

THE SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

SOME EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF EAST AFRICA

by

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THE S.A. INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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NOT TO BE REMOVED

JAN SMUTS HOUSE
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND
JOHANNESBURG

December, 1964

SOME EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS IN EAST AFRICA

The text of an address given to the Witwatersrand Branch of the South African Institute of International Affairs at Jan Smuts House, Johannesburg, by Professor R. Birley, Visiting Professor of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand on 22nd October, 1964.

I think I had better start by giving you some of my bona fides for speaking on the subject of Education in East Africa, or - as you may very well feel it should be put - my lack of them. I spent the whole month of January, early this year, in Kenya and Uganda, spending nearly all the time seeing schools, teachers and educational administrators. I then only saw something of one corner of Tanganyika and I visited Dar es Salaam. I also spent from the middle of August to the end of the first week of September in these three countries. The two visits added up in all to 54 days and that is very little time in which to get any idea of the educational structure and the educational problems of a country. On the other hand, I was fortunate that during these two visits I was given some remarkably good opportunities to see what was happening in the educational field. For the last five years before I came out to Africa at the beginning of this year I have spent a good deal of my time on an organisation in England known as Voluntary Service Overseas, one that sends boys and girls straight from school to work for a year in one of the developing countries before they go to the University or take up a career. My main purpose in visiting East Africa last January was to visit Volunteers sent out under this organisation in Kenya and Uganda and at Dar es Salaam. This meant that I was able to visit the schools where they were working, not only in the main centres of population, but in the country and, incidentally, I learnt a good deal from hearing of their experiences in the schools from these young people working in them. During last August and September I visited the three countries under the auspices of the British Council to attend educational courses and conferences. In Tanganyika I attended two courses for primary school-teachers, at Mbeya in the south of the country and Mwanza in the north, with about 90 teachers at each. They were studying, under tutors from English Teacher Training Colleges, the actual techniques of their profession. In Uganda I attended the annual conference of the Uganda Science Teachers' Association and then a very remarkable three day conference of the Uganda Education Society, at which were present some 300 teachers and educational

administrators, Africans and expatriates together; in Kenya a two-day conference of the Head Teachers of Schools. During the two visits I was very fortunate in being able to meet and hold discussions with most of those responsible for educational policy in Kenya and Uganda, the Ministers of Education of the two countries and their senior officials, (all but the Chief Education Officer in Uganda being Africans,) and with the Kabaka of Buganda and his Minister of Education; as well as with local educational administrators. But I should make it clear that I did not meet any such people in Tanganyika. My views on the education of this country reflect inevitably the opinions of the primary school-teachers at the two courses I attended. Of Tanganyika Education I have only the worm's eye view. I was fortunate in being able to stay at Makerere University College in Kampala and meet students as well as members of the staff, and to see a good deal of University College, Nairobi. But of the University College at Dar es Salaam I saw nothing but the buildings rising from the ground - but then, there was little more to see. Finally I should remind you that I am not intending to give a survey of Education in East Africa, but rather to consider some of the problems which seem to me to face these new countries in the educational field.

The most obvious fact about them is that they are now independent and have to make their own decisions. I came to the conclusion very quickly that probably the most important question which had been settled in their short history was the timing of the change from colonial rule to independence. Assuming that the British were not going to stay there for ever, there were really only two alternatives. Speaking in terms of Education, the British might have retained control long enough to have built up a satisfactory educational structure with the necessary number of teachers and trained administrators before they left. Quite inevitably hostility would have mounted during this period and when the British had eventually given up control, they would have had very little, if any, influence on their education after they became independent. One other alternative was to abandon control when the structure was incomplete and the African personnel lacking, but at a time when the relations between the Africans and the British were such that it would be quite possible for the British to continue to help and influence the development of their education. I must say that it is my very strong impression that, except in Zanzibar, - which I did not visit, but of which I heard a great deal, - the timing

of the change has been remarkably successful. I think most people would agree that to influence a country's education is the most powerful way to influence it. In Uganda there are 430 graduate teachers in the Secondary Schools, (and in addition 40 non-graduates). Of these 430 graduates 145 are Ugandans, (30 Africans and 115 Asians). No less than 250 are trained British teachers. The balance is made up of short-term volunteers, British and Americans, who have come out under organisations such as the one to which I have referred. (I should explain that this organisation, Voluntary Service Overseas, now sends out about 400 graduates as well as the school-leavers, to nearly 60 countries.)

