

# Contribution of Early Missionaries to the Expansion and Management of Education in Colonial Kericho, Kenya, 1901-1962

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## **Abstract**

*The paper critically analyzed the contribution of the early missionaries to the expansion and management of education in colonial Kericho of Kenya. Arguably, it extensively utilized structural functionalism and dialectical materialism theories as organizing frameworks as well as guided the conceptualization of data analysis and interpretation. As aptly articulated in this paper, the close association of Christianity and education among the local Kipsigis of Kericho cannot be overemphasized, for it was through the innumerable schools established by both Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries that many Kipsigis came into contact with Christianity. In fact, school was the church in many parts of Kipsigis. The Christian missionaries therefore saw the school as a key institution, being the most reliable means for membership recruitment and for creating self-perpetuating congregations whose members would ensure the survival of Christianity. Education and evangelization were so closely linked that for, many parts of Kipsigis, the pitching of the missionary tent was synonymous with the establishment of a school. Among the inhabitants of Kericho, as elsewhere in Kenya, the missionaries preceded the administrators and settlers. Education was the inevitable concomitant of Christian proselytisation, since the ability to read the Bible was fundamental. But from the onset, it had been recognized that the principal actor in conversion would have to be the locals themselves. The missionary education was thus intended to prepare the locals in Christian dogma and to ensure that the students observed proper Christian principles. The education also aimed at discouraging the extended family system, encouraging individualism, abolishing polygamy and more so female circumcision. The Christian missionaries had entered Kericho region with a purpose of preaching the Gospel of Christ, but when they realized that illiteracy among the local inhabitants*

*especially the Kipsigis was a serious hindrance to their enterprise they picked up pen and book to spread Western education. This education was geared to serving their interests - basically evangelism. They achieved this by trying to reach out to the locals i.e. the Kipsigis through elementary schools in the villages. Largely, they taught elementary education aimed at producing cheap but literate manpower. On the other hand, the early converts saw education as a sure way of bridging the cultural gap between them and the Europeans who appeared to represent a superior type of human being and this synthesis found its fulfillment within the realm of dialectical materialism framework.*

**Keywords**

*colonial education, management, curriculum, staffing, colonial Kericho, Kipsigis*

**1. Methodology**

The research employed an ethno-historical approach in its design. The selection of the informants was done using snowball and purposive sampling techniques to identify key cultural consultants (Dalen, 1979; Babbie, 1996; Cohen, 1994 and Gall 2003) where individual interviews were carried out during the year 1996-1998 with approximately 45 elderly men and women. The interviews systematically covered the general development of education in Kipsigis during the period under study as was guided by the objectives and research questions taking into cognizance the general historical framework. Interviews were taped, transcribed and analyzed qualitatively through content analysis and triangulation approaches.

**2. Introduction**

The entry of missionaries to the British East African territories is closely linked to the introduction, development and management of education in the region (Tangri, 1985; Ade Ajayi, 1965; Anderson, 1970; Anderson, 1977, Beck, 1966; Dougall, 1936). Education became available on a gradual but progressive scale yet it was initially aimed at serving a limited purpose. The teaching given by early missionaries was closely linked with their work of evangelization. In fact, it could be said that the early history of education in East Africa was the history of the planting of Christianity (Groves, 1948; Lugurnba & Ssekamwa, 1973). In other words, education formed an integral part of missionary work since this was closely tied to the greater purpose of converting the local people to Christianity (Berman, 1975). Their work in educating the young was subordinate to that of luring Africans into the missionary orbit.

In formulating their education policy, missionaries in Kenya were influenced by the LeZoute conference. This was a study on world missions based on the work of the International Conference held at Le Zoute, Belgium from 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> September, 1926 under the auspices of the International Missionary Council (Anderson 1977; Baur 1990). The conference observed that sound education involved: Character development based on religion... covering every educational activity. Hygiene and

health were to be emphasized, not only in the practice of the school and home, but in the reading, writing and arithmetic of the school. Agriculture and industry should be taught in the classroom, field and workshop. The building of a sound home life and the value of recreation should be taught both by precept and practice.

The major contribution of the Le Zoute conference to education was that it hastened the production of literature in the indigenous languages, which in turn enhanced opportunities for literacy. The Roman Catholic Church co-operated in this move when it got involved in the formation of an International Institute of African Languages and Culture (Oldham, 1927). There were numerous missions which immensely contributed to the development of school education among the Kipsigis. They included the Lumbwa Industrial Mission in 1905, the Africa Inland Mission in 1919, the National Holiness Mission in 1933, the Roman Catholic Mission in 1936 and to a lesser extent, the Seventh Day Adventists in 1950 and the Beulah Mission in 1951. In 1902, the Friends Africa Mission had begun work in North Kavirondo from Kaimosi to Mt. Elgon. One of the missionaries of this Society started the Lumbwa Industrial Mission in Kericho in 1905 (Education Department, Annual Report, 1930; Lugurnba & Ssekamwa, 1973).

The mission had two stations under its operation: Chesinende, and Chagaik near Kericho Town which was opened in 1906. Neither of the stations was in the Kipsigis Reserve (KNA, DC/KER/3/7: Political Record Book, 1925-1932). In its early development, the mission was deeply concerned about personal conversion. It was for this reason that its theology was basically spiritual conversion. However, by 1912, the founder of the mission came to appreciate the importance of formal education in facilitating evangelism. The Africa Inland Mission (A.I.M) had started to evangelise the Kalenjin when it established a centre at Eldama Ravine in 1909 (Baur, 1990).

In 1919, Andersen, one of the mission's leading personalities, bought a one-acre plot at Lumbwa and built a house and a church (KNA, DC/KER/3/7: Political Record Book, 1925-1932). The following year, he did a good deal of evangelistic work among the Kipsigis. He also ventured into opening up schools in the region. The third mission to evangelize in Kipsigis was the Beulah Mission. It was established on alienated land formerly known as Bochok and it belonged to the Lumbwa Industrial Mission. It worked in conjunction with the Africa Inland Mission in Kericho in terms of physical resources, but it carried out its evangelistic activities independently. Its work consisted of a Sunday school, Sunday and mid-week services as well as religious instruction in the day school<sup>1</sup>. The mission also did some educational work, and by the end of 1936 it had twenty—four men, seven women, twenty - one boys and eleven girls enrolled, with an average attendance of forty-five.

In 1933, the position of the Lumbwa Industrial Mission and the A.I.M was somewhat complicated by the arrival of Messrs K.R. Smidt and FitzPatrick. They were connected with the National Holiness group from the United States of America, and the mission bought a ten-acre plot at Tenwek (then called Nyangoris Falls) in an area situated between Location 13 and 15 (KNA, DC/KER/2/1: Handing Over

Report, 1933). During this period, the activities of the Lumbwa Industrial Mission were thwarted when its founder, W.R. Hotchkiss, gave up its educational work in Kipsigis and went back to settle permanently in America. The Lumbwa Industrial Mission thus came to be amalgamated later to the National Holiness Mission Association.

