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THE S I S  
for  
The Degree of  
M A S T E R of E D U C A T I O N  
on  
" T H E S I E R R A L E O N E P A T O I S ",  
A study of its Growth  
and Structure,  
with Special Reference to  
The Teaching of English  
in  
Sierra Leone.

Presented by,  
Harry A. Ebun Sawyerr M.A. D.Th.P.T.  
Fourah Bay College,  
Sierra Leone,  
February, 1940.

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## Phonetic Symbols.

- ' stands before stressed syllable
- . indicates length of the preceding vowel.

### A. For English Words

a as in father  
 .. .. hat  
 e .. .. bed  
 ei .. .. hate  
 - indistinct sound  
 i as in fill  
 ou .. .. so  
 au .. .. about  
 .. .. done  
 .. .. cut  
 .. .. sing  
 .. .. shin  
 .. .. think  
 u .. .. put  
 iu .. .. lute  
 t .. .. church

### B. For words in the Patois and other African Languages.

a as in father  
 .. .. hat  
 .. .. bed  
 e a pure open sound in late.  
 - indistinct vowel.  
 i as in fill  
 o a pure open sound in to  
 au as in about  
 .. .. done  
 .. .. sing  
 .. .. thick  
 .. .. shin  
 t an affricative very like eight  
 u as in full- an open sound  
 j represents y  
 t as in church

Square brackets indicate that the word is written in phonetic characters.

= which has become, or altered into.

= which is derived from.

The symbols for the African Languages are based on Westermann and Ward's book Practical Phonetics for students of African Languages.

## Chapter 1.

### The Problem stated .

Nearly fifteen years ago, a teacher in one of our small Church Schools, caned one of her pupils very heavily . The boy ran home to his mother and complained about his mal-treatment distorting the facts at the same time . The mother became enraged and went to the school to demand from the teacher an apology for her action . A fracas ensued during which the woman made a remark from which the teacher was able to judge that the boy had misrepresented the facts to her mother . In a kind of half surprise, the teacher said " I thought as much ." The old lady misconstrued the import of the remark . She flared up all at once . She thought she had been insulted . and in retort said "[Ju kɔs mi tɔt-as-mɔtʃ ? Ju fada tɔt-as-mɔtʃ ; ju mɔda tɔt-as-mɔtʃ]." i.e. "You insult me 'thought-as-much' ? Your father is a 'thought-as-much; your mother is a thought-as-much' .

The whole school burst into a violent fit of laughter and the old lady turned away in shame ; she had displayed a gross ignorance of the meaning of the phrase " I thought as much ." This story has now become one of the stock yarns of Freetown .

But a still more famous yarn is that of the Sunday School teacher who was explaining the story of Dives and Lazarus to his class . When he got to the passage " Moreover the dogs .....etc.," he told his class that the reference

was to a big dog called "Moreover"- from the analogy that dogs were usually named "Rover" . What a misconception ! Till today, when many people read that passage, they often think of the 'Big Dog' who played the good Samaritan to Lazarus .

Another story is told of a school boy who was once reading a book and came across the word R O G U E ; with an air of confidence, he loudly pronounced it [rɔdzu], which is the Patois word for 'plump', 'in the pink of health'. He had obviously confused the form of the spelling with a sound with which he was already familiar, and so such a serious mistake was almost inevitable . But who is to blame ?

As may have been observed, in all the three cases mentioned above, the readers or hearers misconstrued simple English words and phrases, chiefly because they could not understand the underlying ideas involved in their use . In each case the error was due to a confusion between correct English and the everyday language spoken by the people in question

We all speak a language different from English in idioms and usage, but which contains words and phrases which were originally English and therefore give many people the impression that we are speaking a Patois, a "jargon" or "Broken-English, which is an undignified form of speech .

The existence of these English words has produced similarities which are mainly responsible for the difficulties

which hamper our ability to apprehend ideas correctly .  
 These similarities have led to the practice found in schools  
 of transliterating Patois ideas and idioms into English ,  
 thereby producing a kind of English which is neither correct  
 nor Pidgin . As a result, work at school is seriously  
 hampered ; Oral lessons are almost a failure in the Primary  
 Schools and written work is of a low standard everywhere .  
 Understanding of the language of English authors is very  
 negligible and often many pupils fail to solve a problem in  
 Mathematics, just because they cannot fully appreciate the  
 salient points of the question set .

In a speech made by the Director of Education,  
 W.E.Nicholson Esq., on April 2, 1936 at a Prize-giving function  
 of the Methodist Boys' High School, he emphasised that there  
 was a difference of two years between the time taken by the  
 average English boy to attain to School Certificate Standard,  
 and that taken by Sierra Leone boys to get to the same standard.  
 He also lamented the poverty of the English he had observed  
 in boys and girls of Freetown . (1)

Although the Director did not offer any explanation for  
 this delay of two years in the progress of the Sierra Leone  
 Pupil, I am fully convinced that the handicap is caused by  
 the difficulty experienced in the correct use of the English  
 Language .

From my own experience, there is considerable evidence to justify this statement .

When we passed the Cambridge School Certificate Examination, the only boy who was under sixteen years of age, was one of the best pupils of our class at English Composition . He had an easy style which was at the same time very graphic . Others like myself were over seventeen and although we often had more wisdom than he, yet we suffered considerably from lack of words to do ourselves due credit .

