matter. There are hysterical dances among Hausas known as Bori, in which men and women get worked up into a state of semi-ecstasy, semi-madness; these are almost wholly obscene. A recrudescence lately in the city of Kano of the lewdest possible type of dancing, in which both sexes join, practically and sometimes entirely naked, is causing the native authorities in the city some misgiving.

I have seen much dancing in country and town in Northern Nigeria, but I have been impressed with the scarcity of anything which is wholesome, pretty, or graceful; I have seen nothing at all like the pretty country and folk dancing which is so rapidly becoming popular in England. When we have a second or third generation of Christians who have grown up more or

less unassociated with the distinctly evil phases of native dancing, I hope we may be able to revive a very beautiful art, and recover so healthful an exercise.

I am not afraid of leaving the enlightened minds of Christian Hausas to develop for themselves new lines of thought and morals. Our wisdom will be to take off the heavy hand of restraint. To coerce along lines of seeming advantage an unwilling people, whether a church community, or a boys' school, or a mothers' union, will only end in our being left in a backwash; for there are no people in the world who so cleverly get their own way, through passive or active resistance, as Africans. We English people may be accepted as guides, and we shall be well advised to be content with such a role; if we assume the position of undue authority, we may appear to succeed, but the after recoil will be disastrous.

The question of clothing has been a most difficult one to many of us. I am not ashamed to say that my ideas have gone almost around the circle on this question. I find there is an increasing determination among our young people, not only Christians but also progressive Moslems, to wear English clothes. These are probably, if carefully chosen with an eye to climate and other conditions, the most sanitary and useful in existence. Inconsistency in this matter has spoiled the value of our advice; we encourage at times and discourage at others. Soldiers, police, clerks, houseboys, for instance, wear under order English or modified English dress, but we exasperate others who wish to do the same by an irrational prohibition. We cannot fight against a strong tendency which is not in itself wrong; we must seek by example and wise counsel to lead without seeming to do so. Personally, I have been content with those under

my own influence to help them in selecting simple, quiet English clothes, suitable to their colour and the climate.

I believe the young Christian churches in Northern Nigeria are slowly but surely acquiring a truly Christian conscience and a strong public opinion. A new life is coming, and it is the life of ideals based on Christian thought rather than European. A great fight is being put up in church and individual life. We must not be disappointed at its apparently slow progress. Above all how we need the patience and love of Christ not to quench the smoking flax, but to give the encouragement of sympathetic understanding and friendship!

Why expel boys or girls from school merely for offences against a new code which is not yet fully a part of themselves? Why excommunicate church members because after centuries under an inherited regime of low morals they are suddenly brought into the higher life of the Church, and fall? Do we always know the struggle that has gone on against odds that would be severe even to us? Do we remember how feeble yet is the life which is still new but undoubtedly of Christ in them?

With the stone in my hand to cast, I have been often arrested as I have heard the voice: "Let him that is without sin among you." There are to-day in Northern Nigeria many men who are living the Christ life, and helping others to do the same, who were saved after the first fall because God showed me that Christ could heal and restore, and I must not make that harder. The urge to discipline is strong, and it does not require much moral effort; the skill and effort needed to save are so much greater.

In spite of all the seemingly impossible obstacles, we are making towards a new set of conditions. Sanitary

work is helping ; the increased use of soap and water for bodies and clothes, and the new desire for games and athletic sports ; all these make towards the same end. The education of girls, so strongly stressed in our C.M.S. work in Zaria, and now being really tackled by the British Administration, is one of the most hopeful signs ; but we as Christians know well that it is only the breath of God's Spirit that will put life into the great army of moral skeletons. Hope, courage, and ever more sympathy and understanding will be the pre-requisites for all missionaries.

An event happened recently outside my door in Kano which is painfully symbolical of what is going on morally to-day in Northern Nigeria. A herd of cattle from villages far away from centres of traffic was being brought into Kano. They were being driven by one man. All went well until they came to the roads where motor traffic was frequent. A huge motor lorry approached with hideous noise and blowing of horn ; the cattle scattered to all parts of the road, utterly confused and wild. The driver sought to control and bring them to one side in order to allow the lorry to pass. The driver of the lorry, guiltily careless, ran the man down, and he was horribly mutilated and killed in his efforts to save his cattle.

So are the old and the new meeting in parts of Africa, and the impact is deadly for the old. New ideas, the breakdown of old sanctions, the awe and bewilderment induced by the advent of a machine age, are making old beliefs and old superstitions alike impossible.

A steady disintegration is going on, and it is very doubtful whether enough of us are aware of all that this implies for us as well as them. " Retain all you can of

the old customs," says the anthropologist and the man who only sees beauty in what is old. But the iconoclast is not confined to one order of men. Commerce and education, as well as science are all combining to produce a state of perplexity in a population which until thirty years ago had been cut off, since time immemorial, from the outer world!

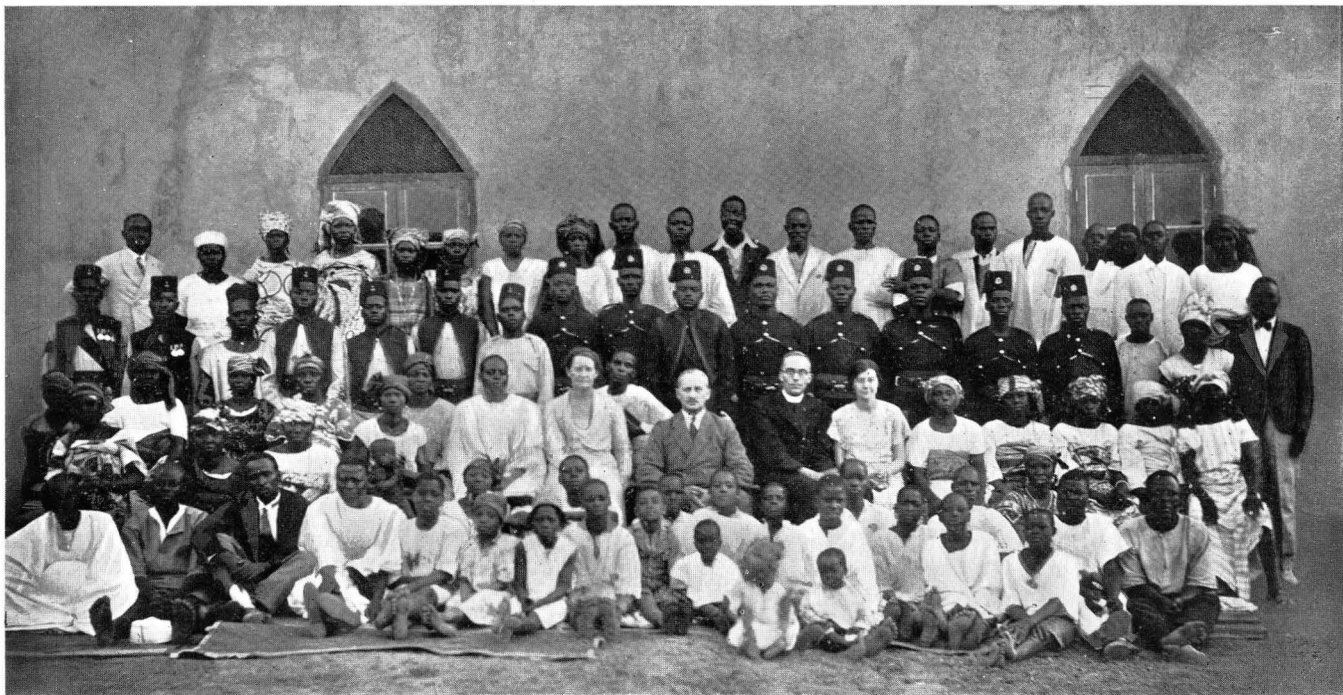
"You see," said the Medical Officer of Health to the Emir and Waziri of Kano, "that malaria is due to the bite of mosquitoes."