We have only to consider what our feelings would be if even a quarter of this number of expatriate teachers came from communist countries. There is not one. The only influence these states have on the education of East Africa is through the students who go to Universities in Moscow or Peking or to those in some satellite countries. Unfortunately I was not able to meet any African who had returned from one of these, but I heard a good deal about them. It seems clear to me that the influence of the communist countries exerted on East Africa in this way is of no great importance. Fortunately no doubt for us, neither the Russians nor the Chinese seem to have much idea how to treat their African students. Both in Moscow and Peking they are very largely segregated from the Russian or Chinese students. On one occasion the Chief Education Officer in Kenya, an African, said to me that he was rather anxious about one result of the very considerable number of young men and women from his country who completed their education abroad. They came back, he said, with a great variety of ideas about education and it was going to be very difficult to create a synthesis out of them. I said that I could well see that it would be difficult to find a synthesis out of Communist and Western Educational ideas. He replied that he had not been thinking of this at all. That was not the problem. It was a question of how to reach agreement between those who came back from Britain and America.

I should not regard communist infiltration as one of the problems in East African education. Whether it will become so one day, after the British teachers have left, which will not be for a good many years, I cannot tell, any more than anyone else. It will only do so, if East Africa, for political reasons, turns to the communist world.

The over-riding problem facing education in the East African countries is a financial and economic one. They spend about a quarter of their income from taxation on education. (It is, of course, easier for a state to do this if it has an army of only about 6,000 men and no navy or air force.) In Uganda this only produces about £6,000,000 a year. In addition a high proportion of the taxes raised locally is spent on education, varying from 24% in the district of Bugisu to 50% in Kigezi. On the face of it they are attempting the impossible. They are trying to create an educational structure similar to that found in highly industrialized states without the national income to support it, which only industrialization could provide. On the face of it they are bound to fail, or rather to take so long over it that it will seem to them failure. Other states have had this experience. France accepted the principle of free education for all in schools provided by the state at the time of the French Revolution. She put more money and effort into the provision of state education in schools than any other country in Europe during the nineteenth century, but it was not until 1895, a hundred years after the Revolution, that the policy laid down then was finally carried out in full. Can one expect a state like Uganda, where 80% of the population are engaged on the land, or Tanganyika, where almost all the Africans are subsistence farmers, with a few engaged in cash-crop production and not more than one in twenty in paid employment, to build an educational system, which in other countries had only been made possible by a fair degree of industrialization ?

I do not believe that the situation is quite as hopeless as I have suggested. It is not realistic simply to compare a country in the second half of the twentieth century with one in apparently the same stage of development in the early years of the nineteenth. After all, the East African countries can draw on the experience of the fully developed ones. Also, while those who believed in a general system of education in Europe a century and a half ago had to prove their case and overcome indifference and often antagonism, those who believe in it in East Africa have no opposition to face at all. The need for education is accepted enthusiastically by all, including incidentally the children. Most important, they can get help, both financially and in personal services, from abroad. No one from another country ever suggested helping France when she was beginning to create a national educational system. For that matter, there was no one who could have done so. Doubtless the East African States will not be able to move as quickly as they would like. But on the whole,

