

Journal of Negro Education

Achimota College and Educational Objectives in Africa

Author(s): T. Walter Wallbank

Source: *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Apr., 1935), pp. 230-245

Published by: Journal of Negro Education

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2292336>

Accessed: 21/02/2010 07:10

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=jne>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Journal of Negro Education is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Journal of Negro Education*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Achimota College and Educational Objectives in Africa

T. WALTER WALLBANK

The Prince of Wales' College and School, situated six miles from Accra the capital city of the British West African colony, the Gold Coast, and commonly referred to as "Achimota," is one of the most interesting and significant educational institutions on the African continent. It, more than any other, in its objectives and procedures reflects what can reasonably be regarded as the sanest, most hopeful, and advanced philosophy of African native education that has so far been formulated. It will be the main purpose of this article to examine this philosophy and describe how it finds expression at Achimota. Such a task is especially pertinent today when so much interest is being manifested over questions relating to the quality and kind of education best fitted for the underprivileged peoples in India, Java, Ceylon, Africa, British Malaya, and elsewhere; and further, it is the belief of the author that certain aspects of what we may term the "Achimotan philosophy" can well be given more generous recognition in the Negro schools of America.

AFRICAN EDUCATION'S QUANTITATIVE ASPECT

Native education, in Africa, presents, primarily, a two-fold problem, on the one side quantitative, and on the other, qualitative. Or as the renowned Africanist, Professor Diedrich Westermann, puts it: "... the

problem today is how to succeed in giving a school training to the whole population, and how to shape this training."¹ Concerning the first aspect of the problem, the quantitative, there is now little disagreement among well-informed people. The African native, "... confronted with a whole range of facts beyond his present comprehension and caught in a maelstrom of economic and cultural progress,"² must be given as much education as economic circumstances permit in aiding him to adapt himself and to appreciate the significance of those strange and aggressive new forces from the West that are both modifying and destroying the old structure of African society. This demands, more than anything else, the extension of the rural elementary schools in Africa as they constitute the most important agency for raising the educational standards of the bulk of the people.

Strictly speaking, of course, it should be noted in passing that the "primitive" African is not uneducated. A careful and prolonged system of training, beginning with early childhood and culminating in the systematic and intense initiation ceremonies which usher the youth and maiden into adulthood and full tribal membership, has been given to the

¹ Diedrich Westermann, *The African To-Day*, p. 216: London, 1934.

² *Cmd. 2387, Report of the East African Commission*, p. 21: London, 1925.

rising generations of practically all African tribes. Thus it was that there passed on a rich pattern of the tribal inheritance made up of such elements as religious ideas, community ideals, traditional norms of sexual behavior, and attitudes of self-discipline and reverence for the old. This pre-European system of African education taught above all else respect for tradition, suspicion of innovation, and a blind adherence to social passivity. In the ever increasing dynamic environment of the African such qualities can not function and are no longer adequate in preparing him to grapple with its complex forces. Referring to this, Professor Westermann declares:

If to-day the white man has set himself the task of giving the African a new education, his attempt is justified by the fact that under present circumstances the Native system of education is breaking down, and even where it continues to exist it is no longer adequate to meet modern needs.³

THE QUALITATIVE ASPECT

The other side of the problem, the qualitative, raises such questions as what form shall the new education take, what objectives should be kept in mind, what attitudes shall be inculcated, how much of the old in the native's social inheritance shall be scrapped, can some elements of the old be grafted on to the new, and finally, for what definite rôle, if any, shall the African be trained? To some, especially a large number of native intellectuals, education means the renunciation of practically all the elements of indigenous culture and the wholesale adoption of the supposedly superior culture of the West. To the

missionaries, especially those of a generation ago, the end-all of education was the Christianizing of the African, and, all too frequently, autochthonous customs, where they differed from the European, were frowned upon as non-Christian and therefore un-Godly.⁴ Another school of missionaries, and one that is gaining ground, believes "that Christianity comes to a strange civilization not to work dissolution, but to fulfill it, that is to say, to bring to their full flowering the seeds of humanity which lie unseen in primitive civilizations."⁵ This school assumes, therefore, a more sympathetic attitude towards native institutions and holds to the view that education, under missionary auspices, is not concerned so much with Europeanizing the African as in making him a good Christian.

Still another view would utilize education merely as a tool for the use of economic vested interests. The objective, in this case, is the creation of an efficient, complacent "black proletariat" perfectly content to be the "hewers of wood" and the "drawers of water" for Western capitalistic enterprise in Africa. Professor Julian Huxley, in a volume describing his recent visit to East Africa, has told how he met an exponent of this view in the Kenya Legislative Council who staunchly believed "that all native education which was not strictly technical and practical was always useless and usually harmful."⁶

⁴ For a recent monograph of value on education and the missions, see Dr. J. H. Oldham, "The Educational Work of Missionary Societies," *Africa*, 7: 47-59: London, Ja 1934.

⁵ Westermann, *op. cit.*, 220.

⁶ Julian S. Huxley, *Africa View*, p. 313: New York, 1931.

³ Westermann, *op. cit.*, 207.