"It is a lie," said the old Waziri. "God alone causes disease."

"What do *you* think?" I asked some intelligent young sanitary inspectors, who had been trained by this most efficient and energetic officer of health.

"Oh, we once thought as the Waziri does," said these products of a modern education, "but we have ceased to hold such beliefs now." And with them have gone overboard a large number of more valuable beliefs.

To hold the balance well and wisely *now* is the supreme duty of all who hope for the speedy reign of Him Who will "make all things new."



THE HAUSA CHURCH : MEMBERS AND ADHERENTS, CHRIST CHURCH, KANO, 1934

*The men in uniform are either soldiers of the African Frontier Force or policemen, some are full church members, some adherents.*

*The Europeans, left to right, are Miss Bryant, Dr. Miller, the Rev. L. Hickin and Mrs. Hickin.*

## CHAPTER XV

### RACIAL RELATIONSHIPS

**T**HERE is no more thorny or difficult question between black and white in Africa than the colour question ; but it seems to me cowardly to refuse to make my contribution and express my own personal opinions even though they be provocative. I wish to be provocative only to clear thinking and not to temper !

Negative thinking is usually inferior thinking, and inferior thinking may even become criminal. Many disastrous results have been brought about in Church and State because conventional or slipshod methods have paralysed honest endeavour towards clear thinking.

Can it be said that the segregation of peoples, whether of Jews by Aryans, or of Africans by British and Americans, is due to anything but prejudice or fear of some kind ? If at any time this course was justified in Northern Nigeria, I believe that period should be closed. If risks to health are to be taken, there are many who have never shrunk from these, and think them well worth while at any time. If fear is entertained that the presence of people of a high civilization and an alien religion is likely to cause trouble in native towns or villages the reply is that after thirty years we ought to have made greater progress in mutual understanding. Moreover, such understanding is essential to the full development of the country ; and the very people who were willing to live in these towns for their work's sake would have been



the most likely to create that better feeling and understanding.

I lived for twenty-five years in the heart of the big city of Zaria, surrounded on all sides by friendly Moslem Hausas, and never had a disagreeable incident. It is no personal conceit which has convinced me that this residence greatly added to the friendly feeling between black and white in Northern Nigeria, for it has often been commented on by others, who, with no prejudice in favour of our mission or its work, were struck by the fact. In conversations with all kinds and classes of people, whom it would not have been easy to meet if living outside the town, I was able to explain difficult happenings ; interpret, for instance, the actions of fellow-countrymen, soldiers, or administrative officers ; and give simple explanations of such questions as taxation, assessment, sanitary measures, coin and paper currency.

Will not the Administration now inaugurate a new policy ? Let permission be given to all who will to live in native communities, and let arrangements be made with emirs and chiefs that land for sale may be bought or rented in open market, without differentiation. Only lives of unfriendliness or acts such as would cause real anxiety to either the Native or British Administration should disqualify for residence. Inter-communication on these lines, even in spite of any small risks, will lead to a far higher friendship and understanding than is possible where a false fear or a narrow eclecticism diminishes the points of healthy social contact.

Far from believing that there would be any opposition to such a departure of policy, I am convinced that native rulers for the most part and certainly their people would welcome it ; always provided that the Administration

carefully explained the reasons for and grounds of such residence. Surely greater mutual loyalty and resolution of points of antipathy result, as a rule, from closer contact? At a time like this when all Africa is beginning to feel its own solidarity and is getting restive about alien rule, we shall do well not to postpone any measures which are likely to lead to happy and hearty co-operation.

There is another form of segregation which it is even more urgent to break down, for here the honour of our divine Master is more obviously involved.

I once wrote a note to a young political officer who was visiting a house within two hundred yards of where we were going to have a celebration of the Holy Communion in the little Hausa church. The note was worded something like this: "Dear . . . , We are having a celebration of Holy Communion this afternoon in our Hausa church. I know you belong to the Roman Church, but I think you will like to show your oneness with Christians in this Moslem country, so am sending you this invitation." He came, and at the communion rail with other Christians, all black, took the Sacrament in remembrance of our common Saviour, at the hand of an African clergyman!

I used to attend a church in another Northern Nigerian town which was for "white men only." The peculiar thing there was the presence always of an African to play the organ, because none of the English people could do so!

Probably most Africans would prefer divine service in their own churches, where these exist; the music, worship, kind of service, and singing would probably be far more to their taste; but not always, and in any case that is not the point. Is it too strong a statement to make that in excluding Christ's brethren we may be excluding

Him? It would be a pity as well as a tactical mistake to alienate by exclusion a possible great saint of God, a potential schemer of sedition, or one in process of becoming a leader of a race, if not of a continent. Such things have happened in Africa!

“You have no right to interfere with another man’s religion.”

“We undertake not to interfere with your religion.”

No one ever acts on the first of these statements; the second gives a promise to which it is impossible for any Government to adhere.

Take a very few points in the administration of a Moslem land.

Slavery, a condition which is of the very essence of Islam, is abolished. Whether slowly or quickly is not the question.

Methods of punishment, such as cutting off the hands and feet for theft, are not permitted; they are as sacrosanct as any other part of Islamic law.

“An apostate shall not be allowed to live.” This is fundamental to the law of Islam, and would be observed to-day wherever possible. But Christians who have become converts from Islam are protected by the British Administration, although Moslem laws of inheritance are still in force and cause real injustice toward such converts.

Moslem soldiers are enlisted in numbers by the British Administration, and these may have to fight and often have fought against their co-religionists. This is a heinous crime in Islam, though often committed.

In countless other smaller, but none the less destructive ways, the British Administration has caused a continual disintegration of the Moslem religion in a country

like Northern Nigeria, and the destructive effect is none the less real because it is effected without any outward or visible sign of interference. Such a result can never be desired by any one, least of all by a true missionary whose sympathetic respect goes out to an honest professor of any religion.

Further, mere neutrality as a policy of government towards different religions in a country, like neutrality in other spheres of action, ultimately breaks down; it is negative, spineless, and ineffectual. "Holding the balance" seems always to end in a grievous tilt to one side or the other.

If then prohibitive legislation of a discriminatory type is unwise, and neutrality is considered as equally useless, what is left?

Some administrators would like, as in Russia, but probably with the same unsuccessful result, to rule out all religion and abolish it entirely. It is unnecessary to say that the instincts for religion are too deeply implanted in men for this to be possible.

There is another and better method. We have adopted it to some extent in most civilized countries; I believe we need not fear that any evil results would follow its adoption in any other land.

Absolute freedom to all! Education in the idea of mutual respect to be given by administrators, educationists, and ministers of religion of all sorts, whether Moslem or Christian. Propaganda *with abuse*, from any side, to be treated drastically. The onus of protecting all to be with the State, and I believe that "onus" will be found to be small.

The most dangerous man in a Moslem state is an irreligious man. No Christian administrator in a Moslem

land need ever fear it being known that he is an earnest Christian ; he will be the more trusted for this. Christian missionaries also need to learn that propaganda is far less effectual than sharing experience ; preaching, though not to be abandoned, has less result than conduct. Can we not, by all working together, remove the idea that we want to interfere, or that our religion involves our interfering with others, and make clear that our consuming idea, as administrators, educationists, merchants, and missionaries is to bring our best, and share it ; sympathetically learning at the same time from those who have much to give us in character as well as belief and knowledge ? I believe that no honest ruler, Moslem or Christian, will need to fear such a policy. No true missionary-hearted men would shrink from acting up to their responsibility if such a liberal and sympathetic policy were followed ; nor should we need to fear results ; for we are not worthy of our name if we are not convinced that Christ is unique, sufficient, and final for the world ; and that He only needs to be presented to men in the right way to win their love and allegiance. We shall see that failure in the past has been due to us and not to Him. Like that shrewd old opportunist Gamaliel we also shall leave the vindication to God, and go on working in confidence that what is best for man, and what makes for the highest in any nation, will ultimately win.