especially I felt in Uganda, they are well aware of these difficulties. The steps taken in Uganda to plan for the future seemed to me very sensible. Immediately after the country had gained independence, in December 1962, Dr. Zake, the Minister of Education, set up a Committee to consider the future educational development of the country. He had the courage to appoint an Englishman as Chairman. The other members consisted of ten Uganda Africans and five educationalists from Nigeria, India, UNESCO, the United States and the United Kingdom. He gave them until the following May to produce a report and, showing none of the leisureliness which in my experience generally marks the work of Government Commissions, they finished their report on time. This report seems to me a quite admirable one, giving a very clear statement of the educational needs of the country and making a number of practical recommendations. Dr. Zake has accepted it and means to work through the proposals in the order of priority given, within the limits laid down for him by the amount of money available. Incidentally, Kenya has followed suit, but the report of their commission has not yet been issued. I never heard anyone in East Africa say anything as ridiculous as, for example, a remark made recently by President Soekarno. Indonesia, it is true, has a very large population, about 100,000,000, which is more than four times as large as that of any African State, except the United Arab Republic, which has 27,000,000, and Nigeria with 55,000,000. The President has claimed that his country should aim at attaining a student population in its Universities of one million. That is about nine times the present number in the Universities of England and Wales.

Allied to this problem and in some ways the result of it, is the problem created by the shortage of teachers. Even if they had the money to finance now the kind of educational development they hope for, these states could not possibly produce the number of teachers required. I have already referred to the situation with regard to Secondary School teachers in Uganda. It is not very different in the other two countries. When account is taken of the need to expand Secondary Education, of which I have something to say in due course, it looks as though the three countries will need at least 1,500 graduate teachers. It is true that when a country is starting on the process of development its teachers, along with those in all other professions, are likely to be very young. This means that the wastage through retirement at the end of service is abnormally low. But against this must be put the fact that the remuneration of teachers is a long way below that of most

skilled posts. It is reckoned therefore, that the wastage will probably be about 10% or 150 teachers a year. It does not look as though East Africa itself can produce much more than 50 a year for some years. Everything is going to depend on the retention and recruitment of expatriate teachers.

It is easy enough to speak of a problem like this; it is another thing to see what it can really mean. Last January I visited a Secondary School in Uganda at Mukono, on the road between Kampala and Jinja, known as Bishop Tucker's College. I wanted to meet two volunteers, straight from school, who had gone there for a year. The school has 150 boys and is of some standing. It usually sends a few boys every year to Makerere University College. I may say that the Headmaster, an African, did not seem to me very impressive. His real interests seemed to lie in his duties as a member of the Buganda Parliament at Entebbe. At any rate he did no teaching himself. I found that these two boys, aged 18, for two months had had to do all the teaching in the school. All the other masters, like the Boojum, had softly and suddenly vanished away, to take up better paid posts in the Administration. By the time I had arrived some relief had been provided, though very much in dribblets, so that one of the boys, to whom the Headmaster had deputed the work of compiling the Time-table, had already made out a new one six times. They told me how they had organised the work when they were the only two teachers, and it seemed to me that they had done it very competently. I assured them that they might at least feel confident that the period in their lives when they worked hardest was already behind them. The Minister of Education told me that without the help of those two boys it would certainly have been necessary to close the school.

On the other hand, although one has the impression that Secondary Education in East Africa is constantly very near the edge of the precipice, the numbers involved are not very great and I believe that given help - substantial help - for the next ten years or so, it should be possible for the three countries to solve the problem. President Nyerere is reputed once to have exclaimed, "My kingdom for twenty good stenographers". But, at least, he did not have to demand two hundred. Probably twenty would make all the difference.

When one turns to the Primary Schools, the problem is a rather different one. Naturally one is not in the realm of small numbers any longer. In 1960 (I have no more recent figures) there were 12,140 teachers in the Primary Schools of Kenya. The number is no doubt appreciably higher now. In

Uganda in 1963 there were over 13,000 teachers in aided primary schools and 6,000 in unaided schools. (One of the characteristics of Uganda education is the extraordinary number of small local schools which are not under government control. Some 20% of the children are taught in them. Most of them are in very inadequate buildings and the teachers are of a low quality.) Certainly there is a shortage of teachers. The Minister of Education in the Government of Buganda told me that it was no uncommon experience for him to have to face a deputation from a village, which told him that they had obtained a suitable building and had saved up the money for the fees, to ask if they could now have a school. He could only answer that it was impossible as he could not provide a teacher. On the whole, though, I believe that the shortage of primary school-teachers is not as great as that of those needed in the secondary schools. The reason is that, while the pay of a secondary school teacher is a good deal lower than that of someone in the administrative services who is of the same academic standard, that of the primary school teacher is probably twice what he could earn in any other calling. On the other hand, little or nothing can be done to meet the shortage of primary school teachers by the employment of expatriates.