Colonial administrators, both French and British have inclined at times to the theory that the most important object of native education is its contribution in making possible the smooth and efficient functioning of the governmental system. Education should be directed so as to prevent the natives from dallying with any "disturbing" ideas concerning self-determination. In the little bush schools, counterparts of our "little red school houses" in America, the students should be taught to be loyal subjects, content to "know their place." The Government should provide only limited opportunities for higher education such as are necessary to produce a small intellectual *elite* from which can be recruited the government clerks and puppet chiefs who act as useful links between the white rulers and their native subjects.

Perhaps the most interesting attitude taken towards the problem of African education is that espoused by certain pro-African sentimentalists. With a Rousseau-like romanticism, they conceive the African to be a noble savage endowed with a cultural heritage which is sufficient unto itself and should not, therefore, be polluted in any way by Western education. According to this viewpoint, all European school teachers in Africa are unnecessary and even pernicious. Fortunately, these modern prophets of back to nature are not very numerous. The hands of the clock can not be turned back. For good or ill, Western civilization has invaded Africa and is remaking the continent. Unless they wish to be submerged, even destroyed, for the natives there is no other al-

ternative than to adapt themselves to the new conditions. "African society," writes Dr. Oldham, "in its present state must undergo radical changes in many directions if it is to maintain itself and advance under the new conditions."⁷

Thus far, in discussing what has been termed the qualitative side of African education, attention has been directed to five diverse points of view: that held by a large number of Negro intellectuals, that of the missionary, the "African Rousseau," the economic exploiter, and that supported by some colonial officials. A sixth, and the most significant, yet remains for consideration. In referring to it no better label can be appropriated than that of "Educational Trusteeship." It is this philosophy of native education which finds its best exemplification in the British African dependencies and which, thus far, has found its most ideal embodiment in Achimota College in the Gold Coast.

EDUCATIONAL TRUSTEESHIP

Educational Trusteeship is based upon the belief that native education should be designed to conserve, as much as possible, the desirable and healthy elements in the fabric of African life and to these should be grafted those elements of European knowledge considered essential for the enjoyment of a fuller life by the African, the fundamental object being to enable him to cope with an environment which is rapidly being transformed under the stress of modern influences. It is further believed that the

⁷ J. H. Oldham, "The Educational Work of Missionary Societies," *Africa*, 7: 53 Ja 1934.

first great task in Africa must be an attack upon the problem of mass illiteracy. Although main emphasis must be placed upon elementary education, at the same time, "As resources permit, the door of advancement, through higher education in Africa must be increasingly opened for those who by character, ability and temperament show themselves fitted to profit by such education."⁸

This philosophy of colonial education, which was officially promulgated in 1925 by the British Government,⁹ also considers that the religious and moral side of education should not be neglected and that the natives must be trained for eventual self-government. The aim of Educational Trusteeship is to eschew the so-called "literary" education and give the *average* African a training which consists, primarily, of work in the field and shop preparing him to carry on efficiently in his probable future status as peasant or craftsman. Instruction in general science, a reading and writing knowledge of the vernacular and perhaps the *lingua franca* of the region, the inculcation of the basic laws of health, and the points of educational policy formulated in the Advisory Committee's pronouncement. It should be noted in passing that the religious and moral side of education was emphasized and it was also recognized that African education must make provision for the training of the natives for eventual self-government. Summing up contemporary British educational policy, with reference to

Africa, its aim is to aid the native to understand his own environment and prepare him to be an efficient agent in it rather than to give a training which has been specially designed to meet the needs arising out of an environment like Great Britain. Educational effort is concentrated on the challenge of mass illiteracy; the so-called "literary curriculum" is eschewed; and the training given to the *average* native consists, primarily, of work in the field and shop which prepares him to carry on efficiently in his probable future status as a peasant or craftsman. Instruction in general science, a reading and writing knowledge of the vernacular and perhaps the *lingua franca* of the region, the inculcation of the basic laws of health, and the impartation of knowledge concerning sound ideals of character and the proper use of leisure are other essential elements which also must find a place in the education of the African masses.¹⁰

SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUCATIONAL ADAPTATION

The key-note of this program of African education, which we have termed "Educational Trusteeship," is well expressed in the word adaptation.¹¹ This recognizes that knowledge "is of a universal character and knows neither race nor national boundaries;"¹² that it is a common treasure for mankind, without refer-

¹⁰ These objectives coincide with those laid down by the Phelps-Stokes African Educational Commissions.

¹¹ For a criticism of "adaptation" in colonial educational policy see R. J. Bunche, "French Educational Policy in Togo and Dahomey," *JOURNAL OF NEGRO EDUCATION*, 3: 87-92, Ja 1934.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁸ *Cmd. 2374, Education Policy in British Tropical Africa*, London, 1925, p. 4.

⁹ In the *White Paper* cited directly above.

ence to individual, time or place; and that it should be available to all for utilization when the need arises. But it is not true that all elements of this treasure, at all times, possess an equal value for all individuals. In the United States, this truth is being increasingly recognized by curriculum revision in our public schools. Few can doubt that it would be absurd to retain Greek in our high schools at the expense of neglecting or eliminating a course, say, in modern European history or civics, and that it would be equally undesirable to compel all secondary students to take the curriculum prescribed for college matriculation. Given the fact that environments and capacities vary for individuals, and in the case of different races at least the environments, and confronted at the same time with the problem of a limited time period for formal education, the principle of subject selection or adaptation is both logical and eminently desirable whether it is applied in America or in Africa.