I have heard many Hausa Moslems say : " White men have no religion ; had we conquered them we should have forced them to follow ours ; their support of our religion and the restrictions upon missionaries are not due to liberality or kindness to us, but because they have seen the superiority of our religion." This leads to a scorn which is not confined to questions of religion,

and perilously tends to leave us with an acknowledged superiority only in offensive warfare and arms.

Equally dangerous is the remark one so often hears from Englishmen: "Their religion is good enough for them; why disturb them? they can't understand ours, it is too lofty and pure." Both such attitudes of pride are unworthy of either race or faith. To the African, religion is the paramount necessity. But he must have the best, and it is our duty to see that he has the chance given him.

So wholly distorted an idea of the Christian faith prevails among the majority of ignorant Moslems everywhere, and in Northern Nigeria in particular, that one has often wondered whether it is not the duty of both Government and Christian missions to adopt some method by which enlightenment might come. In schools, courses of talks on comparative religions might be given by fair-minded experts, both Christian and Moslem; public lectures might be given to which the Resident and other officers of State would come, and which the emirs, their chiefs, and representative people might be invited to attend. Ignorant preachers of both religions have badly injured their own causes, and there is need for something to be done to clear up the mess. The number of Christians is increasing in Northern Nigeria, not only through the aliens who are coming up in large numbers, but because of the very many Hausa-speaking Pagans, and semi-Pagans who have now become converted to Christianity. Much might be done now by bringing thoughtful people of the two faiths together in such a way that they might clear their own minds of the chief misapprehensions, and do much to disseminate saner ideas among the more ignorant.

A very distinguished and much travelled Moslem in Kano city came to my house in his car late one night so as not to be recognized ; we had a very long and intense conversation on the subject of the Christian faith. Though a well educated and very intelligent man I found him crudely ignorant of the most elementary facts of Christianity. I had not imagined such distorted views of a world religion like Christianity could have been held by an intelligent person, and it showed me clearly what abysmal perversions must prevail among the wholly ignorant !

At the end he said : "I wish I could tell all my people what you have said. I wish I had known it before. I had no idea that your religion was so wonderful ; I have indeed heard false reports." It is not well that such conceptions, fraught with danger for the future when Islam is not the only important faith in Northern Nigeria, should be allowed to remain.

Vehement protests against educating the African at all, which one heard so frequently in the early days of the occupation of Northern Nigeria, have given way to a protest against the kind of education given. Negative again, and only a variant of the old die-hard fear of giving the African any " place in the sun."

We are advancing rapidly now to the better formula of " ever more, and better education, training of character and mind which will fit for any work or career." Science and agricultural training colleges at Zaria and Samaru are doing excellent work. It *ought* to be done. Here, as well as in the Southern Provinces, a great advance has been made under a very progressive Director of Education, Mr. Eric Hussey, who brought to his work in Nigeria the experience gained in Khartoum and

Uganda, where he held a similar position. The time will come before long, I trust, when we shall have a scientifically trained yeoman and gentleman farmer class. The introduction of mixed farming is likely to keep men on the soil, and attract a class who have some money to farm on a big scale. I have for some time been urging the young Christian Hausas whom I know, who have been well educated and have saved some capital, to take up land and go in for mixed farming extensively and employ labour.

A science side in all the provincial schools would soon lead a number of boys to give up the idea that they must all be clerks, or get berths in the administrative offices to enjoy life, and be among the Olympians. Various crafts, motor and other branches of mechanical work, should attract the boys, and I trust that the conditions of life in country and town will be made more equable by better roads *to* the villages, and life *in* the villages becoming more comfortable, with taxation reduced for farmers and craftsmen. Much is being done, and much more might be done, if money from the Administration were available, to induce many young fellows to take up sanitary inspectors' work, scientific road making, medical dressing, veterinary and dispensary work.

If and when the Higher College at Katsina is removed to Zaria, Kano, or Kaduna, I hope a careers master will be appointed, most of whose time will be given to the study of the boys' characters and bent of mind, to direct each one into the work most suited for him in which to earn his living and contribute to the good of his country. It would be well worth the money spent; for, in addition, such a man would get to know the boys well, make friends of them, and form contacts which would be invaluable in later life.



An Intelligence Department of the Police Service is a branch of work which many boys should be encouraged to enter on a different basis from the ordinary policeman ; a far higher standard of education should be made compulsory for entrance into the police force and this would attract good men. I have got several of my old boys into this service, and they are doing well.

While I hold that our mission schools should do all that is possible to induce their scholars to enter the ministry, and other service specially devoted to winning men for Christ, I also feel that these schools should be definitely preparing citizens for various other useful and social services. They should give an education which would enable the boys to become pre-eminent in their own line, and seek to develop such character as shall fit them to be real missionaries among all their fellows. Cramming for examinations should cease or be rigidly controlled. A few picked Northern Nigerians might be sent with great advantage to Achimota to acquire there an amazingly fine education, high ideals of life and true manhood ; and to see exemplified, in staff and scholars, how true religion makes men love God and their brother, whoever he may be.

The gulf between rulers and people is far too great. Too little attempt has yet been made to train enough Hausas in the science of ruling. Fear of the people, and ingrained dislike of giving them a share in the rule of their country has not been confined to the African rulers. "The chiefs have acquired the right and the ability to rule ; they must be supported, and the people kept in their place or they will not show due respect."

Inferior thinking again ! Where and when did these

African emirs acquire this right, and why should not others attain to the same position? The existence to-day in the world of a Masaryk, a Mussolini, and Reza Pahlavi of Iran, once a soldier in the ranks, should make all such reasoning now seem archaic. A Hausa peasant to-day would not be able to quote the old dictum: "He who pays taxes has a voice in the expenditure," but he feels it nevertheless. Oppression of a type that should be now obsolete leads to a sullen feeling among the village and smaller town people of Northern Nigeria that they pay heavy taxes, and do not know where their money goes. The African rulers are not sufficiently alive to this feeling. Too much of their attention is spent on their harems, and the expenditure of money on unnecessary luxury, and they do not yet sufficiently care to alleviate or legislate for the poverty and distress of their subjects, a large number of whom are always living on the poverty line.

I neither expect nor wish a brand-new, hastily-concocted scheme of European or American democracy, but it is time we were bringing a larger number of intelligent people into a share of the responsibility and sweets of office and rule. They are capable, and with training can be made rapidly more so. Capacity to rule can be increased from its most incipient roots — in the school, by making boys prefects; or in the village councils, where the addition of a title to a man's name seems to convey very soon the right and ability to rule.

Nothing surprised me more when I first came to live in the Hausa country than the general desire to rule among all the people, from the small lads upward; and their apparent ability when they were chosen to do so. Lepers chose their *sarki* or chief, and he immediately

selected a few of his friends to assist him, giving them high sounding titles which were the joy of their hearts, and certainly helped them to carry on. The boys of every village had their *sarkin samari*, king of the boys ; he again had his court of chiefs, all with titles. The blind had their " chief," and the dignity shown by a village chief, whose authority perhaps only extended over a dozen or twenty houses, was magnificent.

The surprising element in it all was the efficiency, from their standpoint, with which " affairs of state " were carried out by these people whose dignity was out of all proportion to their small estate. This quality is worth using. It is not the business of an ex-missionary to suggest how ; but it cannot be beyond the brains of administrators of the type who rule Nigeria to make use of such obvious talent, and quickly raise up a number of men, whose services might greatly assist both Native and British Administration in the rule and gradual democratization of these big Moslem emirates.

I am convinced that partly through the schools, and partly through travel and reading, there is growing up a generation of younger men who are going to be far more intolerant to the abuses of power, the prevailing nepotism, the taking of bribes, and the whole system now associated with native rule, than anything that we have at present. It will be well for the native rulers to put their house in order as quickly as possible, to lessen the distance between themselves and their subjects, and to get rid of the idle crowds of hangers-on round their courts. They would be well advised to make their councils larger, more distinctly advisory, with increasing powers, and recruited from a much wider area, and diversity of social ranks ; and by degrees, through a graduated system of devolution,

to let nearly all the reins of government get into the hands of men so trained.