The real difficulty about primary school teachers is not so much the number as the quality. In Kenya in 1960 between a quarter and a third of the teachers in primary schools have had no training at all. The Report on Education in Uganda says of the teachers in primary and junior schools that "in general, their academic and professional standards are low". (Incidentally, this report is an extremely forthright document, as these few quotations, taken almost at random, will show. "Promising but isolated projects, involving team work under expert guidance, have been brought to our notice.... But we have seen far too little evidence of combined planning and effective co-operation between the authorities concerned either at the centre or at local level." "There were many schools at Sebei that were much worse than we had seen in Karamoja. Some school buildings were a danger to the lives of the pupils who were studying there." "When we ask how far these desirable objects are being pursued in our schools we come away with a somewhat dismal answer." "Thousands of parents think it of little consequence that their children receive only the one evening meal each day, or that regular feeding on a good diet has any connection with good health or education." "It's quite futile for optimists to rely on the help of other nations to solve the problems of Uganda. This help is now steadily diminishing, Education is a costly necessity, not an inexpensive luxury, and if the people of

Uganda want education for their children it is they who will have to work and pay for it." This last quotation is from the concluding paragraph of the Report. There is no sign here of the feckless optimism, the easy belief that independence will solve all problems in itself, of which the people of East Africa are so often accused.)

The question of the supply and, above all, of the standard of teachers brings us to what is perhaps the most critical issue facing the East African countries, and I suspect most other African states as well. It is essentially a matter of priorities, whether the main stress over the next five or ten years should be placed on the provision of primary or secondary education. I have learnt more from the short chapter of two pages in the Uganda Report on "Priorities in Planning" than from anything else I have read on African education. I should like to quote one paragraph from it. I believe that what it says would be of value for all African states. I know that the point of view expressed is shared by those Africans who are responsible for the planning of education in Kenya. After the extracts I have read to you, I think you will not be surprised to find that the Report is not afraid to face the issue.

"The problem for those who plan educational policy, then, is this: When over half the nation is illiterate and the people rightly clamour for education, when teachers are in short supply and inadequately trained, when government and industry demand trained recruits, when unemployment is widespread and increasing, when the nation is poor - what policy should the government pursue? If the government decide first to educate the neglected 50% it would fail to find teachers to teach them; if secondary education is neglected, the potential supply of teachers would diminish. Moreover, schools can be built in months, but it takes many years to make a teacher. Here is a real dilemma, for behind all these considerations remains the stark fact that the country cannot at present afford to make all desirable improvements in a general advance on all fronts." The Commission in the next paragraph says that "we wish first to emphasise that improvements in teacher training and in High School education should have first and equal priority in future planning", and later they refer to these "two interlocked priorities, namely teacher education and High School education".

There is another reason why the expansion of secondary education seems to be so important. At the Uganda Education Society's Conference I was fortunate indeed to hear one of the most interesting and stimulating addresses on an educational

subject which I have ever listened to. The subject was "The Scientific and Technological needs of a Developing Country" and the speaker was Mr. Waliggo, the Deputy-Chief Engineer of the Uganda Electricity Board. In his address he pointed out that Uganda was successfully producing a few really highly qualified men for the administration and for industry, (he might have taken himself as a good example,) and there were plenty of people who could do the unskilled work at the bottom, but that there was an almost complete lack of recruits for what he called the middle range in administration and industry. And the Uganda Report emphasises the point that "the raising of High School enrolment" is necessary not only to satisfy the requirements for entrants to universities, to teacher training colleges and to agricultural and technical institutes", but also to middle grade posts in the public services, commerce and industry."