This language difficulty is not peculiar to Freetown although it is more probably very much more acute here than in other parts of the West Coast .

When Achimota College was recently inspected in 1938, the inspectors were very particular to study the problem of English teaching there . Their comment on this question reads thus :

"In English the credit mark has been obtained by relatively few, though the results of 1937, show a considerable improvement . It must not be forgotten that when they take the examination ( School Certificate) most of the candidates are about three years older than those who take it in English schools, ..... " (2)

In a later paragraph, the inspectors remarking on the English of the College say" .. ....we are so much impressed by the vital importance of English as a necessary condition of progress in all subjects that we venture to suggest that even at



the cost of sacrifice of time from other subjects,.....a scheme might be tried by which new entrants to the Middle School should be tested as regards their ability to speak and understand English, and that those who need it should be given extra help and time for it ." (3)

If the English language is so difficult for those who have a native language quite distinct from English, it is obvious that it would be more difficult for us Sierra Leone Creoles who speak a Patois ( so called ) which is similar to English in many respects .

Our Salvation lies therefore in a careful examination of the existing problem, so as to discover the best means for improving the present standard of English in our schools . To attain this, it seems to me that a close study of the Patois is most essential, so that we could map out the points of difference between it and English . After such a study, we could start to think out the best possible methods by which we can solve the problem .

It is such a study of the nature of the Sierra Leone Patois, that is undertaken in the subsequent pages of this thesis . The problem of teaching English is now becoming more and more acute in the mind of all serious-minded teachers and unless we begin to think it out now, there will be trouble later on .

This work is presented in all good faith to all who appreciate the problem stated above as a first solution of the needs of our people .

## Chapter 2.

## A short history of the growth of the Patois

The History of the Sierra Leone Patois begins strictly with the first settlement of Freetown in 1787 by freed negro slaves . Prior to this date there had been earlier settlements of English and Portuguese merchants .

The Royal Africa Company traded in bees wax, cow hides, elephants' teeth, gold and negro slaves from 1672 to 1782 . There was also a large number of Portuguese Settlers as far back as 1666, when Sieur Villault visited Sierra Leone . ( 1 ) These groups of traders had some definite influence on the languages of the natives among whom they lived, and very likely developed Trade English and Portuguese (2) .

It is however very difficult to trace the linguistic influence of those settlements as there is little extant evidence available .

In 1765, however, Mr Granville Sharp having become very interested in the growing opposition to African slavery, rescued one Jonathan Strong from his slave master David Lisle , who had brought him over to England from Barbadoes . This was the beginning of a gigantic task to free all slaves who set their feet on English soil .

In 1768, he helped Hylas another African slave to prosecute a Shipmaster Newton by name for kidnapping his wife and sending her to the West Indies .

Again in 1770, he rescued yet another African slave Lewis, "who

had been dragged into a boat under the cover of darkness to be later taken out to the West Indies . A few others followed whom Sharp successfully rescued . By this time, Sharp felt he was under some serious disadvantage as a layman and so undertook to study the legal position of slaves who came to England . He was so strongly convinced of the right of freedom for all in British Territory that the work involved caused him no difficulty . Just when he was nearing completion of the task he had set himself to, another case occurred .

One James Somerset, an African slave deserted his master Charles Stewart whilst in England . Stewart attempted a forcible reclaim of his slave by kidnapping him . Sharp sponsored Somerset's case for freedom . The question arose as to "whether a slave by coming to England became free ." Sharp arranged for three different assizes to sit on this case . In January 1772, in the following February and again in May of the same year . At the third session, Lord Mansfield made his famous dictum "That as soon as ever any slave set his foot upon English territory, he became free . " (3)

Meanwhile, the war of American Independence had broken out . Many slaves took the opportunity to fight against their masters . British propaganda had offered freedom and lands to all who would serve under the crown .

By 1778, many slaves who had served in the war were granted their freedom and later settled in Nova Scotia, whilst all others who arrived in England after Somerset's case became free men .

But this liberty did not however give the Africans all the happiness their supporters had wished . The climate of Nova Scotia was much too cold for them . Winters were really trying . Meanwhile there had grown in London a large colony of Africans, now free, who were finding life very intolerable indeed . They had no regular jobs and therefore could not meet the heavy demands of the cost of living . They soon became dependent upon Parish support .

Public sympathy was soon aroused and the Black Poor Society was formed under the leadership of Hanaway to relieve their misery . This society later thought it advisable that these destitute blacks should be sent back to their homes in Africa . On the advice of Smesthman who had lived along the West African Coast for many years, Sierra Leone was selected as the centre for the repatriation of the Africans living in London . (4)

Granville Sharp voluntarily undertook to arrange for the suggested repatriation .

On February 22, 1787, the first band of settlers set sail from London under the command of James Reid .

One account has it that there were 411 settlers of whom sixty were loose European women . But the report of the Sierra Leone Company for 1795, states that four hundred and sixty people sailed of whom eighty four died on the way . The first account, however, goes on to say that by September 1787, only two hundred and seventy six settlers remained and by March the following year, there were only one hundred and thirty survivors. Those who survived the climate were attacked and dispersed by the Temnes in 1790 . (5)

Meanwhile it was felt that the existing settlement was not ideal. " In 1788, Reid wrote to Sharp suggesting that there was an urgent need for some traders to be sent out to the Colony . In that letter he said :

" If we had an agent or two out here to carry on some sort of business in regard of trade, so that we could rely a little sometimes on them for a small assistance until our crops were fit to dispose of and pay them . It would be of infinite service to all the poor settlers as provisions are scarce to be got ." (6)

Sharp had also felt that the settlement needed some "closer local control", and thought of forming a company of Merchants to take over the responsibility . "The first meeting of the Company was held on Wednesday 19th February 1790, when Sharp was made one of the directors and Henry Thornton was elected Chairman."