At the heart of the manifold objections given to greater *rapprochement* and closer relations between black and white is the intense antipathy to the idea of inter-racial marriage. It is well to remember that much of this antipathy is mutual, though not for the same reasons.

I am far from advocating wholesale inter-marriage, but I do desire by expressing my own personal opinion, to make a contribution toward lifting this matter up into the region of sanity and logic from that of prejudice and fear.

It is not claimed that there is a difference in the red corpuscles of the blood of white and black. Difference in the pigment cells of the skin is a much more serious matter apparently!

It is often said that half-castes inherit the vices of both races and not the virtues. This is a monstrous and cruel slander. Great names in science, literature, and religion only need to be mentioned to give the lie to this foolish, though widely accepted dictum.

But supposing it were true, to what facts would it be due? First, that the union from which the offspring proceeded might be one of lust and passion, not love; secondly, that the child was slighted and neglected by the relatives of both parents, and grew up an Ishmaelite; thirdly, that an inferiority complex was present from earliest childhood. Three such reasons would be enough to produce the result claimed. The fact that they often do *not* is doubly destructive of the theory. Illegitimate children were once treated thus in England by Christians, and often similar results came from the

same causes. We have become more Christian since those Victorian days, and do not now punish the children for the sins of the parents.

If the marriage union of black and white is not morally wrong ; if no race or people or colour has a monopoly of vices or virtues ; if most of us start from scratch, and very many are heavily handicapped in the race (these may be the best !), there is nothing to prevent any from reaching the goal of highest attainment. If this be granted, it follows that Christian and all decent feeling will overcome the cruder prejudices of an unworthy exclusiveness, and society can be taught by us, who claim that in Christ Jesus all are one, to renounce for ever the cruel treatment which has broken so many hearts.

Any one is justified in saying to the men of another race : " While you treat women badly, and withhold from them what is essential among cultured races, marriage with you and yours will be abhorrent to us. It would also be abhorrent with a bully, a moral leper, one whose instincts are wholly animal – among my own people. As long as you retain unnecessary idiosyncrasies of manner, smell, dirtiness, temper, and low habits, which are alien to all men of good breeding, there will be insuperable barriers between us, but these barriers shall never be on the score of colour or race, for which you are not responsible, and which are irrelevant." Differences of religion come under another category, and must be settled in a different atmosphere.

Marriage is a personal matter ; it cannot be proved that in the last analysis cross breeding injures any race. If two people love each other, and are willing to take all the risks of marriage with their eyes open, it can only

be a cruel instinct which leads other people to ostracize them, and penalize their children.

It should not be necessary to implore missionaries to strip themselves of all forms of colour prejudice and pride of race. It is enough for us that as Christ made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, His disciples can never adopt the attitude of scorn or pride or even aloofness towards any of His people.

## CHAPTER XVI

### LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**W**HILE we do not forget the amazing and more recent discoveries of science, the mechanical inventions through which sound, light, heat, and electricity have become the servants of men, we shall probably still rank the invention of script, the power to convey thought in writing to the mind through the eye, as the most wonderful and useful of all man's inventions. To live among primitive people who have no script, no history, and no boundary line between legend and history, is to realize the profound debt we owe to the discovery of writing. True, these lowly races and tribes have preserved and handed on traditions, fables, songs, and folklore, but these are poor compensations for written words. For such roots are insecure; traditional rights and oral history do not give stability; a background of reality is necessary if the past is not to be lost in haze. If the soul of a people is conserved in its language, how far more profoundly true is it that its writings, history, and books are its stakes in time, its influences for eternity; for the lack of which nothing can compensate.

When we reflect on the influences which have shaped us from childhood – histories, biographies, fairy stories, novels – we realize how rich is our heritage. Our literature has moulded us; our history has made us part of a worthy past, and we are bound by it to effort for the future. The first instinct in any true man who goes to a

people without such a heritage is a longing to do something to redress that loss for their generations which are to follow.

The Hausa language, with a very wide distribution, though probably spoken by not more than 15,000,000 people, has awakened an unusual interest in literary as well as administrative circles. It is undoubtedly one of the four chief lingua franca of Africa, and shares this honour with English, Arabic, and Swahili. Having received a modification of the Arabic script many centuries ago, through the introduction of the religion of Islam, Hausa may be said to be one of the tiny group of African languages which has developed a literature, even though only a small one. Quite old historical records of the kings of Kano and other Hausa States are extant; there are written songs, semi-philosophic, semi-religious; and these are widely known among the people.

In the middle of the nineteenth century a German scholar, a missionary of the C.M.S., the Rev. J. F. Schön, then living in Sierra Leone, brought out, with the help of two freed slaves from Bornu in Northern Nigeria, a grammar, a collection of Hausa stories, and considering his facilities, made a great attempt at a translation of the Bible into the Hausa language.<sup>1</sup> Later in the last decade of the nineteenth century another brilliant scholar, Canon C. H. Robinson, visited the little-known country where the Hausa people live and brought back a challenge to the Christian Church to evangelize these great regions. He compiled a dictionary, wrote a grammar, and did some revision of parts of the gospels; these were set up in the form of Arabic script used by the educated

<sup>1</sup> It was found subsequently that this work, for many reasons, could not be made a basis for later translations.



people of this land. From that time onward many efforts were made to add to the knowledge of this great language, but nothing of permanent value was produced until after the British occupation.

During the first years of the British occupation an important literary question had to be settled. In what script should the literature which would be produced be written : in Arabic, in Aljami, or in Roman ? Scholars generally, a good many of the senior members of the Administration – notably Major Burdon, afterward Governor of Barbados – and all those who for one reason or another felt that the connexion between Hausa and the East, that is Islam, should be maintained, wished for the retention of Arabic. To me this was a vital matter, and I felt very acutely the importance of a right decision. There were many and obvious reasons why Arabic should be chosen : it had already been used in the Moslem schools of the country ; it was the vehicle through which the literature that did exist in the country had been written ; and, of far more weight, it was the one script which is venerated by all Moslems as being of heavenly origin, the character in which the “ Holy ” Koran had been written. To adopt another would be to fly in the face of all these powerful reasons and religious prejudices, for the Hausa people are strong Moslems.

And yet I set myself, with my whole mind convinced, to go against the tide and fight for the introduction of the Roman character. It was far more easily learnt by children than the Arabic. But what urged me to unceasing endeavour to prevail on those who would ultimately decide this matter was the conviction that an intelligent nation of potential scholars would thus be drawn one day towards the great wealth and endless

storehouses of western literature, and come into the priceless heritage of Christian thought, rather than to the somewhat sterile Moslem literature and the religion of Islam.

I am no bigot, and am far from depreciating some of the truly wonderful works written by the followers of the Prophet, specially those of the Sufi mystics. But I do not suppose there are many thinkers of our own race and spiritual instincts who would compare the two literatures, or the effect which each has had on the human race.

Almost entirely through the weight of the influence of His Excellency the Governor (Sir Frederick Lugard) the matter was decided in the way for which I had striven. I think there are few, if any, now who would go back on this decision.

The popularity of the new writing, its easy adaptation to the Hausa language, and the rapidly-growing desire now among all the young people of the country for the English language and English books have confirmed the early decision made. In all the government and mission schools now throughout Nigeria the Roman script is used, and thus the north is united in a common writing and a common literature with the once Pagan, and now partly Christian, partly Moslem, peoples of Southern Nigeria. It may be that ultimately they will use a common language, and find in English the only language which will break down national differences, bring about a common culture, and eventually lead to a united nation. I foresee that Christian thought, Christian ideals, and perhaps some day, in God's goodness, the common faith in Christ, will make of these many different races and languages, one great unity, self-governing, because disciplined by Christian principles and able to become

the missionaries of faith and freedom to the peoples around them.