The National Holiness Mission (NHM) worked in collaboration with the A.I.M in its endeavour to promote the development of education in Kipsigis. The NHM station in Tenwek engaged in an ambitious educational programme and, by early 1936, plans for a school building had been drawn (KNA, DC/KER/1/9: Kericho District Annual Report, 1936). By 1937, the Roman Catholic Mission had established its headquarters in Kericho. It catered largely for the Abagusii and Luo labourers on the tea estates; but it also had outschools distributed among the three Kipsigis divisions of Belgut, Buret and Sot—with more concentration of schools in Buret (KNA, DC/KER/11: Kericho District Annual Report, 1937). In its initial stages, the mission was managed by a Father P.J. McElwee who strived very hard to establish more out schools.

However, with the coming of two ordained priests—namely: Father Farrell and Nol in 1938—the establishment of the schools came to a stand still. This was because the latter's concern was with the promotion of Christianity rather than education (KNA, DC/KER/1/12: Kericho District Annual Report, 1938). In this connection, they also targeted the non-Kipsigis in the tea estates until 1953. But during the early stages the Roman Catholic Mission in the Rift Valley was entrusted to the Mill Hill Fathers whose headquarters were initially in Uganda before its transfer to the Apostolic Vicariate of Kisumu (Baur, 1990) which thereafter administered the development of education within this mission.

In Kipsigis, the Seventh Day Adventists (S.D.A) was not one of the largest or most influential missions. Their headquarters were at Kisii, but by 1950 they made headway in extending their activities from Kisii into the Kipsigis Reserve. This was the only mission in Kipsigis which came into loggerheads with the colonial government with regard to the establishment and administration of schools. They advocated a high-quality education to be provided to its adherents and to ensure that the graduates of their schools would be well-placed in the modern economy, doctrinal caveats notwithstanding. The children of all Seventh Day Adventists were expected to attend S.D.A. schools, no matter how far away from home and irrespective of the number and size of other schools around (KNA, DC/KER/4/4: Monthly Intelligence Report, March 1950). This was a real source of contention with the government. In all Adventists schools, the teachers were Adventists but not all the students belonged to the church (KNA, DC/KER/1/23: Kericho District Annual Report, 1950).

In all the missions already identified, the general objective was proselytisation. However, in Kipsigis, they did not often pursue this objective directly. They tried to acquaint themselves with the problems of the Kipsigis in order to see how they could help with solutions with a view to serving purely missionary objectives in the process. With the exception of the S.D.A, the other mission organizations in Kipsigis established a growing partnership between themselves and the colonial government, but the

educational initiative always lay heavily on the former. In this way, the missions were the first to open schools.

### **3. Missionary Roles in Management of Schools in Colonial Kericho**

The central schools were centres set aside by different mission stations where the converts, particularly pupils, were to be taught how to build up a Christian civilization. They were regarded as the forerunners of the primary schools, which performed well (Baur, 1990). Most of these central schools were run by the Protestant missions. Later on, the government made some attempts to upgrade the bush-school system by subsidizing the central schools. In most cases, these schools operated from the syllabus drawn by the Missionary Staff Committee, which recommended subjects that should form the curriculum (Temu, 1972; Provincial Unit of Research, 1989).

The three R's (reading, writing and arithmetic) formed the backbone of the academic part of the education, and the central schools at mission stations offered a more extensive education for the ablest pupils from the village schools. However, religion was always at the centre of the syllabus (KNA, PC/NZA/3/10/9: Education of Natives—General, 1928-1929). These schools were formed after the missionaries had discovered that conversions were not so much from preaching in the villages, but rather by living side by side with their converts and particularly pupils (Byaruhanga-Akiiki, 1928).

Initially, educational work was not separated from general evangelism, however, by 1910; it was felt that this ought to be a separate department of work. This was in line with the Fraser Education Report of 1909 which recommended that, although racial segregation in education should be upheld, Africans were talented enough to benefit from technical education. Thus, the Education Department of the Protectorate Government was set up in 1911, and it later offered grants-in-aid to mission schools to teach industrial Education (Provincial Unit of Research: Rabai to Mumias, 1989). The coming of the railway and the Protectorate meant a rapid spread of missionaries into the inland parts of Kipsigis. It also meant that a market was created for clerical and mechanical skills (Hotchkiss, 1937). By 1912, the Lumbwa Industrial Mission (L.I.M) had two stations with an enrolment of twelve boys under instruction: nine of them had been sent to school from the neighboring outschools. The mission was credited with being the first to translate portions of the scripture into the Kipsigis language (KNA, PC/NZA/3/10/4: Education of Natives, 1910-1919) in order to benefit from this; the people were expected to be able to read. In this way, schools came to be considered a necessity (Barrett, et al, 1972). In the middle of 1912, there was a serious split in the L.I.M. and most of the missionaries departed, leaving W.R. Hotchkiss alone (Hotchkiss, 1937). In October 1915, W.R. Hotchkiss's application to acquire five acres of land in Kiptere for mission purposes was not approved on the ground that he would not be able to manage both missions alone. The situation was compounded by the stiff competition that arose between different mission societies. Among those who were educated at the Lumbwa Industrial Mission was Samwel arap Bargochut—who was later made chief of Location 1 in

January 1914. This was after the Orkoiyot Kipchomber arap Koilegei was deported.

At the end of 1913, Miss Jones returned to America, but McCreary and W.R. Hotchkiss remained behind. The last left Chesinende mission and went to live in the Kericho mission in 1915. So far, the only education provided in the district was carried out by this mission. McCreary concentrated the mission's activities in the Reserve. During this early period of penetration, the missions work was desperately hampered by shortage of funds. Despite this scenario, pupil enrolment steadily increased to sixty by October 1916, although the average attendance was only fifty. This was attributed to the fact that some parents withdrew their children by force claiming that the mission schools were too closely associated with European ways of life. Moreover, they felt that the missionaries, particularly the Protestants, were teaching their pupil converts to abandon traditional beliefs and become Christians. Missionary work in establishing more schools was hindered by the pioneers of the Lumbwa Industrial Mission leaving the country to return to America. They were Miss Amelia Daniels and Mrs. Hotchkiss, who had acquired extensive experience while working among the Kipsigis.

In 1919, A.M. Andersen of the Africa Inland Mission was permitted to commence work in Litein. He put forward plans to begin educational work in co-operation with the Government, but his successors were not favourable to the idea. During 1920, W.R. Hotchkiss began to open more schools in Buret and Sot. At this time, a larger number of Kipsigis took education more seriously than ever before. In November of the same year, the Director of Education visited the Lumbwa Industrial Mission station and announced the opening of a large government technical school in either Kipsigis or in Nandi (KNA, PC/NZA/1/16: Nyanza Province Annual Report, 1921-1923). In 1921, the Lumbwa Industrial Mission under W.R. Hotchkiss and Mr and Mrs Leasure worked together to ensure the rapid development of education in Kipsigis. Three boys were trained as carpenters, and they had an efficient saw mill.