Achimota College is a product of the Gold Coast,¹³ a British West

¹³ The Gold Coast Colony, together with Ashanti, the Protected Northern Territories, and the Mandate of Togoland, is situated on the Gulf of Guinea, between 3°7' W. long. and 1°14' E. long. These four areas extend north from the Gulf about 500 miles and are bounded on the west by French Colony of the Ivory Coast, on the east by French Togo, and on the north by the French Colony of the Upper Volta. The census of 1931 gives a total population of 3,160,386 for all four areas. The total number of non-Africans in the Gold Coast is only 3,100. The soil is very fertile and also contains rich mineral deposits. Before the world depression, the Gold Coast was one of the most prosperous colonies in the world. Governmentally, it is a Crown Colony administered under a system of benevolent despotism. The chief executive officer is the Governor, assisted by an Executive and a Legislative Council, who

African Colony, unique for its post-war prosperity, its reputation as one of the best administered colonies in the World,¹⁴ for the existence of an active group of African intellectuals who are beginning to discuss the subject of "Home Rule" for the Gold Coast, and for the remarkable strides it has taken in education during the past fifteen years.¹⁵

Three factors have contributed, in large part, to the creation of Achimota. First, there was the colony's rapid economic development which centered around the amazing progress made in the cacao industry. In 1879, a few cacao seeds were brought to the colony. By 1900, the total export was not more than 500 tons; but in 1911 it had increased to 40,000 and in 1926 it had reached to the amazing figure of 231,000 tons—nearly half of the world's production of cacao. In 1924, the value of this commodity exported amounted to £7,250,000. It was this development in cacao culture which increased the government's revenues and made possible the financing of an ambitious educational program of which Achimota was a part. Cacao, and cacao alone, explains why educational expenditure could be increased from £54,000 in 1919 to £289,000 in 1930.¹⁶

is responsible to the Colonial Secretary in London.

¹⁴ "It is generally agreed that European colonization has had a more beneficent influence and a greater degree of success in the Gold Coast than in any other African colony." T. J. Jones, *Education in Africa*, p. 121; Phelps-Stokes Foundation, New York, 1922.

¹⁵ Fedden Tindall, "Progress on the Gold Coast," *Contemporary Review*, 136: 54-9, London, 1929.

¹⁶ *Address Delivered by the Governor, March 1, 1932*, p. 44: Accra, 1932.

GOVERNOR GUGGISBERG: ACHIMOTA'S
FOUNDER

The second factor has been the sympathetic appreciation of the paramount importance of colonial education by a number of able and farseeing Gold Coast governors. Before the War, Sir John P. Rodger and Sir-Hugh Clifford especially distinguished themselves in this respect. The unprecedented improvement in education, however, in more recent years was due almost entirely to the energy and vision of one man, Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg, who was Governor from 1919 to 1927. No British administrator has worked harder to live up to the responsibilities of Colonial Trusteeship. During his administration, he improved house building and town planning, doubled the railway mileage, built 3,800 miles of new roads, liberalized the colony's constitution,¹⁷ started the child welfare movement, and built twenty new hospitals.¹⁸

Sir Gordon's greatest interest lay in education and it was in his efforts in this respect that he made the greatest contribution to the welfare and progress of the Gold Coast. The education code was entirely revised, a committee appointed in 1920 thoroughly investigated the colony's educational needs, the grants by the government to mission schools were increased, teacher training was improved, and four trade and agricultural schools were established. Above all, Governor Guggisberg conceived the idea of and built Achimota. This remarkable ex-

ponent of Trusteeship terminated his governorship in 1927 and when, three years later, news arrived of his untimely death, many were the people in the colony who mourned his passing.¹⁹ In every province of the colony, in Ashanti, and in Accra the capital, the chiefs and the people granted him the full burial honors of an African ing. One newspaper stated: "His career was lived for the advantage, the good, and the happiness of the people of this country."²⁰ And speaking of his term as governor, A. G. Fraser, Principal of Achimota, declared: "It is a marvelous work for eight short years, for he has changed the face of a country. . . . In this strong man East and West met and understood each other."²¹

The public spirited educational leadership of Governor Guggisberg did not "just happen." It owed much of its inspiration to that idea of Educational Trusteeship which, as we have seen, came more and more to direct the thinking of British colonial administrators after the war and culminated, in 1925, in the issuance of the famous *White Paper* on colonial education. It was the philosophy of Educational Trusteeship which both justified and directed Sir Gordon's natural interest in education, provided the aims and ideals which led to the creation of such an institution as Achimota, and which shaped the course of its development. Thus the essential economic basis, the element of personal leadership, and the existence of a directing educational phi-

¹⁷ I. L. Evans, *The British in Tropical Africa*, London, p. 122.