Islam has done much for Africa, of good and evil. It has had a vast influence, religious, social, and through the family. But in its failure to educate the masses it lost its chance. Of the many millions of people who came under the rule and religious influence of Moslem conquerors in this big slice of Africa, it has been estimated by careful calculation that not three per cent of the people could read and write, and out of these only a tiny proportion could, by the most liberal estimate, be called educated. Hence to-day Islam in Nigeria, like Christianity in the countries which were evangelized but not educated, is rapidly losing its hold. I do not mean that the peoples of Nigeria show any great sign of giving up their nominal faith in Islam, or of accepting another. I do maintain, however, that as a vigorous, vitalizing force, a spiritual power, Islam is losing ground, very rapidly in the towns, more slowly in the villages, where I fear the people are more likely to lapse into the Paganism from which they were only superficially reclaimed. In the towns they will become materialist, and mammon worshippers, with only sufficient of Islam to act as a nationalist bond.

To us who bring another faith, another culture, another literature, and vastly different methods of education, this partial failure of Islam is a real warning. We have to give our best. There must be no doubt either in our minds or in those of the people of the country that we are pledged to this. Nothing like the argument, which some advance, of the inferiority of the Negro, and the sufficiency of an elementary education for the masses, with perhaps something better for the

privileged few, must be entertained. It would be rank treason to our own history and past ; it is an un-Christian attitude to the people for whom for the time God has made us responsible. To educate partially is to make a nation of miserable pundits and discontented, literate nondescripts.

We cannot have men too well trained for this work of education now. It is not vocational teaching that is needed, but such complete and true education that every vocation will claim and get its fully equipped and educated servants. Whether from a government or a missionary point of view it is folly to be content with anything less than the best. We do not want uneducated farmers, illiterate traders, expert but rude mechanics ; or worse, converts to Christianity whose minds remain in their infancy, however advanced their faith. This way lies failure everywhere. There is grand material in Nigeria ; the land that has produced a Crowther, an Oluwole, a Sheikh Othman, a Henry Carr, and many other men of first-class ability, must be given its opportunity to the full by us who have received so richly from Greece, Rome, and Judæa.

The Hausa language, undoubtedly a very beautiful one, with a high degree of development, extensive vocabulary, and rich in inflexional changes and grammatical structure, is nevertheless rapidly undergoing a very complete internal change and external enlargement. The gradual dropping of inflexional changes for gender and number, *etc.*, with the same kind of change in the pronouns, is tending toward a far greater simplicity. At the same time the language is absorbing a really alarming number of English words which in course of incorporation are being so bastardized in form as to be almost

unrecognizable. Just as between the tenth and nineteenth centuries Arabic contributed the words of religion, law, philosophy, and all the higher conceptions, so now English is the language from which all the words connected with modern inventions, crafts, and political and social conventions are being borrowed; and the Hausa people are using their own methods for modifying and pronouncing these words, sometimes with startling and grotesque results.

It is too late to attempt to standardize the language. The existing literature, even the whole Bible now translated into Hausa, is not sufficiently widely read to effect great changes or to give a standard. Perhaps these changes which seem to us curious and retrograde may be making for a more flexible and useful language which will largely oust the lesser and inferior groups. It was by shedding its inflexions, after the days of Chaucer, that English became the beautiful flexible language which gave to the world for all time that subsequent outburst of Elizabethan literature.

Mr. East of the Government Translation Bureau in Zaria is attempting an experiment which deserves support, and should be closely watched by missionary societies. He is encouraging the better-educated boys and young men in the higher classes of the government schools and colleges of Northern Nigeria to write books in Hausa. Small books on travel, history, fiction, and folklore are beginning to be issued and are surprising us by their high quality. Mr. East is very sanguine that by these means a desire and real thirst for reading may be stimulated among the peoples of Northern Nigeria. While welcoming this fine effort and wishing it all success, I should like to see some publications which are more calculated

to raise the moral and spiritual, as well as the intellectual level.

I wrote a couple of novels recently in Hausa – the so-called “novels with a purpose.” I had been grieved to find what a small number of Hausa Moslems were reading the Bible just completed in their own language, as compared with the numbers from among pagan peoples who speak other languages, but were yet coming from long distances and buying at a fairly high price this same Hausa Bible. I wanted to “get across” the message of our faith to people who refused the ordinary channels of receiving it. But although these two novels were well reviewed, and read by a large number of English people, and have deeply gripped the few Hausa Christians who have been sufficiently keen to read them, the circulation has been disappointing. Two of the objections which I have personally heard from Africans are: “If we want to read novels we would rather read English ones,” and the second: “These novels are just as likely to make a Moslem into a Christian as reading the Bible is, and are therefore equally dangerous.”

At Achimota a most interesting experiment is being made in turning out English books in simple, graceful English but with a high standard in subject matter. This effort is most valuable and should be imitated on a large scale. So often English writers have tried to “think down” to their African readers, with the result that not only is their language unnatural and poor in style, but the subject matter has also been unworthy of their readers. The ranks of potential readers in Northern Nigeria are very rapidly increasing, and the rate will accelerate. The time has come when government education officers and educationists in the missionary

societies should get together and think out these great questions.

Should we therefore aim at getting a production on a large scale of works by Africans in Hausa, and set before our Christian Hausa young men and boys the great possibilities of influence open to them if they can learn to produce something of real value from a literary, but far more from a moral and spiritual point of view? It would be worth while, with this in mind, to give a new bent to the educational work of the senior classes in our schools, and even to give the opportunity to some specially selected boys to go to England that they might be soaked in the beauty and power of our Christian and English literature and classics.

As a missionary I am still convinced that the greatest need of Nigeria is and always will be the message of God's love shown to all men on the Cross. I am equally sure that in the ultimate analysis more permanent work is done through the printed page than through preaching. I see no reason why Northern Nigeria should not produce men who, through consecration of God-given literary ability, and a real passion for the redemption of their country, might become to Nigeria, Moslem and Pagan, what Luther was to Germany, Henry Drummond to the students of Scotland, and Kagawa to-day to young Japan.

Whether such writers will find it possible to convey their thoughts through the restricted vehicle of an African language, or whether, throwing this aside, they will employ another language, English, and express them in a way wholly suitable to their people, is doubtful. I incline to the latter view. I have been deeply interested to find the number of educated men among the Yorubas,

and a few among the Hausas, who have told me without any question of rhetoric that they have found their language quite inadequate to express the large and deep range of their thoughts and ideas, and that they are bound to express these in English. But if this becomes inevitable – and we shall soon know – then it will mean a revolution in our ideas and educational methods, and we must teach English not only as a subject but give all teaching in English and let the whole of the education from the beginning be English. Some schools are already doing this, and although I am reversing all I held in earlier days, and shall probably be considered terribly heterodox, I believe these are the schools with the longest vision.

With all my hope running in the contrary direction I yet rather sadly conclude that no great production of books is to be expected in any African language, and that we must aim, as the French are largely doing in all their African colonies, to give the higher for the lower, the wealthier inheritance for the poorer. We have at present a few noteworthy productions in Hausa of a religious character. The Rev. Lowry Maxwell of the Sudan United Mission has contributed stories of the Old Testament and Bunyan's *Holy War*. My sister, Miss Ethel Miller, has produced a Hausa form of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and several smaller works. *Stories of God* which I wrote thirty years ago has had a fair circulation and is still used.

The issue of the whole Bible in Hausa was completed by the British and Foreign Bible Society about three years ago. In the translating of this I have had many valuable helpers, notably in the early days, Malam Fâté, a good Arabic scholar and one of our first converts,



together with my West Indian colleague, the Rev. W. A. Thompson. I shall never forget those wonderful evenings when we were oblivious of time and went on very late in the night absorbed in the sheer joy of this work, sometimes spending an hour over a part of one text, at other times making rapid progress with easier passages. It is only later when one gets down to the monotonous humdrum work on such uninteresting things as stops, capital letters, diacritical marks, *etc.*, that one longs for the end!