In 1790 the new Company sent out Alexander Falconbridge to recover the scattered settlers who had been raided in the previous year by the Temnes . Falconbridge found many of them in Bunce Island and, after collecting them, settled them in what was later termed Granville Town, beyond Nicol's Brook ( towards the present Kissy Village ) . He returned to England in 1791, after completing this task .(8)

On August 2, 1791, the English Parliament granted the Sierra Leone Company government support . The factors were "to have no concern in the slave trade, but to discourage it as much as possible . They were to endeavour to establish a new species of commerce and to promote cultivation in its neighbourhood by free labour ."(9)

The object of the Company was stated in a body of Rules and Instructions to the officers of the new settlement in the following terms :

" The object for which the Sierra Leone Company is instituted is the establishment of a trade with Africa on the true Principles of Commerce, carrying out British Manufactures and other articles of Traffick and bringing back African Produce in Exchange ".

" A fort, church and schools are to be built ." (10)

Meanwhile the Nova Scotians were beginning to complain of the hardships of their new settlement . The climate was much colder than anything they had experienced .

The promised grants of lands had not been made . There was general discontent . They therefore sent a representative later known as King Peters of Sierra Leone, to state their case in England . His arrival in 1791, led the Committee for the abolition of the slave trade to offer them an opportunity of returning to Africa .

Large grants of land were promised by the Sierra Leone Company viz: Twenty acres for a man; ten for his wife and five for every child .

Their civil rights were also to be on the same bases as that of Europeans . This was ratified in the Company's Constitution where we read in Art 53 :

" ..... you will be disposed on all occasions to conduct yourselves towards black and white men not only with the same impartial justice in your private capacities but with the same condescension and familiarity in all the intimacies of private life . " (11)

John Clarkson a member of the Committee for the abolition of slavery went over with Peters to invite the Nova Scotians to make the change .

By February 1792, 1,196 Nova Scotians had agreed to come over to live in Sierra Leone . They embarked in sixteen ships under the command of Lieutenant John Clarkson R.N., who later became the first Governor of Sierra Leone under the Sierra Leone Company .

They were accompanied by about 100 Europeans of whom 40 belonged to the Sierra Leone Company as servants or artificers 10 were settlers, 16 soldiers and between 30 and 40 women and children . Of the 1,196 Africans, only 1,131 arrived in Sierra Leone . These arrived in August when the climate is most depressing especially for elderly people . In that first season, one tenth of the Africans and half of the Europeans died . In the second year only 40 whites were surviving . (12)

The commercial aspect of the Institution seemed to have failed but the settlement was a blessing to the West Coast of Africa . Mr Thomas Clarkson writing about the effects of the enterprise says :

" It is pleasing, however to reflect that though the object of the institution, as far as mercantile profit was concerned, thus failed, the other objects belonging to it were promoted . Schools, places of worship agriculture and the habits of civilised life, were established . Sierra Leone therefore now presents itself as the medium of civilization for Africa . And, in this latter point of view, it is worth all the treasure which has been lost in supporting it : for the slave trade, which was the great obstacle to this civilisation, being now happily concluded, there is a metropolis, consisting of some hundreds of persons,



from which may issue the seeds of reformation to this injured continent; and which, when sown may be expected to grow into fruit without interruption . New schools may be transplanted from thence into the interior . Teachers and travellers on discovery, may be sent from thence in various directions who may return to it occasionally as to their homes . The natives too, able now to travel in safety, may resort to it from various parts . They may see the improvements which are going on from time to time . They may send their children to it for education . And thus it may become the medium of a great intercourse between England and Africa, to the benefit of each other ."(13)

From the linguistic point of view, these two groups of settlers had been in contact with Englishmen in the West Indian Islands for many years . Many of them were carried into slavery, whilst many others had been born in slavery . It is quite reasonable to suppose that they knew some English . Their names suggest this - Somerset, Strong, Hylas, Lewis .

These Nova Scotians were Christians mainly Methodists and had a fair knowledge of the Authorised Version of the Bible . They were described as "sober men and women who observe the Sabbath ." (14)

Some of them were keen Christians who readily tried to teach the natives of Sierra Leone the truths of

Christianity . One Nova Scotian preacher taught the labourers of the Sierra Leone Company- natives of the colony, on Sundays and another was serving both as schoolmaster and missionary above the Rokelle . (15)

But the language spoken by these people especially among the masses was not correct English . It was a Pidgin which they had picked up in the Plantations as may be seen from a close study of any of the Negro Spirituals :

Peter go ring dem bells

Peter go ring dem bells .

Here are also three letters written to Governor Clarkson circa 1791 by Nova Scotians .

(a) Received on August 30, 1791 .