¹⁸ *Report on Achimota College*, 1930, p. 4: Gold Coast, 1931.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁰ A. G. Fraser, "In Memoriam: Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg," *Oversea Education*, 1: 117, J1 1930.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 118.

losophy were all factors instrumental in the founding of Achimota College.

THE GENESIS OF ACHIMOTA

The history of this institution begins in March, 1920, when Sir Gordon appointed a special committee to make an exhaustive survey of the Gold Coast's educational needs. Two months later, this committee reported in favor of establishing a government secondary school. In 1922, another committee was appointed to consider this recommendation. Influenced, in large part, by the ideas of the governor, it expanded the original suggestion by advocating, in 1924, the establishment of a college which would train teachers, offer technical instruction in many trades, and provide academic training on the secondary level. An enrollment of 240, exclusively boys, and a staff of 25 was contemplated. The cost was estimated at an original investment of £258,000 with an annual expenditure of £48,000. This plan, subsequently, was modified by the influence of the Rev. A. G. Fraser, a well-known colonial educator with a splendid record of service in Uganda and Ceylon, who had been selected as the college's first principal. Upon his advice, it was decided to make Achimota coeducational, to start out, not with secondary instruction, but with elementary classes and gradually add more advanced work until university work was offered; and to make the tone of the college religious.²²

²² For the history of Achimota see *Report of the Committee appointed in 1932 by the Governor to inspect the Prince of Wales' College and School, Achimota*, pp. 7-9: London, 1932. This source, hereafter will be cited as *Report of Achimota Committee*.

Although no trace of Achimota's new buildings was as yet to be seen in 1924, six members of its staff arrived in the colony in October of that year. The governor ". . . intended them to study the country, the educational system as it then existed, and to get to know the life of the people."²³ Schools were visited, vernaculars studied, and some of the members of the staff began to teach in the Government Training College for Teachers at Accra. On Easter Sunday, 1925, the foundation stone of Achimota College was laid by the Prince of Wales and construction of the new buildings rapidly followed.

The college first began to function, albeit on a very limited scale, in August, 1926, when six small African boys were enrolled in the kindergarten department. The same year also saw the staff which was now increasing in number take over the management of the teachers' college at Accra. In January, 1927, the partially built institution was officially opened by its proud sponsor, Sir Gordon Guggisberg, and by March of that year 100 students, all under twelve, had been enrolled.²⁴ Throughout 1928, instruction was carried on only in the kindergarten and lower primary classes and in teacher training; but the next year saw the opening of the upper primary, secondary, and university departments. Finally, Achimota's formative period may be thought as terminating when a constitution was granted in 1930 under which the government relinquished direct control and turned over the affairs of the young institution to a governing council composed

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁴ *Report on Achimota College*, 1932, p. 8: Gold Coast, 1933.

of nominees of the government, members of the college staff, and representatives of the African people.²⁵

ACHIMOTA'S GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

Achimota occupies a site of 1,023 acres on which no less than twelve miles of roads have been constructed and, adjoining the college campus proper, another 100 acres have been reserved for additional playing fields and 750 acres of forest reserve have been added for timber and fuel supplies.²⁶ The area occupied by the college may be conveniently divided into six parts: the college proper, the school and kindergarten, the hospital, the playing-fields, the farm, and the model village. Over seventy buildings have been erected, all built of concrete and supplied with an adequate water supply from Accra as well as with electricity for lighting and power. Some conception of the size of Achimota and the completeness of its equipment will be gained by an enumeration of its principal buildings:²⁷

Administration (includes library & museum)
 Laboratory and Art
 Domestic Science
 Class-room Buildings (4)
 Dining-Halls
 Hospital and Dispensary
 Dormitories (16)
 Kindergarten
 Music
 Workshop
 Guest House & Club
 Teachers' Quarters (32)
 Principal's Quarters

African Staff's Quarters
 Quarters for visiting African Staff
 Printing Press
 Power House & Pumping Station
 Sewage Farm
 Model Village for college laborers

The most centrally located and imposing edifice is the administration building with its large clock tower. As students and staff live on the campus, extensive dormitory facilities have had to be provided. Thirty-two bungalows have been built for the staff not including the principal's house and the building provided for the African staff. Altogether sixteen dormitories have been provided for the kindergarten, school, and college students.²⁸ In the case of the latter, 540 can be accommodated. The hospital has four wards, a surgery and dispensary. The library is fairly well equipped having a total of 8,000 volumes which are being increased every year. On the playing fields, one finds two large cricket fields, four devoted to football, tennis courts, and three hockey fields. Anumle, the model village, located a half-mile from the administration building, houses the college laborers and their families and consists of ninety-six small dwellings.

THE COLLEGE'S FINANCES

It was estimated that a government grant of £68,000 a year would be necessary to meet Achimota's expenses and for several years this sum was appropriated. Out of this grant, it was stipulated that £10,000 should be set aside for a building fund. In 1931, the total revenue of Achimota

²⁵ For the text of the constitution see *Report on Achimota College, 1930*, pp. 43-9.

²⁶ *Report of Achimota Committee*, p. 16.

²⁷ *Report of Achimota Committee*, p. 16.