By 1924, the Lumbwa Industrial Mission at Kericho was an independent station located on a large estate under the control of W.R. Hotchkiss. It had never been admitted into the Kenya Missionary Council and it was unable to qualify for recognition. Denominationally, it belonged to the American Friends. Even so, the Phelps-Stokes Report of 1924 commented favorably on its industrial work and stated that it had then about three hundred and sixty pupils (Philips, 1936 & Jones, 1925). By this time, the government had already instituted a primary school for the Kipsigis at Kericho. It is imperative to note there that the age of the primary school in the colony was inaugurated after the First World War through the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission. In this way, the close co-operation of church and state resulted with missions running the schools, while the government subsidized and supervised them. In the case of Kipsigis, the Phelps-Stokes Commission reported on Protestant schools and praised them for their work. It called on the government to give more assistance to education so that better standards could be reached, particularly in the central primary schools of Litein, Kericho and Tenwek. However, these schools were regarded as too bookish in their approach and as neglecting the training of its pupils in agriculture (KNA, DC/KER/3/7: Political Record Book, 1924-1932).

Most of the Protestant missionaries working in Kipsigis welcomed the report that the government would increase the educational grant to the mission. The government came to control the management of education in terms of setting up an inspectorate which would embrace all the central and village schools. Also, the Kipsigis District Education Board on which the mission societies and local administrators were represented was established to help with educational administration, which included the selection of schools to be aided and the allocation of grants. In other words, the government claimed the supervisory and administrative responsibilities for the schools. This was because the missionary societies, which had very limited funds, had realized that they had to depend increasingly on the support and co-operation of the government in order to be able to maintain their growing and expanding education system.

Both the Protestant and Roman Catholic missions did not, however, expect the government to unilaterally invade the field of education which had progressively become their main recruiting ground for converts. Financial aid was ironically given to schools which were already considerably well established and these were the central schools (KNA, DC/KER/1/1: Kericho District Annual Report, 1924). During the same year, the A.I.M under the management of A.M. Andersen based at the Lumbwa station opened a central school in Litein. The school had an initial enrolment of eleven boys and girls. One boy passed the Government Vernacular examination while another boy indentured for carpentry. Training was later conducted at the school for teachers and their wives in such subjects as hygiene, handicrafts, and dramatics and in the organization of village co-operatives and stores. It was hoped that the pupils of this school would thus have a widespread beneficial influence on the Kipsigis when they returned to the reserve (KNA, DC/KER/4/4: Monthly Intelligence Report, 1924).

In 1925, the District Commissioner, Captain C.E. Ward, reported that the A.I.M had made greater progress in the development of education (KNA, DC/KER/1/3: Kericho District Annual Report, 1925). The mission had a 5 acre plot at Litein under A.M. Andersen's management. The school registered good enrolment because of increase in the number of converts. By 1926, W.R. Hotchkiss did most of the educational work while his wife ran the shamba, sawmill and carpentry instruction shop. This was made possible because during this time, the Lumbwa Industrial Mission had reached a level of being self-supporting from the production of coffee, maize and sawn timber. Under the same management of A.M. Andersen, the A.I.M. station at Litein increased its acreage by five in 1927. An excellent brick school and other buildings were constructed with the aid of the boy trainees (KNA, DC/KER/1/5: Kericho District Annual Report, 1927). The government had to be satisfied that the mission had the right type of staff for the kind of school it wished to set up. In fact, the missions were always advised to train local teachers. At the same time, it was not easy to persuade the Kipsigis parents who had no tradition of literary education to send their children to school.

The Kipsigis generally feared that western education would undermine their social system and deprive them of those services—like herding cattle—which children traditionally rendered to the family. Most

important of all, the argument of the missionaries that the new type of education would be highly beneficial to the people did not sound convincing. More so in the locations of Sot and Belgut where there were no examples of men and women whose prosperity on success could be attributed to their acquaintance with the new educational cultures. Therefore in these areas the school enrolment was generally discouraging.

By 1931, the spread of Christianity and Western education in Kipsigis had picked up considerable momentum as many important people, particularly the chiefs arap Tengecha, arap Taptugen and arap Kirui had accepted and supported the faiths. However, the A.I.M was affected drastically in its educational activities with the opening of 'the Government African School, Kabianga. This was because majority of the pupils at Kabianga were relatives of the A.I.M adherents. Also, the appointment of a Roman Catholic Kipsigis teacher to Kabianga further boosted the level of school enrolment. In this way, the A.I.M school enrolment reduced steadily; in fact, many boys left the mission to join the newly established government school. In assessing the emergent situation, the District Commissioner C. Tomkinson observed: the Kipsigis were not enthusiastic about any mission and even the desire to read and write, was everywhere the reason for a mission's failure to implement and accomplish its task among the community (KNA, DC/KER/1/8: Kericho District Annual Report, 1931).

The development of education by the Lumbwa Industrial Mission (L.I.M) came to a standstill when W.R. Hotchkiss left for America. On arriving in America, he sent two missionaries to assist in the management of the mission's enterprises; but, instead they went to Kakamega. Both Protestant and Roman Catholic Mission schools were under the control of the government, chiefly through inspection and regulations regarding the opening and closing of schools. All schools were expected to be open for inspection, and a penalty was also meted out on administrators of those, that refused to be inspected.

During this period, however, the inspectorate in Kipsigis was quite inadequate since it relied on inspectors from Kisii and Kisumu (Roman Catholic Mission, 1931). This shortage of inspectors prevented the inspection of a number of assisted mission schools. Gradually, opposition to schools was overcome in the areas which had been evangelized earlier, particularly Buret where the school enrolment had increased considerably in Litein Central School to two hundred pupils by 1935. Christian parents wanted their children to go to school, but demand was not high enough for them to be willing to pay school fees from their meager resources. To solve this problem, the determined policy of A.I.M was that all pupil converts should be supported from funds raised locally. In confronting this contentious issue, the missionaries were particularly suspicious of the chiefs who represented old ways which were not at all to their liking.

As time went by, the missionaries further made the claim that the chiefs did not truly reflect the Kipsigis public opinion. In any case, the Christian converts dropped in number, and this had a bearing in the drastic drop of the school enrolment at the Litein Central School to one hundred and two boys and eighty-nine girls in 1936. The average daily attendance was also very low as compared to the



previous years in the ratio of 81:33 and 69:33 respectively. In the same period, the World Gospel Mission moved to Sot to establish a school at Tenwek (NHM Mission Report, 1938).

This mission was supported by J.H. Webb who held the position of Provincial Education Officer. He was based in Kisumu but travelled throughout the province establishing schools. He had a genuine concern for mission schools and was instrumental in supervising the activities of the Central School, Tenwek. He also established the levels of qualifications so that the schools the mission opened would be accepted by the government. His successor, John K. Benson encouraged the W.G.M to keep the standards high in the school's work. With the above impetus, the school at Tenwek witnessed steady growth in enrolment in these early years and by 1937 there were one hundred children on the roll of the Tenwek primary school (Fish, 1990). On the other hand, the Central School at Litein had increased the boys' enrolment to one hundred and three boys while the enrolment of girls dropped to seventy.