" To the right Honourable John Clarkson Esq.,  
Captain General and Commander in Chief in and  
over the Free Colony of Sierra Leone and its depen-  
denceys and vice Admeral of the same etc., etc.,

Whereas your Honours Memorilist Andrew Moors wife being brought to bed this morning and delivered of a daughter and now stands in need of som nourishment for her and the child Your Excellencys Memorialest begeth that out your humanity and geantle goodness, you will take it in your honours consederation to give orders that she and the child have some nourishment such as oatmeal molassis or shugger a little wine and spirits and some nut mig and your Memorialest as in duty bound shall ever pray.

N.B. - and one lb candles for light ."

(b)

" Honoured Sir,

This is a petition from the poor woman who was so much hackled and cut by Mrs Pace, whose husband are on board the Amy Brig -- I sent a letter home to Mr Sharpe but has had no answer concerning it , but as Sir you

are our dependance I think it my duty to acquaint you of the treatment after leaving her own husband and intice my own from me . I may say my life are in danger with her whilst she still continue with him I have seek for satisfaction, but never met with none Sir, I lay it in your Honor's hand to see justice done one who is so much injured which is past the laws of God, therefore I beg justice done me .

From Sir, Yours  
Hannah Richardson . "

(c)

Freetown  
November 18th 1792.

"To our most excellent Governor John Clarkson .

Sir, if it please you ecellent honnah as to consider your ecellent promise is to make every man happy . Sir, we want to know wither we is to pay as much for half rassion as for full rassion, plaes you ecellent promise Sir the request of the Company please Your ecellent honnah our most ecellent Governor John Clarkson the people is all waiting for answer as soon as possible plaes you honnah Sir the mens would be willing to give one days work in the week for half rassion Sir please your to think that this put the Captain of the Company in a great peacie of uneasiness .

John Culbert for if it pleas your ecellent honnah as to let the Captain know what your honnah mean to do the Mary Barnit Company." (16)

Meanwhile the Sierra Leone Company established schools and taught the settlers various trades . In 1793 there were three hundred children in schools as the Company's report for 1795 states. This was in accordance with the policy outlined by the Directors in their constitution . In 1798, the population of Freetown was about 1,200 ; half of these were farmers many were mechanics . Others were fishermen and shopkeepers and about 100 to 200 aborigines came down daily to barter African produce for British Manufactured goods . (17)

Article 79 of the Constitution reads :

".....it is our purpose to provide as far as possible for the

general instruction of the Colony by appointing schoolmasters to be sent from home, and we wish you to encourage and assist natives in general and particularly those in your service or under your influence to learn to read and write . (18)

In September 1800, the Maroons arrived and immediately helped the Government to quell a joint insurrection of the Nova Scotians and the Tennes . These Maroons belonged to a different type of people . They belonged to the Gold Coast and had been in slavery in the West Indies . They however rebelled and took refuge in the mountainous strongholds of Jamaica. They were tall and fair and claimed European descent.

Rev Henry Seddall a C.M.S.Missionary, writing of the Maroons in 1874 says " They had their origin in Jamaica from an intermixture of several white and black races, where during the early connection of the Spaniards with that island, runaway slaves not infrequently secured their liberty in the impenetrable forests . The Maroon is by descent European American and African, and he combines in his person the vices with very few of the virtues of these races.

.....

Five hundred and fifty Maroons landed at Sierra Leone in 1800 and they have ever since been increasing in number and acquiring considerable wealth." (19)

In spite of their stay in the West Indies they were not good at English. Extant forms of Maroon speech suggest that they spoke a jargon. When they wish to say goodbye after a visit a woman usually addresses another thus: "[Sissa mi lɛga ju]." i.e. 'Sister I must leave you'. [lɛga] < [lɛgo] 'let go'; hence = leave. Another form of address is "[sisa ginnɛt]" = 'Sister goodnight'.

It seems correct therefore to judge that the early settlers all learnt English imperfectly and could only speak a pidgin. Hence Trevelyan describes them as "...an aggregation of Negroes from Jamaica, London and Nova Scotia who possessed no language except an acquired jargon" (20)

Meanwhile the servants of the Sierra Leone Company were doing their best for the settlers. The Directors had warned them "to remember .... that the introduction of Christianity and civilisation is a point .... THEY enjoin THEIR ( capitals mine ) council to have in view." (21) All the servants of the Company were therefore required to instruct and assist those who were received in the colony. Many of the settlers were therefore given an opportunity of learning correct English. In later years these formed the more educated class of the country, their sons often going to England to study Medicine and Law.

Other groups of people were now becoming interested in the new establishment .

C.M.S. was established in 1799, and their first activities

were directed towards the uplifting of the people of Sierra Leone . Before this time, a few missionaries had volunteered on their own. One Rev Fraser came in 1787 with the Nova Scotians; in 1791, two Church of England clergy had come out although they returned after two years on grounds of ill health. In 1794 and 1795, Ministers of the Church of Scotland were appointed chaplains of the settlement; two Baptist ministers also came in 1795.

At the same time the Missionary Society of London and Edinburgh and Glasgow sent two clergymen to work in the Foulah Country . But as there was war in that district the men came instead to Bullem then to Rio Pongas (now in French Guinea ) and later to the Bananas Islands in Sierra Leone . (22)

In 1804 however, a more definite attempt was made to supply the new colony with regular teachers and clergy. In that year C.M.S. led the way by sending out a number of men and women who were at first of German origin and later of English stock .

