



Education is the Keystone of Progress, mix the materials badly, omit the most important, and the arch will collapse ; omit character-training from education and progress will stop. BRIGADIER-GENERAL SIR GORDON GUGGISBERG, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., late R.E. 1924.

The Book of Education of the Gold Coast has yet to be written ; this is a mere booklet describing the present situation with regard to education and attempting to paint the picture of the future.

My only excuse for writing it is that some of my African friends have asked me to do so ; they say — with justice — that I have spoken much on the subject in public, but that the spoken word does not reach the many literate Africans who are scattered through the " far, far bush " of a country that is greater in area than England, Scotland and Wales.

My friends assure me that, if Government's plans for education were better known, there would be better co-operation with the people. As this is essential to the future well-being of the country, I accept their assurance.

Hence this booklet. It is disjointed and scrappy. It cannot be complete because, as I shall presently show, we are at the parting of the ways, at a point in our narrow old main road where a wide new thoroughfare is being surveyed and staked out across the flat " Plains of Elementary Education " towards the " Hill of Higher Education " — Achimota.

But anyway, it may show what Government is doing while that thoroughfare is building and may indicate the direction of all the little roads that are being planned to connect up our educational system.

When the whole system is planned and made known, I think that a number of keen young Africans in the Government service who have had no chance of obtaining a higher education will find that they have not been forgotten. There will be opportunities of entering Achimota for those who have given real promise.

It goes without saying that anything I write in this booklet applies to the Gold Coast and nowhere else; my remarks on the " African " apply to the " Gold Coast African."

The races of Africa are in such varying stages of development that some of them have by no means reached the point on the Road of Progress at which a higher education is either within their intellectual grasp or would be good for their future.

In the Gold Coast itself — the Colony, Ashanti and the Northern Territories ' — conditions vary so greatly as to necessitate caution in the application of the principles advocated in this booklet.

The moment for reviewing the educational situation is a proper one. We have just laid the foundation stone of Achimota College, an institution that is destined to be the mainspring of all educational works in this country.

While the walls of the College are slowly rising from the ground a staff of picked men will gradually be gathered together ; a definite scheme will be drawn up for progressive education from the infant school to the university or the workshop ; the needs of the country will be carefully considered; and on all these things will be based the future curriculum of Achimota.

I confess that, as I stood on the platform on the barren hill-top of Achimota on the 24th March, 1924, and looked round the great horse-shoe of spectators, I was deeply impressed by the importance of the occasion that had brought us together.

I had just passed through two long lines of Boy Scouts, their faces and their bearing showing that " B.P.'s " (Baden Powell) great system of character- training was already taking effect ; just inspected the Guard of Honour of the Gold Coast Regiment, hardy fighting men from the far North whose breasts carried evidence of their readiness to defend their country against aggression, whose education for the moment is limited to that of discipline and self-sacrifice, but for whom greater benefits lie hidden in the distant future.

To my right in the horse-shoe were those who had inherited for many generations the qualities conferred on them by the education of their forbears, the number of these Europeans, the distance from which they had come, and the nature of the occasion, testifying that they at all events were not of those who disbelieved in the education of the African.

Scattered thickly among them were the European-clad Africans — barristers, doctors, teachers, traders — the pioneers of the progress of their race, their faces ample proof of their satisfaction that, at long last, the dream they had dreamed was approaching realisation.

To the left were many Chiefs in their robes and insignia of State, surrounded by their Councillors and sword bearers, their attitude leaving no doubt in one's mind but that they shared with their countrymen the appreciation of what was coming.

I was assisted in laying the foundation-stone by African professional men : we shared in the manual labour. All had received their higher education in Europe : only two professions could supply properly qualified members — engineering, for example, was symbolised by a boy mechanic. Scathing comment on the inadequacy of our existing system of education.

The stone that we laid marks the end of the old system; the new will begin with the opening of the college on the 1st January, 1927. May the blessing given by the Bishop of Accra on that block of concrete spread, like a creeper from its roots, over the whole of Achimota and help it in turn to lay the foundation of the New Era in the Gold Coast.

F G. GUGGISBERG. S.S." Aba , "At Sea" 3rd April 1924.

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