²⁸ A. Victor Murray, "Achimota College," *Oversea Education*, 4: 63, Ja 1933.

was £85,353 coming from the following sources:²⁹

Government Grant	£68,000
Students' Fees	7,276
Government Grant for Teachers in Training	6,575
Scholarships	1,389
Misc. Sources	2,113
	£85,353

For board, room, and instruction students are charged £20 yearly in the kindergarten, £30 for the primary, £50 for the secondary, and £75 for the university classes.³⁰ The kindergarten and lower primary fees have recently been reduced to £15 and £25, respectively, in view of the financial depression. It is estimated that out of the 500 students, the fees of 40 per cent are paid wholly by parents and friends. The fees of the remaining 60 per cent are met, in whole or in part, from government, college, or private scholarship funds. In 1932, the government was forced to reduce its subsidy to £48,000. The collapse of the cacao market has forced retrenchments in all the government departments of the Gold Coast.³¹

In surveying the number and size of the buildings, the extent of the grounds, and the adequacy of equipment, the realization must come that all this represents a very heavy financial outlay. The initial expenditure was £564,000 not considering another £53,000 spent for equipment, and the annual cost has averaged £65,000. Achimota, therefore, truly stands as a monument to a government's faith in the educability of the

African and the recognition of the supreme importance education is destined to play in his country's destiny. Speaking of the potentialities of his students, the principal of Achimota writes:

There is perhaps no race with greater potentialities than the people of West Africa and in the work of educating our pupils we find character and intense human interest all the time. True, they start handicapped at present by lack of previous generations accustomed to our forms of education. That is a small matter and curable in time. But they are hardworking, intelligent, responsible, and reliable.³²

PRINCIPLES OF ACHIMOTA'S CONSTITUTION

Achimota stands for the principle of the worthwhileness of African education and, further, in the manner of its administration, it is based on the idea that the natives should be trained, more and more, to assume the management of their own affairs. In 1935, by the *Achimota College and School Ordinance*, full responsibility for the institution was given to a governing council³³ in which official nominees of the government are in a minority. Commenting on this action, the president of the council declared:

Here Government at great cost has established a college, endowed it and then made it free to work out its own future. It is an immensely generous attitude and act.³⁴

²⁹ *Report on Achimota College*, 1930, p. 9.

³⁰ The Council is composed of 15 members: 6 elected periodically by the Council upon nomination by its African members, 4 elected by the college staff from its own ranks, 3 nominated by the Governor, and 2 *ex officio*, the Principal of the College and the Gold Coast Director of Education. Six members of the Council must be Africans and there is no provision limiting their total membership in the Council.

³¹ *Report on Achimota College*, 1930, p. 38.

²⁹ *Report of Achimota Committee*, p. 21.

³⁰ A. Victor Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

³¹ *Report on the Education Department, 1931-32*, p. 8: Accra, 1932.

The constitution of Achimota recognizes three principles: that the people should have a voice in their own education; that the staff should be allowed to share in the management of an institution; and that the proper place of the government "is that of patron, not that of controller."³⁵ In view of the generous financial support rendered by the government, it requires, as provided by the constitution, an annual audit and financial statement and a periodic inspection by a board of examiners. Outside of these reasonable safeguards, the college has been given a generous degree of autonomy and the opportunity of developing along its own lines. It is identified with no official viewpoint and seeks to advance no political or economic program.³⁶

Its constitution endeavors to do the same thing in the realm of education as "Indirect Rule" in the governmental field. The so-called policy of "Indirect Rule," practiced especially in the British dependencies of Nigeria and Tanganyika, delegates to the African people a wide degree of responsibility through the utilization of native courts, rulers, native treasuries and police which are at the same time subject to the sympathetic supervision of British officers.³⁷ Sir Donald Cameron, referring to the objectives of Indirect Rule, recently stated:

My conception is that in Nigeria . . . our duty is gradually to train the people so that—whatever may be the generations or

even centuries that it will take—they may be able to "stand by themselves."³⁸

With such an objective, delegation of responsibility in education goes hand in hand. Another reason, however, exists why it is imperative for the native community to take a share in the administration of its schools. For too long, the African has regarded the schools as supported by charity, run by an alien government, and not "belonging" to the native community.³⁹ As long as the natives are given no say in the management of their schools they will be thought of as a foreign agency in the community, financed and controlled by an outside power. A quotation from an *Achimota Annual Report* will suffice to show how clearly this problem is appreciated by the college authorities:

. . . In the education of African children African parents should have an effective voice. An education where foreign experts think out problems, foreign experts work out projects, and foreign experts carry them out is doomed, however perfectly benevolent it may be, to be perfectly unimaginative. On the present Council six out of fifteen seats must be African. That proportion must inevitably increase. It can not diminish.⁴⁰

ORGANIZATION OF COLLEGE AND SCHOOL CLASSES

In the organization of its classes, Achimota is divided into two main divisions: the College and the School. The latter takes care of children up to age nine or ten and is in turn divided into the kindergarten and the lower primary. The enrollment in 1932 in

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁶ *Report on Achimota College, 1932*, p. 9.