Something may be learnt, perhaps, from a comparison between the educational policies pursued in the French colonies in Africa and in the Belgian Congo. Compared with British policy they went to two extremes. As is well known, the French policy was based on these principles, the need for the integration of the African into French culture, the insistence on academic standards parallel with those of metropolitan France, and therefore a recognition of the importance of secondary education. The basis of Belgian policy was well described in a speech by the Belgian Minister for the Colonies in 1954. It is quite clear that he had in mind the contrast between the Belgian and the French systems. "Civilization cannot be limited to a few individuals or even to a thousand, for its purpose is to raise the whole people to a higher level. I do not think that the method which some countries have applied has had very favourable results. We have seen that those natives who have been shown Europe and given a very advanced education did not always return to their homelands in a spirit favourable to civilization and to the mother country in particular. They have come back as blasés, estranged from their own people or turned against those who opened the door to civilization for them. In our view, civilization founded on a solid basis in their own environment offers greater guarantees."

Views like these will be very familiar in this country. But there are some comments which may be made. There is no doubt that the insistence by the Belgians on the importance of stressing the need for primary education was, as far as it went, very successful. The literacy rate in the Belgian Congo at the time it became independent was one of the highest in Africa,

the proportion of children attending schools higher than in any other state south of the Sahara. But a comparison in the field of secondary education between what are now Congo (Leopoldville) and Congo (Brazzaville) is illuminating. Congo (Brazzaville) has about one-eighteenth of the population of its much larger neighbour, but when it became independent it had one-third as many children in secondary schools. It is true that there were absurd exaggerations in the French system. It is literally true that at one time African children in Senegal were being taught that "our ancestors, the Gauls, had blue eyes and red hair". It must be admitted that a good many Africans from the French colonies who went to France for higher education stayed there and did not return, but since these colonies became independent they have returned in large numbers. But when the Belgian Congo became independent in June, 1960, not one Congolese African had graduated in medicine, not one had been educated as a lawyer and the total number of Congolese university graduates was 31. It can hardly be said that the history of the Congo since 1960 has been a good advertisement for the policy of giving primary education such a very high priority or for the general educational views expressed in the Belgian Minister's address.

One more piece of evidence may be given for the need at the present time for the East African states to give first priority to secondary education. It is true that the greatest educational demand is for literacy. But it cannot be assumed that all children or all parents will be satisfied with this. The fulfilment of the demand for primary education itself creates a demand for secondary. The provision of primary education in Kenya was considerably in advance of that in the other two African states. The non-European population of Kenya is about $7\frac{1}{4}$ millions, of Tanganyika rather under $9\frac{1}{2}$ million, of Uganda $6\frac{1}{2}$ millions. But in 1961 there were 700,000 children in the primary schools in Kenya, 525,000 in Tanganyika and only 400,000 - or not much over half the number - in Uganda. It is not very surprising, perhaps, that Kenya now finds itself faced with some 150,000 candidates for the 30,000 available places in its secondary schools in 1965. In Uganda during the ten years preceding independence the number of children in secondary schools had been doubled, but the number in primary schools had increased eight times.

But although the case for giving priority to secondary education in the immediate future may seem to be overwhelming, it should be realised that there is the strongest political and social pressure for giving it to the provision of primary schools with the aim of abolishing illiteracy. In fact, I believe that if the decision in favour of secondary education

is taken and adhered to in the East African states it will be a sign of considerable political firmness and maturity.