The Methodists followed when in 1811, their first Missionary came out in the person of George Warren. (23)

Let us now take a brief survey of the early C.M.S. Missionaries in order to determine their influence on the people they served .

" The Committee (of C.M.S.) had indulged the hope that, in consequence of their earnest applications to a very numerous body of clergymen in almost every part of the Kingdom ( United )

Several persons in whose piety, zeal and prudence the Committee might confide would ere this have offered themselves to labour among the heathen. Their hope was however disappointed;" after lamenting "the evident want of that holy zeal which animated the apostles and primitive Christians", the Committee went on to announce that ....they were looking to the Continent for men and expressed a hope that the new Berlin Seminary would presently supply them .

Within a month of this report being presented, two of the Berlin students Melchior Renner of the Duchy of Wurtemberg and Peter Hartwig a Prussian had been accepted by correspondence. This was in 1802. In November of that same year, the men arrived in England .....

When the two men appeared before the Committee..... there was no means of conversing with them."

After a few days an interpreter bridged the gulf; the two men were accepted as missionaries for West Africa and were sent to Clapham to learn a little English before going out. On January 31, 1804 these men left for Sierra Leone, after a Valedictory Service at the New London Tavern in Cheapside . But so little was the English they had picked up that they "being unable to speak with sufficient fluency after fifteen months' training, responded by presenting a written letter to the Committee. (24)

In Berlin these men *had* received two hours' lectures

per week in English. (25)

Thus our earliest German Missionaries came to Sierra Leone with the barest minimum of English to be spoken in a very broken way.

A long celebrated line of Germans followed these two pioneers. Nylander, Butscher and Prasse came next; first to Rio Pongas and Bullom in 1906, and later to Freetown. They also received instruction in English for nine months before setting out. Of these first five men, Nylander served for 19 years, Renner 17, Butscher 11, all of them dying at their posts.

The standard of their English was very poor indeed on the whole as may be judged further from the Instructions of the Society to Nylander and his colleagues.

"We instructed your brethren Renner and Hartwig, to transmit their journals at least twice a year; and it was understood that they were to write them in English. We have found, however, that some inconvenience arises from expecting journals to be written only on a language with which the writer is not familiar. You will therefore each of you keep a daily account of your proceedings in your native tongue which you will close on the last day of every month, and sign it with your names; and, that you may at the same time be induced to improve



yourselves in English, you will draw up a quarterly abstract in our tongue, at Christmas, Lady-day, Midsummer and Michaelmas, of the most important contents of such private journals; such abstract to be signed by all the members of the Mission present.

.....  
 The directions here given to you with respect to your Journals in German, and the abstract of them in English the brethren Renner and Hartwig will consider as addressed to them equally with yourselves."(26)

Wenzel and Barneth, the next candidates received two years' training in England, first at Bledlow under Mr Dawes, formerly Governor of Sierra Leone and later under Rev T.Scott of Aston-Sandford, both of Buckinghamshire. These came out to Sierra Leone in 1809 .

Wilhelm and Klein followed in 1811, after four years' training under Mr Dawes and Rev T.Scott. Wilhelm served for 23 years and Wenzel for 9. The arrangement for the training of men by Mr Dawes was the outcome of the experience of the first missionaries of the Society .

In 1807, C.M.S. thought it advisable to have a Missionary Seminary in England and arranged with Mr Dawes formerly Governor of Sierra Leone and resident at Bledlow, Buckinghamshire, to help with their new students .

It was expected that Mr Dawes' acquaintance with Africa would be invaluable for the work. Some neighbouring clergymen also offered to help, chief of whom was Rev T.Scott of Ashton Sandford.

In 1815, two more men arrived who had been trained by Rev Scott; Sperbacken who went to Bullom and Schulze who died after two months. Meanwhile two catechists had arrived with apparently no training: They were Meissner a smith by trade and Meyer a ropemaker. These served for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  years and 6 months respectively .

In 1811, Rev George Warren a Cornishman came out as the first missionary of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, with a lay assistant, Rayner by name. These were succeeded by Healy and Hirst in 1814; and in 1815, the Rev William Davies a Welshman arrived in the Colony. This same year, 1815, saw the arrival of the first English C.M.S.Missionary in the person of Robert Hughes a native of London. And so from that year, there was a regular mixture of German and English workers C.M.S. or otherwise, in the country.

In 1816, W.A.B.Johnson to be forever immortalized in Sierra Leone as a great Christian leader, arrived together with Daring and Jost . All three Germans. These three men seemed to have had no training either in Germany or in England, but Jost was a trained Schoolmaster.

Meanwhile the Central School of the National Society

was founded in England in 1816 and from that time until the establishment of Islington College in 1825, it became a training centre for missionaries.

The course seems to have extended from two to four years.

From 1817 to 1822 no Germans arrived in the Colony but ten Englishmen came out seven of whom were C.M.S. During that period, the source of recruiting German Missionaries for C.M.S. work changed and henceforward all Germans were first trained at the Basle Seminary before coming over to England. Four such men came in 1822, after undergoing further training at the Central School of the National Society. In 1826, the first German student of Islington College came out. Hansel had received a full course of training at the Basle Seminary before going up to Islington where spent four years.

In 1832, two more arrived and between 1835 and 1837 fourteen men came from Germany many of whom spent over three years each in Basle Seminary and Islington College.

Meanwhile English missionaries continued to offer themselves.