³⁷ For an account of the genesis, philosophy, and functioning of Indirect Rule see T. Walter Wallbank, "The Principles and Organization of British Native Rule in Tropical Africa," *Pacific Historical Review*, 3: 142-55. Je 1934.

³⁸ *Address by the Governor, Legislative Council Papers*, p. 8: Lagos, Nigeria, 1933.

³⁹ Westermann, *op. cit.*, 226.

⁴⁰ *Report on Achimota College, 1930*, p. 38.

the former was fifty-four and in the latter, eighty-three. One factor that complicates instruction in the School is the fact that the young children come to Achimota speaking one of four vernacular languages: Ga, Fanti, Twi, and Ewe. This necessitates the forming of classes on the basis of the four vernaculars. English, naturally, finds little place in the classroom at this stage and practically all instruction is through the medium of the vernaculars. Scripture, arithmetic, and nature study form the very simple fare of the young children in the kindergarten which is enriched in the lower primary grades by the addition of formal English, history, geography, civics, physical training, and music. Classes are still organized on a vernacular basis but English is increasingly used.^{40a}

The College consists of four sections which are given below with their enrollment:⁴¹

	Enrollment		
	1931	1932	1933
Middle School or Upper Primary (grades IV-VII)	102	111	148
Secondary Department (four grades)	69	98	81
Teacher Training Dept. (four yr. course)	140	126	99
University Department (at present only) the first two years	7	18	19

In the Middle School, instruction is carried on, for the first time, entirely in English but two periods weekly are set aside for vernacular study. Mathematics and English are regarded as the most important studies but the aim is to strike a happy balance between literary and scientific subjects. At the same time, a wide place is found for arts, crafts,

^{40a} *Report on Achimota College, 1932*, p. 19.

⁴¹ *Report on Achimota College for 1933*, p. 7. The staff, for the College and School, numbered 74 in 1932.

music, physical training, and domestic science.

The Secondary Department prepares students for the Cambridge school certificate upon passage of which they can proceed to the university classes which are patterned after those given at the University of London. In addition to studying English, the secondary pupil continues his vernacular studies and what must seem surprising to many, Latin is taught to all. This has been included because of the insistence of Gold Coast opinion which evidently regards it as a fundamental hallmark of an educated man. Science is specially emphasized in the secondary grades. In the first year, elementary science and nature study are offered, in the second, elementary general science, agriculture, and hygiene, and in the third and fourth years the student may choose between agriculture, or botany, or physics with chemistry.⁴²

It must not be thought that Achimota's curriculum is "academic." As the main economic basis for the colony is agriculture, specifically cacao, this subject is given special attention. It is a compulsory subject for all secondary students, both girls and boys, and also for those enrolled in the Teacher Training Department. In the near future, as the college expands, it is planned to offer a degree course in

⁴² *Report on Achimota College, 1933*, p. 11.

tropical agriculture in the university department.⁴³

EMPHASIS UPON AGRICULTURE

Although the colony has succeeded in developing a high degree of prosperity based upon farming, the rich soil will not always retain its fertility and much remains to be done in disseminating information regarding fertilization, crop rotation, and the basic principles of agriculture.⁴⁴ With this in mind teachers in training are given a thorough training along these lines. The first year consists of a course in nature study. Familiar animals, birds, and insects are studied and a series of lectures are given in the biological laboratory. The second year finds the prospective teacher engaged in practical work on the college farm. One day weekly is devoted to actual work on the farm garden or in the field crops, in landscape gardening, or in the care and breeding of livestock. The third and final year is concerned with a study of the theory of agriculture and every student is given full charge of a small model plot. Some of the specific subjects taken in the last year of the agricultural course "include theoretical teaching on soils, growing and propagation of Gold Coast crops and decorative plants, the housing and feeding, general management, grading up and diseases of poultry and other livestock."⁴⁵

HOBBIES AND CRAFTS

A generous allotment of time is devoted to hand work and crafts in

formal classes and to the encouragement of hobbies as an extracurricular activity. Special periods two afternoons every week and on Saturday mornings are devoted to hobbies in printing, cobbling, drawing, carpentry, drama, music, and wood-carving, etc. The idea actuating this activity is that the young Achimotans must be taught "not only to live, but to live well," that education must train young people to utilize their leisure profitably and enjoyably, and that students who do not shine in the conventional activities of the classroom must be encouraged to find their *metier* elsewhere.⁴⁶ Once a year, an exhibition is held of the students' work in hobbies. An amazing diversity of drawings, clay models, beaten-copper and tinsplate work, bookbinding, raffia and basket work, scientific experiments, and schoolroom apparatus is proudly displayed by the student body and, for that matter, by many members of the staff.⁴⁷

Drama is given much attention in the extracurricular program at Achimota. Speaking of this fact, a committee of inspection which visited the college in 1932 commented:

We had ample evidence also of the part played by the Drama in the cultural life of the place. Scenes from village life, written and produced by one of the Houses, and scenes from the Old Testament, . . . assured us that in stagecraft, dignity of pose, sense of grouping, colour and rhythm, young Africa is making a serious contribution to the Drama, and is evolving what may play an important part in the evolution of the African village.⁴⁸

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴⁴ "School and Farm: An Achimota Experiment," *Oversea Education*, 2: 57, Ja 1931.