To turn to more specifically educational problems, the one that is most important and which arouses the greatest interest, is undoubtedly the question of the language to be used as the medium of instruction. It is of great significance that there is no support at all for the idea that this should be the "mother-tongue" or the tribal language. To discuss this question satisfactorily it would be necessary to consider the nature of the nationalism which has grown up in Africa and I have no time for that. One of the most interesting discussions I have had in my life was one that I had one evening with two students at Makerere College. It was largely taken up with a consideration of two questions which I put to them. The first, arising out of some talk about history syllabuses in Africa today, is one that I should certainly have to refer to if I was dealing with what seem to me to be the underlying problems of society in modern Africa, but clearly I cannot embark on that now. It was, "What does the French Revolution mean to Africa?", and the very emphatic answer I received was "Everything". The second question was, "What does Kenya nationalism really amount to?" I think anyone would have agreed at the end of our discussion that it certainly does mean something. One of the results of this is that there is no movement in any of the three East African states comparable, for example, to that in favour of Erse in Eire. The only comparable language is Swahili. This has the advantage over English of being an African language, but even in Tanganyika it is not very adequate as a lingua franca, as it is not much used in some parts of the country. In Tanganyika the first task in the primary schools is to teach the children to read in Swahili. It remains the language of instruction throughout the primary school course of four years and at the beginning of the "upper primary school" course, covering the next four years. It is very commonly kept up as a subject of study in the secondary school up to the School Certificate Examination, taken after another four years. Already in the primary school the child is being taught English, and during the upper primary school course and throughout the secondary school it is the medium of instruction. The remarkable cultural confusion caused by this arrangement may be illustrated from the fact that President Nyerere has felt it desirable himself to translate Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" into Swahili since he became the ruler of his country. I found at the two Teachers' Refresher Courses which I attended in Kenya a passionate desire on the part of both primary and upper-primary school teachers to improve their English.

In Uganda children are taught in the vernacular for their first two years in the primary schools, except in those situated in towns, where this is felt to be impossible as the classes are sure to include children from different tribes. In them the medium of instruction is English from the start. The usual practice in other schools has been to start teaching the children English from the beginning of the third year in the primary schools and to use it as a medium of instruction from the seventh year. This is now being pushed back to the beginning of the fifth or the fourth year. There was some pressure from politicians when Uganda became independent to adopt Swahili as the common language of the country and for it to take the place of English. It was defeated by the overwhelming opposition of the teachers.

But the most interesting developments in this subject are to be found in Kenya. There the decision to make English the main medium of instruction was inevitable, though some politicians hanker after the use of Swahili, referring to it as the "common language", which it certainly is not, and to English as "the language of education". In a remarkable short space of time it has come to be felt that if English is to be the medium of instruction in the upper forms of primary schools and throughout the secondary schools, it is really essential to use it from the very beginning of the primary school course. The work that is now being done to train teachers to do this must be one of the most interesting educational developments in Africa. It depends largely on the experimental work being carried out at an institution in Nairobi, modestly styled the Special Centre. The driving force behind the experiment is essentially an educational, rather than a political one. It is the conviction that one of the greatest handicaps to the African throughout the whole part of the continent where English is the language of educated men and women, is that they have been taught it essentially as a written rather than as a spoken language.

While I was in Kenya last September some thirty young volunteers arrived at Nairobi to start their year's work under Voluntary Service Overseas. I was present at a meeting held on their first evening in the country when they were welcomed and given some advice by some Africans with positions in Education or the Churches. One of the Africans later told them not to be afraid to make the first approaches when they met Africans casually and suggested that they might use the Swahili greeting, Jambo! At this another African leapt to his feet and exclaimed, "Please, do not! If you do he will think

that you believe he is uneducated. Say Hullo or How do you do". It was this kind of thing which made me appreciate the advice given me a year before by the late High Commissioner for Tanganyika in London to send as many young Volunteers as possible to teach English in the countries in Africa which had been French colonies, for, he said, before very long the real division in Africa is going to be between the English-speaking and the French-speaking countries.