This drastic drop was attributed to the parents' withdrawing girls because they wanted them to be married in order to get bride price. Throughout Kipsigis, the activities of A.I.M missionaries in 1938, particularly in the field of education were hampered by lack of funds. Their revenue amounted to Shs. 2,932.70, of which Shs. 640 was provided by the Government for the Jeanes School teachers towards their salaries. Shs. 970 was given to cover for the same from the Local Native Council. The fees collected amounted to Shs. 272 while the food grown by the girls was valued at Shs. 600. Hence funds did not have to be provided by the mission.

The Protestant missionaries of the National Holiness Mission, Tenwek continued with their own educational, medical and evangelistic work throughout 1939. By 1940, the Central School, Tenwek was managed by L.E. Adkins supported by R.K. Smith (Fish, 1994). These two missionaries maintained the school as a centre where a completely new way of life was practiced in opposition to much that went on outside it. In many ways, the Christian pupil converts were expected to abandon the ways of the Kipsigis and spearhead uncompromising westernization. The missionaries were convinced that their message could only reach the Kipsigis through evangelizing them in their vernacular, and they therefore made attempts to produce textbooks in the local language. Central schools were supposed to serve the missionary purpose not only by their Christian character and religious teaching, but also by showing the willingness of these mission churches to grant Christians in Kipsigis an opportunity of acquiring the best that Western culture had produced.

In actual fact, educational progress in Kericho among the Kipsigis was very slow until after the Second World War. There was no real demand for education in most parts of this region particularly in Sot and Belgut where resources were far from abundant. Even so, the nascent Christian community amongst the Kipsigis was asking more and more of the missions in the field of education. In response to this demand, the A.I.M missionaries based at Litein received a grant of £.150 in 1946 towards expansion of Litein Central School and other school buildings within the region. The mission by then was under the new management of C. Barnett who took over from A.M. Andersen (KNA,

PC/NZA/3/6/81: Provincial Commissioner Nyanza Education Department, 1946). The mission was able to boost its development of school buildings through the increasingly cooperative spirit with the local inhabitants through the Local Native Council.

The local Kipsigis in the region treated these school buildings and other educational activities as their projects. In this way, by 15<sup>th</sup> March 1947, the A.I.M missionaries at Litein had admitted the first form one intake (KNA, PC/NZA/3/6/83: Confidential Report, Correspondence-General, 1945-1947). At the same time, the Director of Education Noman Larby rejected the proposal of having a two-year secondary school at Litein. He observed that the then school was poorly managed and had low academic standards. He stated that further development would be contingent upon a qualified educationist taking charge of the school and the renewal of the Board of Governors. Even so, the District Commissioner P.W. Low stated later during that year that the A.I.M school at Litein was by far and away the most efficient.

The school made steady progress because its financial burden was placed squarely on the Local Native Council with excellent results. The National Holiness missionaries at Tenwek also expanded educational activities in the same year by obtaining an extra eighteen acres for a primary school and a school garden (NHM, 1947). The number of Christians at the Litein and Tenwek schools was proportionately larger than the number of Christians in all the out schools in Kipsigis. This was because there were many primary schools in these two places where Christians were concentrated. Christians were allowed to use assembly halls and other school buildings for worship.

In the whole of Kipsigis, Christian converts began to assist the missionaries in the construction of schools. Christian parents were also willing to pay school fees which assisted in meeting the running costs of the schools (KNA, PC/NZA/2/11/3: African Education, 1946-1949). With this help and the provision of Government grants -in-aid, mission schools in these areas were not a burden on mission funds except in the areas which had not been deeply evangelized. This problem was witnessed in Chepalungu—an area which was newly settled during this period with inhabitants who had not recognized the importance of Western education. The government continued to provide inspectors of schools to ensure uniform standards of education in all schools in the region. However, the Roman Catholic Mission, following other denominations—namely NHM, AIM and Beulah—started to appoint their own Christian supervisors to ensure the maintenance of high moral standards and efficiency of teachers (Diary Correspondence of Lumbwa Catholic, 1948). But with the rapid increase in school enrolment and new schools being established, the missionaries were unable to hire more trained teachers so as to maintain high educational standards. Also, they were no longer able to maintain their inspectors, and the government had to intervene.

In 1948, the NH missionaries expanded their educational activities by acquiring an additional twelve acres at Tenwek (KNA, DC/KER/9/7: Political Record Book; 1932-1948). During the same year, Cheptenye mission in Belgut also received twenty acres for a mission station where, later, a school was

built. The Roman Catholic missionaries, unlike the Protestants, did not look upon schools as tools of evangelism; hence, their schools did not grow out of the needs of the church. On the other hand, the Protestant missionaries engaged in an ambitious programme of building more and more schools in Kipsigis. However, this expansion was also limited by 'shortage of funds since, during this time, the Kipsigis Local Native Council had very little money set aside for education. In fact, the Kipsigis L.N.C. frequently clashed with administrative officers who refused to allow what they regarded as excessive council appropriations for education.

The confrontation crystallized with the governments' adoption of the 10-year development plan proposed in the 1949 Report on African Education chaired by Leonard Beecher (KNA, PC/NZA/2/11/3: African Education, 1946-1949). The Kipsigis did not fully accept the commission's proposals; for instance, they objected to the use of English as a medium of instruction in schools. However, when the missionaries failed to provide the kind of schooling or education the Kipsigis considered desirable, the latter demanded secular schools which they could control locally and would perform the functions deemed appropriate to them. Among such secular institutions were the independent schools (KNA, DC/KER/3/4: Kericho Monthly Intelligence Report for October 1947).

In 1950, the World Gospel Mission opened a station at Cheptenye, where the Kipsigis were desperately lacking schools. Loren Clark, who was in charge of the mission worked with the District Education Officer in the opening of new schools in the Belgut area. Further, Soin was proposed as a possible school plot; but this was met with protests, particularly at Singoronik. During the same year, the Seventh Day Adventists opened schools randomly in the Belgut area. In their endeavor to open up Kipsigis for educational development, the SDA never accepted government help on principle. In fact, they remained adamantly opposed to any form of radical social change, especially that initiated by the government. Students were taught to lead in church activities and to dislike indigenous ways of life. The Adventists missionaries associated dances, wrestling contests, moonlight plays, festivals, initiation and other cultural activities that featured prominently in the life of the Kipsigis as evil.

Even to watch these events were forbidden for the Adventists; but worse still was the act of participating in them. Instead, they taught their students to be virtuous, to pray regularly, to be gentle and not to violate the Sabbath. In 1951, the World Gospel Mission with its branch in Cheptenye continued to establish and develop the existing schools. In that year, eight men returned from Tenwek to take the second year courses at the Cheptenye Bible School. But due to limited teaching facilities and materials for further construction, no first year students were enrolled. However, on alternative Fridays throughout 1951, the men cared for the small children and guarded the cattle while their wives came to attend classes which were geared to training them in the improvement of their social needs. The eight men graduated successfully in December 1951. Still, when, the older children were at home during their vacation from school, the WGM missionaries engaged in a one – week crash training programme devoted to the wives of those who had graduated. Afterwards, the Bible school was

transferred from Cheptenye to Kericho town, where training the WGM converts in purely religious programmes commenced (Fish, 1990).