⁴⁵ "School and Farm: An Achimota Ex-

periment," *Oversea Education*, 2: 62, Ja 1931.

⁴⁶ *Achimota Committee Report*, p. 39.

⁴⁷ *Report on Achimota College, 1932*, p. 29.

All students are required to take a year course in general science and one in hygiene. Keeping in mind the emphasis assigned to agriculture, hobbies and crafts, hygiene and science, it is easily understood that Achimota's proud boast is that all its students leave with at least three essentials: a thorough background in agriculture, much information relating to tropical sanitation, and the ability to work efficiently and creatively with their hands.⁴⁹ Achimota's curriculum is based upon the policy of educational adaptation. This does not mean that there is a desire to limit instruction solely to technical or vocational subjects but, contrariwise, it is fully realized that training must be offered in both the means of livelihood and the art of living. The sincere purpose is to eliminate subjects which only have an "ornamental" value in Africa and substitute instead a reasonable synthesis of literary, scientific, and vocational studies which will promise both economic efficiency and personal happiness to Achimota's graduates.⁵⁰

The university section is, as yet, functioning in a very limited way, only nineteen students being enrolled in 1933. In this department students may enroll in the arts or pure science course and in addition there are professional offerings in pre-medical work and engineering.

PROFESSIONAL COURSES

Engineering is a four-year course and follows the B.Sc. degree curriculum of the University of London. Upon completion of his engineering training the student may find employment in the colonial department of public works or in the Gold Coast railways. The most important professional course now offered is that of teacher training. This was not part of the original plan for Achimota but it has now become one of its most important functions. The course prepares students for teaching service in the elementary schools and in the less advanced secondary grades. The curriculum covers a span of four years and follows, in the main, the outlines of the regular secondary department. No Latin is taken, however. There is less attention devoted to mathematics. Arts, crafts, music and agriculture are stressed, and the prospective teacher is urged to do considerable study on one African vernacular.

As part of its service to educational progress in the Colony, an annual Teacher's Refresher Course is given at the College, for two weeks, during the Christmas holidays. An average of forty teachers attend, lectures are given by members of the staff on such subjects as the "Functions of the Junior School," the "Teaching of Vernaculars," and "First Aid." Discussion groups are organized to exchange opinion on such topics as: "How the Teacher Can Best Continue His Own Education," and "The School as a Community Center." Special lectures are given on subjects relating to Achimota's educational program, na-

⁴⁸ *Achimota Committee Report*, p. 39-40.

⁴⁹ T. Walter Wallbank, "Colonial Education and Achimota College," *Crown Colonist*, 4: 309-11, J1 1934.

⁵⁰ "Achimota," *Round Table*, XVI, pp. 78-82: London, 1925; R. L. Buell, *The Native Problem in Africa*, I, New York, 1928: pp. 848-9; and R. C. Blumer, "A Curriculum For a West African School," *Education in a Changing Commonwealth*, Wyatt Rawson, Ed., pp. 98-101: London, 1931.

tionalism in India, and the economic basis of the cacao industry.⁵¹

THE HOUSE SYSTEM AT ACHIMOTA

In the British educational White Paper, issued in 1925, it was stated that:

The most effective means of training character . . . is the residential school in which the personal example and influence of the teachers and of the older pupils—entrusted with responsibility and disciplinary powers as monitors—can create a social life and tradition in which standards of judgment are formed and right attitudes acquired almost unconsciously through imbibing the spirit and atmosphere of the school.⁵²

At Achimota, in accordance with the above recommendation, the typical organization of the great English Public Schools has been adopted. All the students live in Houses each of which carries a name, such as Livingstone, Aggrey, Guggisberg, and Lugard, selected to suggest qualities of honor, service, and courage. Each House is divided into four dormitories and over each is placed a monitor. The four monitors are in turn responsible to the House prefect who reports to the two resident House masters—one of whom is an African. Questions of discipline are handled by the monitors and prefects, and only as a last resort are the masters called upon.⁵³

In every House, the students are held accountable for the cleaning, for the cultivation of their garden and lawn; and a weekly inspection is held every Saturday morning. As part of

the plan of delegating authority, a prefect supervises the cleaning of the classrooms and another presides over the dining hall.

Athletics play a large part in the life at Achimota. In addition to the setting-up exercises taken five mornings weekly, all boys are expected, three afternoons a week from four to six, to participate in some form of athletic game. From January to April, special attention is given to cricket; from April to June, association football; from August to October, running and field events; and from this date to the end of the year, hockey. There is little opportunity for inter-school athletic competition. Keen rivalry, however, has been built up between the Houses which participate, every year, in the House athletic championships. "Through physical training and sports," comments an *Achimota Report*, "we are also developing, not only healthy bodies but self-government, self-control, clean minds and interests, and community of understanding and comradeship between the various races and tribes."⁵⁴

CHRISTIAN IDEALS AND SOCIAL SERVICE

The establishment of the House and monitor system and the emphasis upon games is proof that education at Achimota is concerned just as much with the training of character and ideals of sportsmanship as with developing the mind. Another illustration of this fact is the opportunity given for service in the social service society, or *Legon* as it is called. "Its work is calculated to produce a lively

⁵¹ *Report on Achimota College for 1930 and Report on Achimota College for 1932*, pp. 33-4 and 28 respectively.