One day last January I visited a refugee camp for Watutsi refugees near the Uganda-Ruanda frontier, which was in the sole charge of a young Volunteer aged 19. There were no other Englishmen within thirty miles. When I saw him there were over 20,000 refugees in the camp, but he told me that before the massacres in Ruanda at the end of last December he had had only some 5,000 to look after. This, he said, had been comparatively easy. He had spent his time organizing the building of an immense anti-hippo ditch, five miles long and ten feet across to prevent the hippos from the Kagera river getting at the plots of ground, which the refugees were tilling, and in teaching English to the Watutsi boys. I asked him how on earth he had managed to learn their language so quickly, but he explained that it was quite unnecessary, as they nearly all could speak French. He bitterly regretted having abandoned that language after passing in it in the Ordinary Level examination two years ago. When I went into the little hut where he slept, I found only one book, a copy of Hugo's "Conversational French". It seemed to me to have an uncomfortable significance.

For anyone interested in education, a visit to East Africa is a fascinating experience. He will meet questions about the content and technique of education being discussed wherever he goes. He will also learn, if he is not aware of it already, that education cannot do everything. The Africans are, perhaps, rather too ready to think that it can. I shall only take one example. I found it very generally held, (more, I must admit, among the English than among Africans) that as the very great majority of the inhabitants of the countries worked on the land, the first need was to introduce more teaching into the schools, even the primary schools, about agriculture and new agricultural techniques. But more thoughtful people pointed out to me that it was little use doing this when nearly all those who worked on the land were engaged in a primitive and relatively unproductive subsistence-agriculture. To alter this would need changes in the system of land tenure, in marketing arrangements, and often in tribal customs, as well

as agricultural research at a high level. Until these were brought about, it was inevitable that educated young men would want to leave the land. To effect these changes what was needed was not so much the teaching of agriculture but the raising of the whole standard of education. It was very interesting to find that in Kenya, where changes of this kind were carried a good way before the country became independent and thousands of successful small family farms have been established, farming has become an occupation which educated young men are beginning to enter in quite large numbers, and the need for greatly increased training in agriculture is well appreciated.

If I were engaged in giving a survey of African Education and not merely in raising some problems connected with it, I should have to spend much time on the three University Colleges, of Makerere at Kampala, Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, now federated to form the University of East Africa. They have their problems certainly, but not, I felt, comparable in complexity or urgency with those facing the Ministries of Education in dealing with education at school. This is no doubt partly because, compared with most other educational institutions in East Africa, the two former, Makerere and the University College, Nairobi, have long histories and are firmly established. I find it difficult to convey the impression made by someone who has been visiting schools in the more distant parts of Uganda when he enters Makerere, with its dignified buildings, its fine chapel, its admirable library and its halls of residence, to dine in one of which is so like doing so in a College at Oxford or Cambridge that one might well feel that one was in a different continent. A visit to the University College, Nairobi, though it is a good deal smaller and younger and only developed out of a Technical College some four years ago, gives much the same impression.

I found it a common subject of discussion whether it was really beneficial to East African education as a whole to have, for its higher education, institutions with quite so high a standard. It was this question which Mr. Matibe, the leading civil servant in the Kenya Ministry of Education, had in mind when he told me of the conflict in their views on education of young Africans who returned from England and America. The standard of entry to the three University Colleges, I may add, is appreciably higher than that of the "white" universities of South Africa. They are, I suppose, firmly rooted in the English University tradition. On one point I felt certain. One felt the influence of Makerere, and to a lesser extent that

of the University College, Nairobi, (that of the latter is sure to grow), wherever one went in the field of education in East Africa. I have no doubt at all that when the history of East Africa comes to be written in the future it will be appreciated that one of the most important influences in its development towards independence was the way - one might almost say the ruthless way - in which Makerere forced up the educational standards of the three countries. Perhaps it is because I am an Englishman that I must say that I should deeply regret to see it decline now into something more like an American 'junior college'.