With the Binns Education Commission of 1952 the central role played by the missionaries in the development of education changed. The committee stressed that the missions should not be encouraged to increase their responsibilities in education beyond what was required for school government and religious education. Thereafter, the professional supervision of all teaching, except that of religious education, was to be in the hands of qualified officers appointed and employed by the government (East Africa Royal Commission, 1955). In the exercise of these powers the government made increasing use of the Local Native Councils and also reinforced the use of the District Education Boards. In contrast, the Christian missionaries in Kipsigis seized the opportunity and greatly expanded their educational services by means of the grants-in-aid they received from the government (KNA, PC/NZA/2/12/121: Intelligence Reports, 1956). In this way, Cheptenye School had addition classes of standards V and VI. This was a step forward in attaining an intermediate school status. In 1953, the WGM missionaries started a standard VIII; thus, the school gained intermediate status.

By 1952, the Seventh Day Adventists had opened standard V classes in various schools. These classes were meant to attract children who had completed the Common Entrance Examination. S.D.A Kabokyek was opened to standard VI, though the District Education Board rejected its development on the ground that they had not got permission to do so from the government. It admitted fifteen boys from other schools of different denominations. The government further prohibited the S.D.A missionaries from holding prayer meetings outside schools of other denominations. The District Commissioner, P.G. Tait, observed that the only inefficient schools in 1952 were those managed by the Seventh Day Adventists (KNA, DC/KAPT/1/4/15: Confidential Report, 1952).

In 1953, the Tenwek W.G.M missionaries received a full grant of Shs. 5000.00 to expand their primary educational facilities. Their school had an enrolment of one hundred and ninety—two pupils KNA, DC/KAPT/1/4/15: Minutes of Kipsigis District Education Board, 1953). This increase in enrolment was proportional to the increase of converts within central schools, as was witnessed in the other two central schools of Litein and Kericho. During the same year, W.G.M. Solyat in Belgut was allowed to offer elementary primary education up to standard IV (KNA, DC/KAPT/1/4/15: Minutes Kericho D.E.B, 1953). This was the beginning of the missionaries' attempt to improve and upgrade the outschools.

However, the missions were not left to run their schools entirely as they liked. Schools were subjected to a system of inspection—the purpose of which was to ensure that the relevant sections of the education ordinances as well as the conditions governing the establishment of schools by missions were not violated. But the S.D.A missionaries opposed this move. They continued to remain uncooperative and, as a result, all the four remaining S.D.A schools in Kipsigis—namely: Marumbasi, Kabokyek, Bochorwet and Kebeneti (all in Belgut division)—were closed down. They had also been regarded by

the government as poorly managed.

The government felt that education should be wholly secular and thought it adequate that schools should be given opportunities for religious instruction to those children whose parents wished it to be given to them. But to the S.D.A missionaries this was not the case, for education meant also the spiritual growth of the pupils. Both the Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries acknowledged that training in conduct and morals was so important that nothing could be done to discourage their schools from performing a dual role. In Kipsigis, all Catholic educational institutions were under strict supervision and management. In fact, the boys were segregated from the girls, and they never met with the girls during play or leisure time. On the few occasions when the boys and girls attended the same activities, strict supervision was provided by the school principals or nuns. Girls and boys did meet in church; but even there the girls sat on the left side with the women, while the boys occupied the right side with the men.

During 1957, Cheptenye Intermediate School under the management of W.G.M missionaries was turned into a boys' school. The school enrolment stood at one hundred and fifty pupils. By this time, the W.G.M was responsible for administering ten primary schools and one intermediate school, all distributed sparsely in the whole of Belgut division. There was a total enrolment of one thousand, four hundred and sixty—one pupils in all these schools. This growth was attributed to the increase in the number of converts in the out schools as well as in the central schools. By 1960, the missionaries thought that it was necessary to form committees to be responsible for all the central schools. Therefore, a board of governors for each school was started, particularly in Tenwek and Cheptenye schools (Fish, 1990).

The Tenwek Central School got a boost in its activities in 1962 when Carl Waggoner, who served as secretary of the Christian Churches Educational Association of Nyanza Province, assisted it in the provision of facilities and staffing. As Waggoner reported in his pamphlet on the school that increased housing had been made possible by the closing of the intermediate girls' boarding, making their large dormitory available to secondary boys (Kenya Field Annual Report, 1962).

Subsequently, during the same year, the World Gospel missionaries made the decision to phase out the intermediate level of work at the Cheptenye station and to use the twenty acres of plot to establish a secondary school. Permission to implement the same was given by the government, and by January 1964 Gene Lewton opened the school for the first students—and enrolment increased steadily. Wesley A. Rono became the next school principal and, despite financial constraints and lack of teachers, he steered the school to greater achievements (KNA, PC/NZA/3/14/80: Intelligence Report, 1959).

The problems of distance and lack of personnel hampered the development of western education in Belgut, but also in Sot. While most of the costs of education were borne by the Kenya government and the Kipsigis African District Council and subsidized in part by tuition fees, the formal administration of the majority of these schools was still in the hands of one or another of the three leading missions

within Kipsigis (Manners, 1967). However, such autonomy in educational matters was at this time being drastically curtailed.

#### **4. Role of Missionaries in the Staffing of Schools**

Staffing formed an important component in the educational system. It is imperative to note that while the early missionaries in Kipsigis region constituted the most important teaching force in nearly all the central schools, the catechists manned the mushrooming outschools. The acute shortage of teachers in the central schools was alleviated when a few converts were able to help the missionaries. Some missions—like the Lumbwa Industrial Mission which moved southwards to Kericho from Kaimosi were able to make use of the teachers from the more educationally advanced parts of Western Kenya, but missions like the Beulah which came direct from overseas had to train all their teachers from the beginning (KNA, DC/KER/3/7: Political Record Book, 1925-1932).

The missions soon found that an efficient teacher was not always a satisfactory Christian; and that a fervent evangelist could not always teach. In 1931, some technical work began at Litein Central School under the supervision of the first teacher who came from Jeanes School Kabete. The Education Department was not able to find a suitable teacher for the Government African School, Kabianga from this mission (KNA, DC/KER/1/18: Kericho District Annual Report, 1931). All the missions that operated in Kipsigis were assisted by the Kipsigis Local Native Council to pay salaries for the Jeanes School teachers. The mission schools, notably Tenwek and Litein, benefited especially in 1932 from the work done by the wives of these teachers who had attended training together with their husbands at the Jeanes School. They were trained on the importance of child welfare and other domestic chores. This was a matter which most of the teaching force and administrators found difficult to approach (KNA, DC/KER/1/10: South Lumbwa District Annual Report, 1934).