Out of 63 men who came out between 1804 and 1875, 52 belonged to the south of England, 6 to the North - 5 from Yorkshire and 1 from Cumberland; 4 belonged to Ireland and 1 to Scotland.

Of the men who came from the south, 17 came from London, 5 from Devon 1 each from Worcestershire, Wiltshire, Sussex, Somerset, and Buckinghamshire; 3 each from Hampshire

Gloucestershire, and Essex, 2 from Oxford .

There were also eleven ladies engaged between 1820 and 1885 of whom 6 belonged to the South. ( 3 from London, 2 from Gloucestershire, 1 from Hampshire ) 3 from Yorkshire and 1 each from Scotland and Ireland. 27) See also Appendix 2 Judging from C.M.S. activities therefore, the major influence on the Colony of Sierra Leone, seemed to have come from Germany and the South of England . The home towns of the English Volunteers belong to the South of England as also the centres of training for their German colleagues .

Of the Methodist ministers, and lay workers who served in Sierra Leone, 62 workers on the whole came out between 1811 and 1875.

In this period further changes took place in the settlement.

The population nearly doubled itself.

The efforts of the Committee for the abolition of the Slave Trade were now beginning to yield valuable fruit. A large body of sympathisers from over the whole country had been won over to the cause, in and out of Parliament.

Men like Wilberforce, Pitt and Fox were advocating most enthusiastically the cause of the Negro which Thomas Clarkson had been pleading. The Sierra Leone Company had been granted a Royal Charter in 1799. (29)

Public opinion was growing stronger and stronger against the Slave Trade. Twenty years' experience had shown the wonderful blessings of the new settlement in Sierra Leone.

Government was also beginning to see that England was to prohibit slave dealing altogether.

At the same time, the enterprise had become too big for the Sierra Leone Company. The project had grown beyond the dimensions manageable by a commercial association. The Company was deep in debt, and the cost of defences were high. A government enquiry was instituted into the affairs of the Company. The Report of that enquiry recommended that the Government should take control of the settlement.

A bill was accordingly introduced into Parliament which received the Royal assent on August 8, 1807 and came into force on January 1, 1808, granting the settlement the status of a Crown Colony. Governor Ludlam already Governor under

the Sierra Leone Company became the first Governor of the new Crown Colony. (30)

Meanwhile in May 1807, a bill for the abolition of the slave trade was passed by Parliament providing that slavery was an abomination and that any slave who set foot on British soil anywhere in the world was free. Following this "on the 16th of March, 1808, by an Order in Council, a Vice-Admiralty Court was constituted in Sierra Leone for the trial and adjudication of all captured slavers brought in as Prizes by His Majesty's Cruisers." (31)

As a result the population of Sierra Leone increased by leaps and bounds, Africans from all parts of the West Coast being collected here as Prizes. By July 1814, 5,925 negro slaves who had been recaptured from the slavers were landed in Sierra Leone. The Census of the population in 1811 gives the following returns:

Europeans	28	28
Nova Scotians		982
Maroons		807
Liberated Africans		100 (32)

Major Crooks however states that there were in April 1811, 396 captured negroes provided for by the Government. (33)

It is certainly obvious that the population was more than doubled by July 1814, when it stood at 5,925.

Between 1814 and 1824, 12,765 liberated slaves were landed in Freetown and the population of the Colony became most unwieldy .

Rev Henry Seddall gives a somewhat different account of the situation. He states that in 1811, the population of the Colony was 4,500 of whom more than half were liberated slaves. In 1817, there were 5,310 negroes in the Colony. Of these only 284 had been there, the rest having been liberated and landed in the Colony. (34)

These conflicting accounts however help us to understand the nature of the problem that grew out of the new liberation movement.

Rev Samuel Walker confirms Seddall's figures for 1811 with a slight difference in the later figures. He states that a census in 1820 declared a population of 12,521, and in 1833, of 29, 764. (35)

At the early stages of this development, the Government absorbed some of the liberated slaves into the militia- the West Indian Regiment and the African Corps of the Royal Navy. The following extract from a letter of Mr Fergusson, head of the Medical Department is very instructive:

"There is at Sierra Leone a very fine regiment of Colonial Militia, more than eight tenths of which are liberated Africans." ( 36 )

Many others were apprenticed to the earlier Settlers and the rest were appointed to villages, often according to their tribes. Thus, for instance, the village Kissy was settled by the "barbarous natives of the Kissi district"- lying between

Falaba and the source of the Niger. Kanike ( the modern Cline Town ) was also settled by the Kanike people of Hausa extraction. Wilberforce also in 1811 was first inhabited by the Congos who moved later in 1817 to a new settlement near the sea, now known as Congo Town . ( 37)

In consequence of this influx of people, several villages far and near to Freetown were founded.

Opinions vary on the total number of tribes that were so brought but there is no doubt that at least one hundred differently speaking tribes were usually settled in the various " King Yards" of the villages.

The older generation of our people still talk of "Seventeen Nations" when referring to the early courts. The bulk of these liberated Africans however belonged to the Yorubas, chiefly Egbas, Jebus, Jeshas, Ondos, and Ibos. Of these Yorubas, the Egbas were more numerous than the other groups because they were usually enslaved by Fulah slave-traders. (38)

At the receipt of the news of the establishment of Abeokuta, many Egbas returned home. Mr E.O.Moore dates this return home of the Egbas as happening around 1838. (39)

The settlement of these liberated slaves introduced a new chapter in the history of the Sierra Leone Patois. The Liberated slaves knew no English, and in many cases were not able to communicate their thoughts to one another.