One must admit, however, that their high standard of entry is one of the main reasons why East Africa seems, even in the world today, to be a desperately examination-ridden country. I remember one morning last January standing in a biology laboratory in the University College, Nairobi, watching first year students at work. I do not claim to be a biologist, but one cannot be a Headmaster for nearly thirty years without learning a little about the subject. I was with a young lecturer of the department, an Englishman, and I told him that I thought they were going about their work in a most competent way. He agreed and said that he thought they came to the College remarkably well trained. "But", he added, "if I were to take one of them to the window and point out to him outside the commonest bird, he would probably not be able to say what it was". Well, it may be agreed, perhaps, that Africans as a whole are not very knowledgeable on the names of birds. But nor do they know much, without being taught, about dissecting fish. He went on to point out that they were well trained within the limits of the Advanced Level Certificate Examination syllabus, which does not refer to the naming - or the study - of common birds. What worried him - and I think rightly - was that as a result they had had no experience at all of the adventures of independent inquiry, however simple.

Africa is not the only country in the grip of examinations. It is very difficult to see what can be done about it. What is needed - and not only in Africa - are new techniques of selection which will not dispense with examinations, but put them in their proper place. But how can one use anything but examinations when faced with the problem of choosing 30,000 children out of 150,000 for places in secondary schools?

Nothing impressed me more in East Africa than the quite extraordinary influence of a very small number of African secondary schools of high standing. More than half the cabinet

and all the most senior civil servants of departments but two in Kenya were educated at the same school, the Alliance Boys' High School at Kikuyu. A very senior civil servant, an African, said to a friend of mine not long ago that if they were going to put up a statue to anyone in Kenya it should be to Mr. Carey Francis, who retired a short time ago from being Headmaster of the school. It is difficult to exaggerate what one might call the cohesive force of that school in a society so rent by tribal divisions. On one occasion the Minister of Education in Kenya made to me what I felt to be a very embarrassing remark, "I am afraid, Dr. Birley, that we have no schools in Kenya like your school, Eton." "But, Mr. Otiende", I replied, "what about the Alliance Boys' High School? There is a higher proportion of men from that school in the Kenya cabinet than of Old Etonians in the British one". Any Headmaster would have known what would come then, as the unmistakable look of the Old Boy came into his face. "Ah, Dr. Birley, I was there myself". I believe that the proportion in the Uganda cabinet who came from the High School at Budo is even higher. I doubt whether there is any quite comparable phenomenon in Tanganyika, though the Tabura Boys' School has had, I believe, a great influence. And, looking to the future, I rather think that a few quite excellent Girls' Schools, like the Jayaza Girls' High School in Uganda and the Alliance Girls' High School in Kenya are quite as important. There are now eleven women graduates in Uganda: eight were at the Jayaza School. The only woman member of the Uganda National Assembly was there. Of the 140 School Certificate Candidates at the school in 1961, no less than 37 are now at Makerere and six at the University College, Nairobi. People in South Africa, whose picture of Uganda is taken almost entirely from Mrs. Noni Javabu's book, "Drawn in Colour", might well consider what these figures may mean for the future of the country.

It is difficult to give any coherent picture of the impressions of some fifty days. There is, though, some coherence in the general pattern of educational development in the three countries; one finds the same problems under discussion, the same difficulties loom ahead. There is also the same hope. I was having a long discussion with a very intelligent primary school teacher in Tanganyika about the difficulties which actually faced him in his school, the lack of books and equipment, the wastage of children leaving before the end of even the primary school course and so on. He did not seem to me to be particularly interested in politics, though I should be surprised if he were not a member of TANU. Suddenly he broke in with the words, "But we are a happy people,

Dr. Birley, we are a happy people. That is because we are at the start of everything and we have to do it ourselves." One finds this kind of elation very often. It obviously has its dangers. It is not the best frame of mind in which to face the disappointments which every planner encounters. It is only too likely to mean that they will move in too much of a hurry, expanding their secondary education, for instance, before they have properly qualified teachers. But it does not mean that they think that independence solves all their problems automatically. I did not find this kind of absurdly facile optimism among teachers and educational administrators. I came away with the impression that it is this feeling of elation which may provide the drive and energy which will enable them to build for their three countries a satisfactory long-term educational structure.