⁵² *Cmd. 2374, op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁵³ *Report on Achimota College for 1930*, p. 24.

⁵⁴ *Report on Achimota College for 1930*, p. 40.

sense of responsibility and a spirit that may in future years exercise a strong and beneficial influence on village life in the Gold Coast."⁵⁵ The society is limited to sixty students and twelve members of the staff supervise their work. The main field of operations is at Achimota, a native village two miles distant from the college, and at Anumle, the village where the college labor force is housed. In these villages dispensaries have been conducted, trees planted, latrines constructed, and a football club organized. The girls in the society interest themselves in infant welfare. A savings bank for the laborers has been started, aid is given to the boys' club in Accra and the members of *Legon* also conduct evening classes in arithmetic and oral English.⁵⁶

The final point which this article would like to make is that the Staff of the College firmly believe that: "The greatest importance must . . . be attached to religious training and moral instruction."⁵⁷ Christian teaching, therefore, colors the entire atmosphere of the institution and permeates all its activities. This is not to say that this attention to religion is of a denominational kind but rather it is the type that emphasizes universal truths and seeks to stimulate a humanitarian and altruistic attitude. The principal, speaking on the religious aspect of Achimota, declares:

Throughout the College religious teaching is voluntary. None the less the College is a religious institution, and the voluntary nature of its religious teaching arises from the

belief of the staff that such teaching can only be really effective when attractive and not compulsory, and that it can be made attractive.⁵⁸

The attention given to character training at Achimota is one of its outstanding characteristics and the following excerpt taken from a speech delivered by the Gold Coast Governor to the College graduates in December, 1932, illustrates how this objective is always kept in mind. The Governor, Sir Shenton Thomas, declared:

The good name of Achimota depends on the way in which you behave while here and, still more, on the way in which you behave after you have left. The first thing I ask of you, therefore, is that you will show the people of this country by your daily life that an Achimota boy is dependable, honourable and hardworking. . . . The second thing which I want you to remember is that education, the advantages, which you have received have not been given to you for yourselves alone. They have been given to you in order that you may pass them on to others who are less fortunate than you are . . . Achimota has been created in order that it may serve the whole population of the Gold Coast and, as it is impossible for everyone to come here, it is up to you to see that others learn what you have learnt, not merely in books but in the general conduct of life.⁵⁹

To recapitulate briefly, the heavy financial investment made at Achimota represents a commendable faith in the educability of the African people. In its constitution, the college represents the principle of "Indirect Rule" in education—that the natives must be given an effective voice in the management of their schools. The curriculum is based upon the philosophy of educational adaptation

⁵⁵ *Report on the Achimota Committee*, p. 33.

⁵⁶ *Report on Achimota College, 1931*, pp. 42-4.

⁵⁷ *Cmd. 2374, op. cit.*, 4.

⁵⁸ *Report on Achimota College, 1930*, p. 7.

⁵⁹ *Report on Achimota College, 1932*, p. 16.

which endeavors to relate all the college's activities to the needs of the Gold Coast. Special care is being taken not to alienate the African from the praiseworthy features in his own tribal heritage. The emphasis placed upon Gold Coast history, tribal drumming, native vernaculars, and indigenous music, demonstrate that the best in the West and East, for the Gold Coast people, is being united into a unique synthesis. And finally, permeating the whole atmosphere of the college is the belief that training in the fundamentals of Christianity and ideas of "playing the game" holds an equal place with developing the intellect.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ACHIMOTA

It has not been the purpose of this article to present only a laudatory picture of Achimota College and to sedulously avoid referring to its weaknesses. The truth of the matter is that the great bulk of the material concerning this institution is distinctly commendable in its tone. The most valuable and comprehensive study of Achimota extant is the *Report* of a committee appointed, in 1932, to inspect the college. This report is highly favorable and contains only a few minor points of criticism relating to financial retrenchment. The gist of their attitude is expressed in this statement:

"We are impressed by the general aims," write the Inspectors, "and we are still more impressed by the wisdom and thoroughness with which these aims are being carried out."⁶⁰

Undoubtedly some observers will be dubious regarding the emphasis upon religion; and to others, including the author, the inclusion of Latin for all secondary students is difficult to justify. The physical education of the girls has received too little attention and other critics have been opposed to the schedule of fees charged. The greatest criticism has come from members of the native intelligentsia in Africa who, when the idea of the college was first conceived, hailed it as a second Oxford; but soon became hostile and suspicious at the place, in the curriculum, accorded to such subjects as agriculture, hygiene, and crafts. It would be a mistake to regard Achimota as a "model institution." Much that is being done there is frankly regarded as tentative; and the future, certainly, will witness some modification and adjustment in its methods. What direction these will take is problematical. At the present time, however, Achimota is the best example of an institution which embodies in spirit and method what has been referred to as African Educational Trusteeship.

⁶⁰ *Achimota Committee Report*, p. 77.