The process is something like this: A book like the Gospel of St. Mark with which most translators begin, may take anything from two to six months to prepare, according to the amount of time at one's disposal. As, during these years, I had building work constantly on my hands, was accountant for the mission, had to run a dispensary, take most of the services in church on Sunday and other days, beside housekeeping, itineration in the villages, and constant visiting in the town, I had to wedge in what time I could, in the intervals between school, to meet my Hausa colleagues for the work of drafting a translation. A verse over which we may have spent hours would be written down on pieces of paper. Gradually such scraps and other pages accumulated, and we would revise, to make sure of perfect symmetry and consistency in using the same word to express the same meaning. A whole evening might well be spent with the Greek grammar and Testament, as well as the Arabic (and sometimes even the French Testament), rightly to distinguish and fix the equivalents for such words as sin, offence, fault, transgression, trespass, wickedness, evil, wrong-doing, mischief.

When finally the whole book was drafted, it had to be

typed and four or five copies made ; this was a big and tiring task. I have often wondered how many thousand sheets of paper have been used in typing the various copies and corrections and recensions before the whole work was complete. For this typing, as well as in the worrying out of a satisfactory translation of every text, I can never sufficiently thank Thompson. His was the drudgery with but little of the praise and credit.

Copies of all these typed sheets would go to those who were my assessors in the work. Some of these worked only at the New Testament, some at the Old. There were none who worked right through with me from beginning to end. In the early days I had the keen criticism and invaluable help of the Rev. G. P. Bargery, whose generous encouragement and often too liberal praise helped me to go on without despair in what seemed an endless work. His monumental work in compiling the Hausa Dictionary is too well known to need mentioning here : it stands out as the biggest thing ever done in Hausa.

After some days or weeks, according to the disposition of each individual on my committee, the first draft would come back, sometimes with a great many sheets of notes and criticisms. All these notes had to be carefully examined with the help of my African friends, some suggestions and criticisms accepted, some rejected. I was appointed by the Bible Society as the final authority, and on me rested the heavy responsibility of the final decision. On some occasions I had to go against the combined verdict of all the other members when I found, after most careful investigations with my Hausa friends, that the native mind supported my original draft, but I only did this when I felt compelled.

From all these emendations would have to be built up a new draft. This had then to be re-typed, several copies made, and again the process repeated of sending round one copy to each helper. This did not end the contributions of these assiduous people, and again more notes and suggestions would come because neither had previously seen the criticisms of the other! Slips in the writing, mistakes in spelling, omitted words, quite possibly a whole verse accidentally omitted – none of these things ever escaped the lynx eyes of that devoted and keen servant of God, Dr. Stirrett, of the Sudan Interior Mission, who joined our committee at a later date, and made his best contributions to the work on the Old Testament.

Perhaps of all those who gave their time and strength in this bad climate (amid so many other duties fully engaging their time), no one did more painstaking and thorough work than Lowry Maxwell. Sometimes when my draft came back with his notes in the neat hand for which I blessed him, I would groan as I saw endless sheets of closely packed writing and realized that there could be no rapid glancing at such work, but patient and careful thought given to every word which came from a man who almost sweated blood to make time for it. I knew that it was the wrung-out effort of a worker whose life was full, but who would only give his best after prayer and hard study. I dare not worry my readers by much further description, or they will approach my own condition when after thirty years the work was reaching its last lap, and I wondered if my eyes and brain would hold out!

When at last the nicely typed copy of the whole draft of *one book* was ready it went home to the British and

Foreign Bible Society, whose Editorial Secretary, Dr. R. Kilgour, scholar, translator, and friend, often saved me from serious mistakes. Then began fresh hours and days of drudgery. Three sets of proof sheets had to be corrected. And remember, these proof sheets were prepared by compositors who did not know one word of Hausa! A copy had to be retained by me, with every stop, every letter fully examined and compared with the original text (we made all our final corrections by the Revised Version). One copy had to go back to London with the same work done on it, and another sent to the members of the committee. And this process had all to be repeated twice, and then *one* book was completed!

In order to get the Scriptures read as they were being produced, the Bible Society edited the books separately, then the Gospels with Acts, separately; and finally the whole New Testament, when completed, as one separate volume. Some books of the Old Testament, notably Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, the Psalms, Proverbs and 1 Samuel were edited separately, and then together, before we were able to complete the whole of the Old Testament.

In 1929 I was asked to give up all my other work and confine myself in Kano to the work of finishing the whole Bible. During this time I was given the services of one of my old and much loved boys, Tafida Omaru, a relative of the Emir of Zaria, and himself descended from a long line of Emirs of Zaria. He, as a boy in my school, had become a Christian, and later married one of our Christian girls. Together we went to Kano and for many years, including the time he had helped me in Zaria, we were closely associated in this work. In addition to becoming my typist he gave me great help in drafting the remaining

books of the Old Testament. I had brought him to England in 1925, where he spent several months with me, visiting a great many of my friends, who gave him a most loving and Christian welcome.

In 1931 I returned to England with all the MSS. complete; the previous books being also revised, and everything ready for print. The whole work was completed in 1932, and when I received the last piece of proof sheet from Bible House, I wondered what next I could do in this world, and was inclined to say Simeon's prayer.

My most prized possession is a presentation copy of the whole Hausa Bible, with the date, October 12, 1932, and signed for the Bible Society by Dr. R. Kilgour. Previously I had the much-valued honour of being made a Life Governor of the B. & F.B.S.

Other helpers in this work beside those mentioned were the Rev. H. Earnshaw-Smith, my sister Ethel, Mr. Gowers, afterwards Sir William Gowers, Governor of Uganda, Malam Bello of Zaria, since dead, and Mr. and Mrs. Farrant of the S.U.M., who for some years were on the committee, and did very painstaking work.

I trust I have not forgotten any. In a work extending over so many years, in which a great many people shared for some weeks or months, and generously helped with correspondence, typing, suggestions, proof reading, *etc.*, it would be well-nigh impossible not to forget some. They gave their services to prepare a gift for the people of Northern Nigeria, and far beyond Nigeria, a gift second to none; and that knowledge needs no additional tribute from men.

One of the reasons which make it so important that books should be written in Hausa is the widespread use of this language, and for the same reason it may still be

wise to send out a small amount of literature of a religious character, in the Aljami or Arabic script. I was surprised in 1898 to find the large population of Hausas residing in Tripoli (then Turkish) and all along the Mediterranean littoral. Later we found that at every seaport along the West Coast of Africa at which we stopped were colonies of these people, living their separate life, all Moslems, and speaking the purest Hausa. Sierra Leone, Bathurst, Cape Coast, Accra, Sekondi, Axim, and especially Lagos, all have large numbers of Hausas who, for trade or other purposes, have left their country, and settled in these coast towns.

One can travel from Kano three thousand miles to the Mediterranean and use Hausa to good effect the whole way. The traveller Dugald Campbell, whose books on the Tuaregs, the People of the Veil, have made him so well known, has circulated the Hausa Scriptures in the whole length of his travels, and found a great welcome for them, specially portions which we had written in the Aljami script. Similarly one may travel from Kano to Khartoum, and find little Hausa settlements at regular intervals the whole long way. In Egypt, where I stayed with Canon and Mrs. Gairdner in 1910, I found great numbers of Hausas, and saw their very obvious pleasure in meeting some one who could converse readily in their own language. These people were very open minded and much more willing to discuss matters of faith than their fellow-countrymen in Nigeria.

In Khartoum and the Upper Nile there are so many engaged in public works, that government officials in the Sudan have sent for grammars to study the Hausa language. All over the Hejaz, in Mecca and Medina, large numbers, having completed the pilgrimage, have

remained in the Holy Cities, while in Jerusalem, Smyrna, Beirut, Damascus, and other towns of Syria there are colonies of them.

What potential missionaries are these people, all of them so fond of travel, should there be an awakening and move toward the Greatest Prophet! And why not? God's miracles are so frequent if we are alive to them that we may truly say, "there are no miracles with God."