By 1934, the three Jeanes school teachers at the Central School, Litein so far had not produced any noticeable result. This problem was also aggravated by the death of the school principal A.M. Andersen, who had a lot of experience in dealing with the Kipsigis. In 1936, the A.I.M had increased its staff at the Central School to nine African teachers with three European part-time teachers. During the same period the W.G.M missionaries at Tenwek benefited from the co-operative spirit cultivated by the then Provincial Education Officer Webb gave genuine advice to the teaching staff on how to improve their teaching (Fish, 1990). He provided them with inductive courses and was also able to pay their salaries. Hence, they were more motivated. Still in 1937, the A.I.M missionaries increased European part-time teachers to four while they reduced the number of African teachers to eight. In this way, they had the ambition that the missionary staff could do better than the African. They were still motivated by the pseudo-scientific evaluation that Africans could not do much as the Europeans do. This was the point of dilemma that led the government to disagree with the Seventh Day Adventists.

Further, the missions found it difficult to meet all the requests they received for teachers and schools.

Sometimes, Kipsigis benefited from the rivalry between missions, and played off one against another in order to get the education they wanted. However, this instead had a diverse effect on the case of staffing—where teachers from one mission could be employed in the other. On their part, the NHM missionaries introduced and developed an elementary education system in Kipsigis from at the beginning of 1938. At Tenwek a pupil-teachers' class came into existence to train teachers who would help in opening elementary schools in the villages. Under the pupil-teacher system, the pupils in the teachers' class were expected to follow the normal academic syllabus and to teach in the neighboring village schools each day (NHM, 1938).

However, in practice, the pupils did far more teaching than learning. At the end of the year, the pupils graduated as junior teachers or first certificate teachers. After a year's work in the village schools, they could return to the Central School, Tenwek to work for the second certificate (KNA, DC/KER/2/1: Handing Over Report, 1928). The teachers' course which lasted a year and led to the first certificate included instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, blackboard writing, elementary instruction in method, drill, register and mark-book keeping, the Bible and practice in taking children's services and giving simple addresses (Fish, 1990).

The subjects taught to the would-be school masters demonstrated clearly that they were prepared to do both church and school work. Indeed, as the village schools were primarily used as instruments of missionary expansion, the teacher's course at Tenwek helped to strengthen the National Holiness Mission catechists who were exclusively engaged in church work. Everywhere the Protestant missionaries came to have access to the Christian pupils; the members of staff played a leading part in their Christian activities. In this way, the teachers were expected to set a good moral example to the pupils of the schools. In fact, teachers could be discussed because of drunkenness and any Case of scandal by associating freely with women. From the National Holiness Mission's viewpoint, the growth in education was significant in that every teacher was essentially an evangelist and took long hours after school to teach those inquiring about the gospel. In 1940, the National Holiness missionaries led by Alice Day of Tenwek Central School made a breakthrough when they co-operated with their counterparts of the Litein A.I.M. to prepare a scheme of work for the teachers to use throughout Kipsigis (NHM, 1940). This was a way forward in the cooperation between different missions towards the educational advancement of the Kipsigis.

By 1947, the National Holiness Mission, Tenwek agreed to take lower primary teacher trainees from Government African School, Kabianga to whom they were to provide temporary accommodation (KNA, PC/NZA/3/6/83: Confidential Report, 26th May 1947). They also charged an extraordinary grant of Shs. 500 for this service. The opening of this lower primary teacher course at Tenwek was taken as an emergency step. With the increased government grants to the mission schools, the NHM, AIM and Roman Catholic missionaries decided that teachers needed to be better trained, and training colleges were started. The missions were given impetus by R.K. Smith's advice that: "Where it was

impossible ... carry on both the immediate task of evangelization and ... educational work. [The missions should] neglect ... churches in order to perfect ... schools (KNA, PC/NZA/3/6/83: Confidential Report, 1947).

During this period, the schools proved to be the main evangelistic agencies. Because of this, the missionaries began serious training of the teachers and evangelists who were still very limited in number. Improvements in this respect were necessary if the outschools were to lead the Kipsigis to a better future. The translation of the complete Bible into the Kipsigis language also encouraged a higher standard of teaching for evangelists, and it gave impetus to the idea of bringing pupils into the central schools (AIM Mission, 1947). Many missionary staff teachers learnt the Kipsigis language which was the medium of instruction, and they engaged in reducing it to writing and producing scripture translations with the assistance of the early educated Kipsigis teachers. Credit in this task was given to A.M. Andersen, K.R. Smith and W.R. Hotchkiss, among others.

By 1949, the teachers had to be registered with the Education Department and were expected to be capable of teaching the classes assigned to them. The government sought to ensure that the equipment was adequate for the number of children in regular attendance; and that the school authorities did not, without approval, depart from the curriculum spelt out at the time of the application for authority to open the School. The standard of work and the teacher's attendance of duty were strictly supervised. In 1949 also, the NHM recruited the first Kipsigis into the teaching staff of Tenwek Central School. This was Dishon arap Kesembe, who was one among the graduates of the Sotik Bible School that year (KNA, DC/KER/1/22: Kericho District Annual Report, 1949).

In 1951, the S.D.A schools were assessed and adjudged to be inefficient and not showing any improvement. This state of affairs was partly attributable to the lack of European staff in the government's view. Even so, the S.D.A was still opposed to the type of supervision and curriculum advocated by the government and, more so, to the kind of students such a system would finally produce. However, the government recommended measures that should be taken to improve the conditions under which the teachers worked and the children learned. Further, it recommended that missions with schools which were not viable should shut them down; in some instances, it took the harsh step of ordering the closure of schools so categorized, especially the S.D.A ones.

In 1951 also, the District Education Board (D.E.B) reprimanded the S.D.A of transferring one teacher, Kimutai arap Koskei, from an aided school, A.I.M Musarian to S.D.A (KNA, PC/NZA/2/19/120: Confidential Report, 1952) Kebeneti on a day's notice without any correspondence between the administrations of the two schools. This shows that the government was always concerned about the overall management of schools. During the same year, the government inspected the W.G.M. schools and established that there was a shortage of teachers. Most missionary staff members voluntarily contributed from their salaries to church funds. They strongly upheld the view that the teachers, just like nurses and evangelists, were servants of God who must be remunerated in order to enable them to



live, although the real reward was spiritual. Some of the missionaries further boosted the development of schools by donating from their salaries. Most missions—particularly N.H.M, A.I.M, Beulah and SDA—wished to control the lives of the teachers entirely. Teachers could be dismissed without notice for drinking, smoking, insubordination to the management, failure to pay church dues or to attend religious services regularly (KNA, PC/NZA/3/66/1: Nyanza Province, 1951).