Some of them were apprenticed to the Nova Scotians and Maroons but not long afterwards, the practice was condemned and they



were provided with lands. (40)

Rev Henry Seddall says " When large numbers of negroes were brought together in the year 1813, they were found to be in a most deplorable condition. They consisted of persons taken from almost all the tribes in that part of the Continent. The efforts of those who had charge of them, under the vigilant and anxious inspection of the Governor, had greatly improved the condition of those who had resided there for some time. Every measure that it was possible to adopt in order to accomplish this end had been adopted by the Governor

.....  
 A church had been erected in anticipation of the regular establishment of Christian worship among the natives. The Governor felt that a powerful stimulus was required to rouse the negroes to diligence; and that an energetic principle was wanted which might harmonize their jarring feeling and unite them as one body. That stimulus was found in the sense of duty and of gratitude which Christianity inspires; and that uniting principle in the healing spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." (41)

In 1816, Mr Bickersteth, Secretary of C.M.S. visited the Colony and found about eleven hundred liberated negroes under the care of the Colonial Authorities."

There was now a new problem . The liberated slaves were to be educated. But how ? Mr Bickersteth discussed

plans with the Government and soon C.M.S. Missionaries were appointed to the early villages. These men established schools and taught the men various arts, and the women hand-work and sewing. Government made use of these missionaries in civil affairs by appointing them civil superintendents as well. Leicester had already been founded in 1809, Wilberforce in 1811, Regent in 1812, Kiskey in 1812. At the express desire of the Governor, W.A.B. Johnson and his wife were appointed to Regent in June 1816 to take charge of twenty-two tribes numbering over 1,300.

By the advice sent home by the Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, an agreement was reached by which the whole Peninsula was then divided into Parishes, and C.M.S. undertook to provide Clergy and Schoolmasters, if Government would provide the necessary financial aid." (42)

At the same time a Christian Institution, a Central Boarding School for 200 boys and girls was established. This was later removed to Regent in 1819. A school for liberated slaves was established at Kiskey also for boys and girls.

In 1827, the Christian Institution now at Regent was in bad repairs and a new site was contemplated. Fourah Bay College was thus established as a training centre for the African Clergy of the C.M.S. connection.

By 1836, most of the Peninsula had been settled. Waterloo, Allen Town, Hastings, Wellington, Bathurst, Lumley, Goderich, York

Kent, Dublin, and Ricketts had been established; and nearly 1,200 to 1,500 children were attending schools. Farms were attached to these schools whilst many of the children learnt masonry and carpentry; the girls taking up spinning, washing and needlework. (43)

In 1845, a school for liberated African girls was established first at Regent and later removed to Charlotte. This later became the Annie Walsh Memorial School in 1864, when it was removed to Freetown.

Several other problems arose at the same time in connection with the adults. First the men had to be helped to earn their living, and so had to be provided with facilities for doing so. They were therefore taught trades or thrown on the land. Secondly the women had to be provided for. This introduced further difficulties. At first the Government provided rations for them, but this proved difficult and so the authorities encouraged marriages between the Settlers in order to lighten their responsibility. Sibthorpe states that when Governor Major-General Sir Neil Campbell revised the expenditure of the Government with special reference to the newly-arrived Africans, it was arranged that "Unmarried women were granted rations for three months, by which time they were expected to be married and supported by their husbands. If the unmarried men were slow or neglected to marry, they were to be transferred to another village, where

espousals were immediate; by this means the women were struck off rations. (44)

Then again except for a few villages, the population was most heterogeneous. The Ibos, Pawpaws ( from Togoland ) Egbas, Jeshas and Jebus were all thrown most promiscuously one upon the other. At Regent alone twenty-two different tribes were settled. Communication was impossible. An early account of life among the settlers is very interesting.

"The were greatly prejudiced against one another, and in a state of continual hostility with no common medium of intercourse but a little broken English. " ( 45 )

Many of the earliest marriages were certainly between members of different tribes as many of us can claim two or three tribal ancestries e.g. Yoruba , Pawpaw and Ibo.

Adult classes were therefore provided for teaching the Scriptures, English and the Mechanical Arts. We are told that within five years of W.A.B. Johnson's appointment to Regent, he had taught the people of that village many trades, and about 600 of them were capable of earning decent wages. These classes as may well be imagined consisted of men and women of different nationalities who were being taught by others of quite foreign nationalities. English the official language of the settlement was the medium of instruction of the classes though to both teachers and scholars it was a foreign language.

In spite of the deficiencies in the speech of the Germans, they were still teachers and of course of a higher culture. As is natural the Africans tried to imitate the culture of their masters, and made strenuous efforts to speak their language also. Native languages accordingly fell to the background as they were of little use. There was need for a lingua-franca. Masters wished to get ideas across to their Pupils and ordinary household conversations were also seriously held up. English became the most satisfactory medium and a broken English gradually developed. Among W.A.B. Johnson's records for Wednesday December 3, 1817, of a meeting at which a missionary society was formed, we find the following extract:

"After this, not less than seventeen communicants came forward and addressed the meeting. Some spoke much to the purpose, though in broken English. It would have greatly animated our Christian friends in England. One of them exhorted to prayer, that it might please God to send some of them to their country people, to carry the good news of a Saviour to them. He then came forward and said, 'I will give half-a-crown. I know Sir; I will give it every month.' Several followed his example. A motion was then made, that those who desired to be members were to give not less than two-pence a month. One hundred and seven had their names put down as subscribers. After which, several of the schoolboys and girls came forward, and gave their pence and halfpence.