## CHAPTER XVII

### CONCLUSION

**B**ETWEEN the years 1926 and 1929 several members of a new party, known as "The Hausa Band," had been coming out and were at work with us in Zaria: Guy Bullen, who stayed until his consecration as Assistant Bishop in Egypt and the Sudan; Mary Locke, who came somewhat earlier, and was a trained certificated teacher; Dorothy Saunders, who was a trained nurse, and had done valuable work in Palestine under the C.M.S.; and Max Warren. These were followed later by Mrs. Bullen, a fully-qualified doctor; Dr. and Mrs. Norman Cook; and Miss Hammond; and later still by Dr. Bertie Cook, and Mr. and Mrs. Ramshaw, educationists.

Quite early it seemed to the new arrivals that our premises in Zaria were small and circumscribed; a wider sphere, materially and spiritually, seemed to them indicated. It was difficult for men and women, new to the work, knowing little of the language or the people and their religion, to realize how much *was* being done; how invaluable was the site, though small, in the heart of a big Moslem city, in which many a man, wanting a talk on spiritual things, had been able to come quite easily, sometimes entirely disguised, and stay long hours talking till late at night with me on spiritual matters; and how easily contacts *made* might be lost! They scarcely realized with what difficulty and hard work



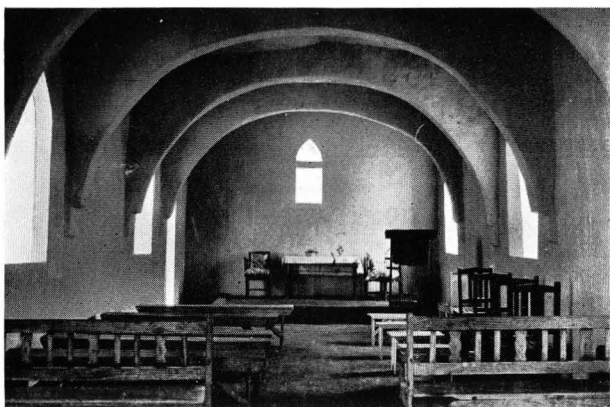
had been built up a big school of Moslem boys, most of them boarders.

To the older members of the mission to leave the city seemed to be the surrender of a strategic position hardly won. But the C.M.S. Committee in London, after weighing the pros and cons, considered that it was wise for the move to be made. The Administration gave us generous compensation for our premises and buildings, offering as well a square mile of land outside, but under two miles distance from the city wall.

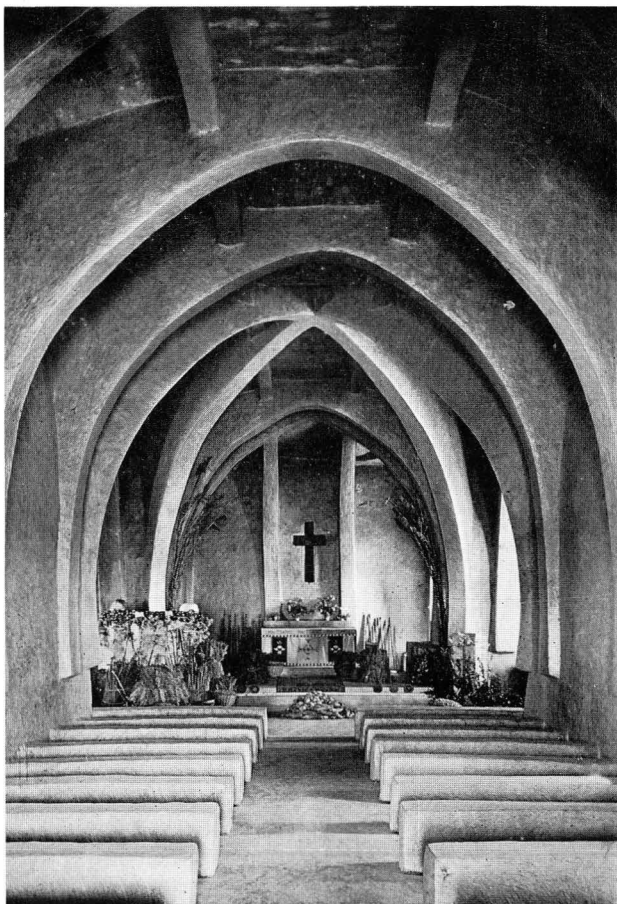
In 1929 the site was selected, and the first batch of buildings was erected: three residential houses for the European missionaries, a large school house, boys' dormitories, and a girls' hostel. Hospital buildings were also commenced. For four months I spent most of the day in superintending the putting up of the buildings, which were strong, cool, and of the native, flat-top, mud, storied houses, similar to our buildings in the city, but much larger.

In August, 1929, I was asked to go to Kano to give myself mainly to finishing the translation of the Bible, begun in 1899, and also to do some pioneer work, and develop what existed in Kano. I had, as always, the help of devoted fellow-workers, Africans; together we tried in every way possible to show ourselves true friends to the people, and certainly won a measure of genuine friendship. Many of these fellow-workers had been with me in previous years in Zaria.

Before long a little church grew up; many boys came to live with us; there were converts who seemed honest, and our community gave evidences of real spiritual life. With the consent of the Committee at home we applied for a site much nearer the city. This was granted by the



THE FIRST CHURCH FOR HAUSAS AT KANO—BUILT AND PAID FOR BY AFRICANS—OPENED FEBRUARY, 1934



THE C.M.S. HAUSA CHURCH AT WUSASA (ZARIA),  
WITH HARVEST FESTIVAL OFFERINGS

British and the Native Administration, and the Emir of Kano always showed himself very friendly toward us. Within a few months I had put up a very useful house and compound in two acres of ground – the first real C.M.S. Hausa mission station in Kano. The church still grew, and our people decided to erect a building where we might worship God – a simple mud building capable of holding about a hundred people. The money was raised by offerings among our own Africans, without appealing home or to any Europeans; and great was the pleasure of us all and our thanksgiving to God when the new church was completed.

The Resident, Mr. H. O. Lindsell, and some of the members of the European community came to the dedication service, which was performed by Bishop Smith, assisted by some other English and African clergy; I conducted the whole service and preached in Hausa. The singing and general heartiness much impressed our visitors. A crowd of African soldiers and policemen, – converts, – were there, and among all was a sense of happiness and true worship.

We had just before been joined by the Rev. L. Hickin and his wife, who were beginning to understand a little Hausa when this service was held.

The appeal of Kano is, to me, urgent. This city presents an unavoidable challenge to the Church. The centre of a teeming population of two and a half millions, in one of the most intensely farmed areas in the world, it presents also a problem which baffles but fascinates. Nowhere in Africa is there anything quite like this great native city, with its superb walls measuring fifteen miles in circumference, inhabited only by Moslems.

Missionary work has made little if any progress here.

The walls, both of mud and religion, are adamant! Money is the one god, and money rules. I have never yet in Africa, except in Kano, had Moslems approach me quite seriously and say: "Give me money," or "Give me a job, and I will be baptized." What a reflection after so long on their conception of our motives! Vital religion, as far as I have seen, has collapsed. It is not Islam as a religion that keeps the Christian faith at bay. It is a spirit which is the resultant of many forces, a spirit of intolerance to anything which makes for right living or progress apart from money. I have discussed this with political, educational, medical, sanitary, and other Nigerian officials, and have gathered the impression that most feel how little spontaneous response there is in Kano to anything of ultimate reality or goodness. Callous, hard, often brutalized, with little pity for man or animal; absorbed in the craving for money by all and any means, the life of these people in town and village around Kano attracted and baffled me; stifled and yet stimulated my desire; froze my spirits, and yet made them red hot with longing.

The C.M.S. *must* take up this challenge. Kano counts in influence for more than all the rest of Northern Nigeria. Kano leads; the rest follow; and Kano is the metropolis of North-central Africa.