Because selection of teachers rested ultimately with the supervising mission body, the missionaries tried to staff their schools with avowed adherents of their own church. However, many of the teachers did not like to live in strict accordance with the regulations laid down for them (Manners, 1967). And virtually all the young men and some of the young women teachers smoked or drank, or did both, when they considered that they would be safe from detection. They resented deeply this infringement on their personal rights, and would point out that hypocrisy was not a choice but a necessity in such circumstances. Their employment depended upon outward conformity, and they needed their jobs (Matson, 1955). The government sometimes intervened to assist the teachers not to be mistreated. Consequently, there was always a trickle of teachers from the mission schools to D.E.B. schools, and others to the independent schools because of mission strictness regarding such matters as polygamy. Such exodus also resulted from the desire to secure more favourable terms.

Some teachers left teaching altogether; because of what they regarded as missionary oppression, many joined government service. Although the missionary societies received no compensation in this situation, they were relieved of the financial burden of paying such teachers. The government eventually took responsibility—for the payment of teacher's salaries, especially with the creation of Teachers' Service Commission in 1957. However, some churches or denominations, particularly the Roman Catholic, took a conservative view and continued paying its teachers. The Christian teachers helped carry the "spiritual burden" for the students and their families. For example, the African school teachers in the NHM, Tenwek helped to extend the ministry. On the whole, there were one hundred and fifteen Kipsigis teachers who shared the missionaries' work in this field. About twenty of the African day school teachers also had Sunday schools or churches.

##### **5. Missionary Role in School Curriculum Development and Implementation**

The first missionaries to work among the Kipsigis did not introduce the advanced Western secular type of education. In any case, they did not, at the beginning, have the staff or resources to do so even if they had wished to. Initially, they wanted to train catechists and evangelists and get the Kipsigis to study the Bible. At this early stage, they also expected physical work from their converts. For example, young men and boys who came to W.R. Hotchkiss of the Lumbwa Industrial Mission for training spent part of the day working in the gardens and part of it in the classroom. Hotchkiss firmly believed that schools had a two-fold purpose. First and foremost, the schools were to be centres for evangelism, but they were also to train the Christian converts to become intelligent leaders of their people. Hotchkiss

recognized the need for a training school for teachers and a Bible school for preparing pastors (Hotchkiss, 1937).

In 1915, he gave the curriculum of the Lumbwa Industrial Mission School as religious knowledge, reading, vernacular, reading Swahili, arithmetic, writing, composition in vernacular and Swahili, geography, physiology and hygiene. This curriculum was to give the Kipsigis pupils an elementary type of education. On the whole, knowledge of the three R's became a condition for Protestants seeking baptism. The first two missions to operate in Kipsigis by the early 1920's were not successful in the introduction of technical education; these were the Lumbwa Industrial Mission and the Africa Inland Mission. In theory, it was considered that training in crafts and agriculture was a basic need to uplift the Kipsigis as a community.

This figured in the missionary programmes and, more widely, in the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission. However, what the Kipsigis demanded was an education which would lead to white-collar jobs as teachers or officers—these were practically jobs which the Europeans were doing and which offered a good salary. Anything that involved manual work was hardly desirable and was resented by the community. And tilling the fields did not really need one to go to school (KNA, DC/KER/3/7: Political Record Book, 1925-1932). On the other hand, industrial training needed much more than an ordinary school in terms of materials and facilities as well as teaching skills.

In 1925, the Lumbwa Industrial Mission started to emphasize teaching agriculture, carpentry and other trades, as well as compulsory scripture m. As part of its curriculum, the AIM stressed that pupils should make reed mats and baskets. The AIM schools operated from a syllabus drawn by their missionary staff; and the three R's continued to form the backbone of the academic part of the education. The technical part included woodwork, carpentry, hand-craft, house-craft and agriculture because of the belief that pupils ought to appreciate the value of manual work. Christianity, particularly as advocated by the Lumbwa Industrial missionaries, relied heavily on a person's ability to read and understand the Bible. Although this in itself did not necessitate schools, the settings in which these missionaries laboured characterized as they were by "heathen superstitions and savage customs"—dictated the expediency of establishing such institutions to ensure the success of the work (AIM mission Annual Report 1926). The education provided by the mission was restricted, especially during the early years of 1920s, to the basics which would enable students to carry out only evangelist functions. The curriculum included singing, scripture, prayers, reading, spelling, writing, catechism, and arithmetic. This education emphasized the spiritual value of hard work and the tenets of evangelical Christianity. Although the role of religion was paramount, there was some room in the curriculum for secular subjects. As noted earlier, the early missionaries started schools in order to further the cause of conversion. Later, the L.I.M passed a rule that no convert should be admitted into the church without first learning to read, exception being made only in the case of those far too old to learn (Sambu, 1997).

By 1927, the AIM had intensified its industrial education to the Kipsigis. It taught different trades,

including brick making and laying, carpentry, working in iron, road making and tailoring. As regards agricultural training, the pupils were taught to plant crops such as maize and tea. By 1936, the AIM was giving agricultural instruction to the boys in the Central School, Litein. At the same time, a teacher-training class of sixteen was established by the National Holiness missionaries at the Tenwek Central School. The teachers' wives were given a special course in hygiene and home-making. Agriculture was also taught, although to a limited extent. The Kipsigis furnished the materials and the buildings; this was a self-help practice which continued through the years. It was considered that getting the community involved in donating and supplying the materials for building gave them a sense of "belonging" and of responsibility for upkeep and continuation (Fish, 1990). Agricultural education of some kind or other, then, was imparted in all the central schools although it often degenerated into mere manual labor on large, non-typical holdings to supplement the fee revenue. To the Kipsigis, however, education was a means out of a harsh, mainly subsistence economy, and not the way back into it.

In 1942, the National Holiness Mission changed its curriculum for all its central schools. The mornings throughout the week were spent in the classroom and the afternoons devoted to working in the vegetable gardens. Beans, peas, pumpkins, green onions, cabbages and potatoes were raised to add variety to the pupils' diet. Classes in cooking, sewing, spinning and weaving, and maternity lessons were started (NHM, 1942). The central schools occasionally taught vocational subjects. But the main obstacles to the widespread acceptance of vocational education were the Kipsigis themselves, who insisted on literary rather than vocational training. The missionaries argued that vocational education would help combat the "well-observed" Kipsigis characteristics of "indolence" and such "depravity" as cattle theft and would counterbalance "immorality" (KNA, DC/KER/4/4: Monthly Intelligence Report, 1944; Jones, 1925; King, 1968).

The Protestant missionaries working among the Kipsigis drew encouragement from the successful vocational education programme undertaken at Hampton and Tuskegee institutes in the United States". Missionary insistence on vocational training as part of the school curriculum was not exclusively ideological; there were very pragmatic concerns of economic viability and self-sufficiency involved as well. Missionary work in this region was woefully underfinanced, and it was only schools which consistently impressed the government that received official assistance by way of grants in-aid. Beginning in 1946, a more formally organized Bible training course was started at Tenwek. The entry requirements were that one was expected to have the ability to read and write (KNA, PC/NZA/3/6/83: South Kavirondo Correspondence, 1946).

Following the emphasis on vocational education by the leading Protestant missionaries, then, saw the establishment of workshops which were built to train the Kipsigis in carpentry, iron technology, pottery, basketry and masonry. The efficacy of the vocational instruction offered by these missionaries was vindicated by the number of its graduates found gainfully employed throughout Kipsigis (KNA,

PC/NZA/2/12/121: Provincial Commissioner Nyanza Monthly Intelligence Report, May 1947). The vocational instruction in Kipsigis was further motivated by the insufficiency of the mission funds and the high cost of employing skilled labourers. In fact, most of the central schools were built by Kipsigis pupil masons with the assistance of the technical instructors within each mission. The Beulah Mission schools had traditionally been characterized by hard work, strict discipline, quality education and the inculcation of a spirit of fierce independence in the pupils. This mission imparted basically moral and religious education. In its central schools, the curriculum centered on the four R's - reading, writing, arithmetic and religion.

The day usually started with morning worship which was attended by all the teachers and pupils. It was at this time that the required biblical quotations were expected from each class. A very trying oral test in arithmetic was generally the first classroom activity. Prayers marked the end of each day's activities (KNA, PC/NZA/2/11/3, African Education, 1925-1949). The Kipsigis who had widely travelled, and especially those who had gone out of the country during the Second World War, knew that the pietistic approach to education would not lead to the type of training that would prepare them for social, economic and political development (KNA, PC/NZA/3/1/363: Confidential Report, 1944). They demanded that the missionaries concentrate more on industrial training which would enable the Kipsigis to provide for themselves, thus making the Christian life more meaningful and attracting people to the faith. They were eager for education and anxious to learn beyond the three R's. Those who were sufficiently educated took charge of the elementary classes. And those who were already well versed in reading and writing the Kipsigis language were selected and formed into a special class which was taught English every day in the central schools.

The Roman Catholic missionaries believed in the ideal of both "civilizing" and then Christianizing their converts. They built schools and taught subjects like history, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and hymn singing. There was one year's religious course which was incorporated into the school curriculum. The completion of the course had no substantial academic benefit except for some basic lessons in reading and writing. However, the course, which came into force in the late 1940s, reportedly had great religious impact on those concerned with life. The course introduced the religious aspects of mission education: subsequently, the religious instruction in the primary school - as well as at other school levels was merely a confirmation and an expansion of the religious instruction already received. Pupils were introduced to the Bible in primary one and two while continuing to study the different sacraments and other Christian doctrines. The class teachers were responsible for teaching of religion; but occasionally the Father in charge of the parish would come to explain some points of the Catholic dogma beyond the teachers' comprehension.

The pupils in Catholic mission schools were required by the school rules to go to confession at least once a month and to receive communion at least once a week on Sundays (Sang, 1997). All pupils were also expected to attend mass on Fridays during the school days and, as on Sundays, failure to appear

meant punishment. The majority of the pupils became converts and, at the primary, intermediate and secondary levels of education, the number of Christian increased until they formed about fifty percent of the total school enrolment (KNA, PC/RVP/6A/12/3: Confidential Report, 1950).

Pupils in the Seventh Day Adventist schools were encouraged to enter vocational and technical courses of study, which did not prepare them to be dependent on others, since Adventists were expected to be self-sufficient (Amayo, 1974). In Kipsigis, the courses encouraged were teaching, studying for the ministry and medicine. Other professions were regarded as unnecessary, as the purpose of acquiring education was to enable one to be of service to God and humanity irrespective of their position. The school curriculum included arithmetic, writing, language (Kipsigis and English), hygiene, nature study, general knowledge, handwork, singing, story telling and religious instruction. This last subject was taught daily (twice on Fridays) and was supplemented by a fifteen-minute morning devotion. Arithmetic, writing and language were given almost as much attention, while the other subjects were taught three periods weekly (KNA, DC/KER./1/27:Kericho District Annual Report, 1953). Attendance at Friday evening and Saturday church services was compulsory for all the pupil converts in all the four schools managed by the Church in 1953 among the Kipsigis.

There was also great emphasis on manual work. This emphasis was designed to demonstrate that education did not consist solely of reading and writing; but also must rely on people's ability to use their hands. Training in manual work enabled students to be self-employed as artisans or more scientific farmers rather than having to rely on office jobs or those provided by others. There were practical considerations which complemented the theoretical. Perhaps manual work was emphasized to reduce the expense involved in running the institution.

The S.D.A missionaries' emphasis on manual work had its negative side. Sometimes it seemed that it only served the interests of school administration. There was also a general feeling among the pupils that they were not compensated in terms of the quantity of crops they harvested from the school farm. In short, the S.D.A educational philosophy meant the development of the hand (through manual labour and the acquisition of skills), the heart (through the study of religion), and the head (through academic work).

## **6. Conclusion**

The central schools were seen as a means of bringing the young generation of the Kipsigis pupil converts who were desirous of learning the missionary's Christianity and Western culture under permanent Christian influence. The pupil converts were bestowed with the responsibility of spreading the Christian message. Teaching was not restricted to religious subjects but included other branches of knowledge. The character of school administration, its curriculum and the training of teachers were not decided by the missions alone except in extreme cases; for instance, the S.D.A refused to be controlled by the government. The government intervened in the management of the missions' central schools

through the grants-in-aid and also in the overall colonial policy of targeting of quality education. Kipsigis culture—and most of their social and political institutions—was not given a chance of perpetuation, but doomed to near extinction under the weight of Western missionary influences.

In particular, the Protestant missionaries played their part in the destruction of Kipsigis customs, values and norms with the introduction of central schools. The missionaries were determined right from the start to abolish the Kipsigis religion and culture. They preached that the only God was the one whose nature and character had been revealed in the Bible and that all other gods were mere illusions. They asserted that it was their divine duty to bring all peoples into the arena of salvation and grace. This was clearly depicted in the curriculum of the central schools, with religion forming the centre of it. The neglect of technical and industrial education, the emphasis on elementary—literacy and clerical training and the consequent love for white-collar jobs also created among the educated Kipsigis disdain for manual labour and agricultural work. Furthermore, the uneven nature of the distribution of educational facilities prevented a uniform process of modernization in each of the three divisions of Belgut, Buret and Sot respectively.

The Kipsigis as a community made a very substantial financial contribution towards the cost of mission education. Sometimes, the Local Native Council stretched its resources to pay the mission teachers' salaries. On their part, the missionaries—particularly those of the NHM, AIM, Beulah, Lum.bwa Industrial Mission and S.D.A—tried to abolish the old system of the Kipsigis indigenous education, replacing it with Western education and Christianity. In most cases, the Roman Catholic missionaries condoned these vices. Subsequently, it was the inability of these missions in the overall development of education in Kipsigis that led to the establishment of the Government African School, Kabianga (Bogonko, 1992). Towards the 1960's, missions accepted the role of the government in education and began to concentrate on the lesser role of providing for the teaching of religious education in schools. However, the churches still played the role of being 'managers' of schools until after the country's independence. Thereafter, the churches were happy to occupy the role of 'sponsors' as recommended by the Ominde Report of 1964 (Mutua, 1975; Sifuna, 1990; Otiende, *et.al* 1992).

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