I pray first for a Hausa Moslem prophet to arise among his own people, with one desire: to lead his people through repentance to God; and then that God may raise up some Englishmen, with wisdom and an enlightened keenness, who will learn how to deal with the religion of Islam *here*, how to use it, and to love its people; how to bring everything that is of God in the religion of the Prophet, and sublimate it, not by argument

or spiritless propaganda, but by the mighty power of the love of Christ.

Who will take up that work? Who will for Christ's sake forswear colour, prestige, health, friends, reputation – all, to become one with that people; to live with them, and learn so to understand, that the problem which has baffled me, they may solve? If I have seemed to see black in the mass, to have been hard in writing of the whole, love for the units making up that whole, and light shining through the darkness of the mass have never ceased in me to turn despair into hope.

I have only touched on the band of men and women who began to come out to Zaria in 1926, and are now consolidating their work. I trust in a few years they will write their own story which I shall not forestall, and it will be an interesting story. Already I note with pleasure the growth in medical work, whose smaller dimensions in earlier years often troubled me. I should like to see a break up of the large party concentrated in Wusasa, and a spreading out into other areas. This seems likely now that two fresh sites have been given at Maska and Chafe, where work is already going on. In this way alone, I am convinced, rather than at one big centre, will the best kind of progress be made, a first-class school of pakka Hausa Moslem boys become possible, and the work of a sympathetic evangelization open up.

The death of Norman Cook, one of the most charming personalities I ever met, and whose work and knowledge of the language were beginning to tell, seemed irreparable; but the influence of that happy, joyous spirit will live for all time in Zaria.

I have come to see that the government method of

dealing with flagrant wrongs patiently, and waiting for the years to change the habits of peoples has strong affinities with the methods of Christ. Lust has been rightly said to be the determination to get what one wants quickly and by any means ! If so, then the undisciplined Christian and the licentious Moslem may have been living very much on the same plane ! And I have, by way of reparation, to try to make clear now my conviction that the way of the Cross is really the only possible one for the Christian to tread in dealing with racial and personal evils with assured ultimate success. I have seen the failure of force in Africa, and believe now that, however slow the pace, this is the only sure way of progress for Christian men and women to seek and work and suffer for a change in individual lives, and through those, so changed, to secure a constant succession of Africans, true patriots, who will overcome through the sheer power and beauty of their transformed lives.

But patient waiting was never meant to become a fatalistic acceptance of the fact of wrong, but a dynamic faith in the one and only power which can overcome individual and national sin, the power of the living and vitalizing Spirit of Jesus. When missionary and government official, understanding and having real fellowship with each other's motives and aims, work together on these lines, prepared to suffer rather than coerce, to give and share rather than force, to offer friendship and co-operation and understanding rather than aloofness and criticism, then I feel will come about such a wonderful regeneration that we may expect the miracle of the Old Testament prophecy to be fulfilled : " A nation shall be born in a day."

## EPILOGUE

I HAVE written of Hausaland, as we used to call her. Beautiful as she is ; far more beautiful yet to be.

Past is the pain of fever, and the sound and bite of the mosquito ; remains a longing to hear even the buzz of the crickets at night and the insistent croaking of the huge bull frogs. Gone the evil odours of the foul open pits filled with stagnant water in the rains ; the insanitary bush, and the whiffs of tainted air from dirty clothes. Remains the memory of delicious scent of burning sandal wood in the markets, and the bush fires and dry burning grass at evening when trekking.

Past is the worry of the cook who lied, the " boy " who stole and broke the glasses, and the market trader who cheated, swearing by Allah his honesty. Remains the sense of comradeship, the bonhomie, and faithful, devoted love.

Faded into the mists of distance is the sight of dusty, sandy roads along which one trudged wearily ; and the smelly villages where one encamped at night in the open, the moon's white light hiding the worst. Remains the early morning vision of the brown earth three days after the first rains, when the bush is spangled with myriads of exquisite little flowers seeming to spring from nowhere with the extravagant prodigality which man does not understand ; but which Nature, and Nature's God, love and give so freely.

Past is the weariness from heat, the sleepless nights,

and often grilling days. Remains the heart-ache for work unfinished, friendships severed, though never lost ; and the unquenchable longing to see the fruition of all to which life was dedicated, but which still seems so distant.



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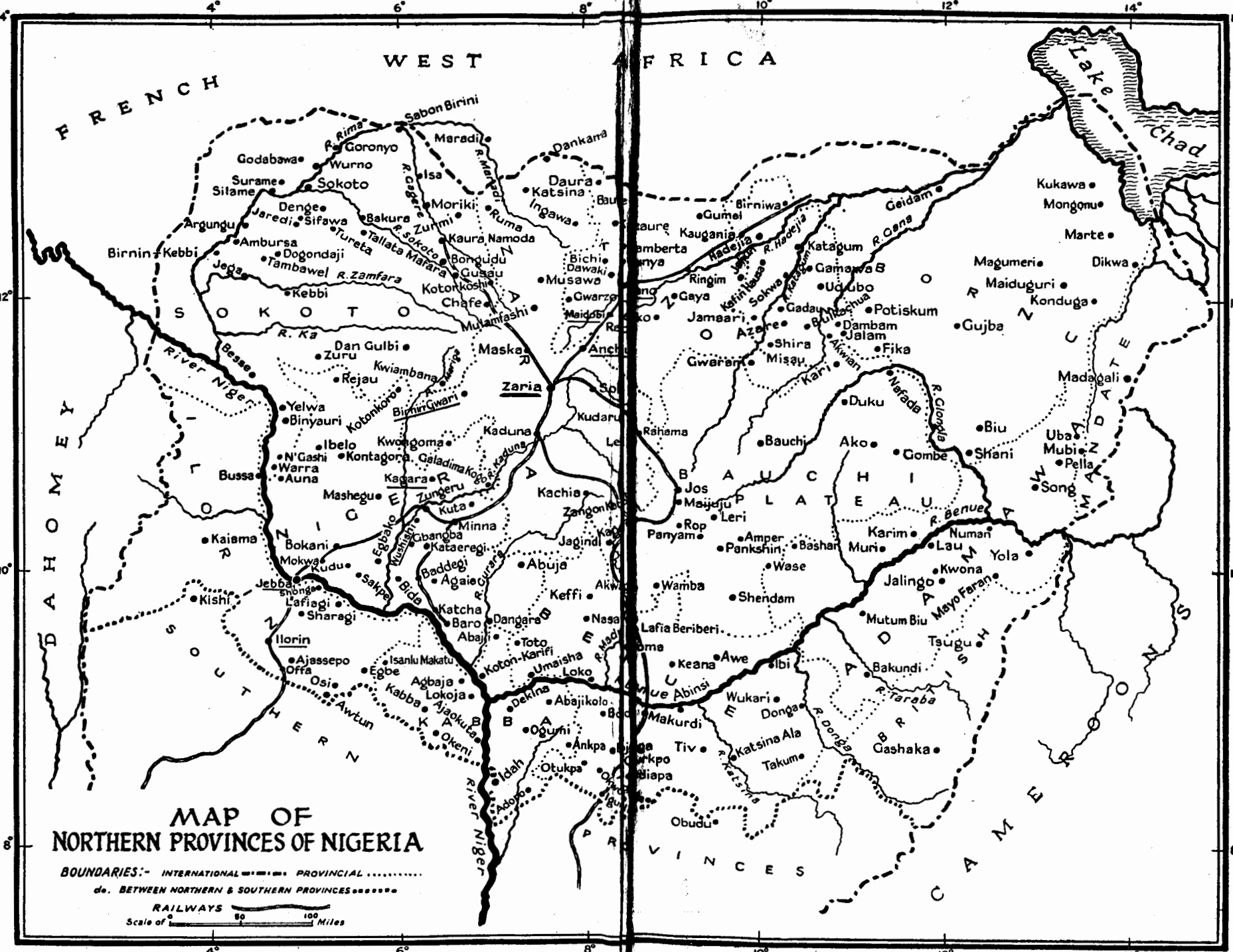
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