I asked one boy who requested me to take a penny, where he got money? He replied ' Me got three coppers, (three halfpence ) long time. Me beg you Massa, take two and me keep one'. I told him he had better keep his coppers which he had kept so long. But he refused, and urged me to take the two coppers....." (46)

This Pidgin (Broken English ) was fostered principally by the Germans who as has been already mentioned spoke broken English themselves. These were the men primarily responsible for the education of the liberated Africans and therefore their heavy brogue was easily imitated.

Besides even the Nova Scotians and Maroons to whom many of the liberated Africans had been apprenticed did not hold up a higher standard of English to their wards. The result was a more or less uniform and universal broken English among all members of the community. In time this became a kind of lingua franca for the whole colony with as wide a usage as possible. This explains why many people still living call the Sierra Leone Patois Africo-German. Sibthorpe corroborates this title when in discussing the manners and customs of the Maroons and Nova Scotians, he says "It is their English we have for general communication, falsely called "Africo-German or Lingua Franca; some call it Aku-English." (47)

The titles Aku-English and Africo-German suggest the various factors responsible for the language whilst the term Lingua Franca

describes the function of the language thus developed. Of the German contributions to the language we have the use of the hard [d], in places where the softer [ð="th" was usual in English. e.g. [brɔ̃da] < brother; [fada] < father; [mɔ̃da] < mother; [bɔ̃da] < bother.

But this predominating German influence was only one of many factors.

The liberated slaves seemed not to have attained fluency in the use of their newly acquired language. English was too much a hard knot for them to break; and so many of them began to feel the need of their mother tongue. At a meeting held in Regent sometime in 1818, one of the negroes addressing the house said inter alia:

" We must believe that Jesus shed his blood for sinners and pray for our country -people. If we cannot speak English, we must pray in our country-tongue. Jesus can hear, for he knows our thoughts." ( 48 )

Thus a new element gradually entered the language which up to now had been a pure pidgin and its character began to alter accordingly.

Men and women continued to find their mother tongue the easiest medium for expressing their deepest thoughts and they tended to use it more and more freely.

And so we enter a new phase of the Sierra Leone Patois .

As may be gathered, this strong reaction in many people's minds against the inarticulation produced by their poverty of English became a potent force. Native words thus gradually came into their speech and with it the native African idioms. Native thought forms were also applied to the new ideas learnt and further mutations were produced. The relations of the settlers and the aborigines of Sierra Leone gradually improved, and all sections of the community as it were pooled their resources and later developed a mixture of languages such as Dr Edward Blyden was recently quoted to have described as

" A mixture of mixtures, all is mixture. "

Sir Samuel Lewis also described it once as "a unique type of Modern Languages." ( 49 )

Thus the liberated slaves gradually interpolated their speech with native words and later applied their native thought-forms to the words in the new language they were learning.

This confluence of forces - the German brogue, the African words and African thought-forms, led to the gradual development of an Africanised mode of speaking which diverged further and further away from the original Pidgin English. It is difficult to give full details of the changes which took place. In course of time however, a language was produced which can be safely regarded as African in which the Yoruba strain appears dominant.



In 1858 Bishop Bowen in his first letter home from Sierra Leone gives us a picture of the language situation. Two facts stood out most in the report he made. "First "the Ako" i.e. Yoruba is much spoken by a large number of people and much better understood than English." Secondly the English spoken was a "sad gibberish, produced by the carelessness of the negro mind, the influence of the native mind and language on English and the bad pronunciation of the German teachers. These all led to the corruption of the Queen's English and a poor ability to understand what is said. ( 50 )

In an anonymous article in Sierra Leone Studies No VI, 1922 entitled " Sidelights on the Pidgin English of Freetown" the author collected a series of mistakes in pronunciation at a rehearsal of Shakespeare's A midsummer Night's Dream. After making a careful catalogue of the mistakes, he attributed the difficulties noticeable to the fact "that the Sierra Leonean speaks an African Language in which nothing is English or derived from English except the individual words." This is a very surprising situation when one remembers that the Nova Scotians were more highly cultured than the Liberated Africans to the extent that many of the latter were apprenticed to them. Besides, all the many Ibos, Pawpaws, Congos, and the rest of the 160 tribes which Sir Samuel Lewis once described as forming this settlement, seemed to have gone under and accepted Yoruba leadership.

The Yorubas of course far outnumbered the other tribes; there were Egbas, Ijeshas, Ijebus and Ondos settled in every village and this advantage of numbers seems to have contributed largely to the predominance of Yoruba culture over the others.

These Yorubas were very fond of the prefix (O)ku, equivalent to well-done as a form of salutation in phrases like :

[Oku] [ɛ]	=	Well done for work done.
[Okuaba]	=	Well done for a return home i.e. welcome
[Okuofe]	=	Well done for a bereavement i.e. please accept my sympathy.
[Okualedzo]	=	Well done for receiving a stranger
[Okukpalam]	=	Well done for packing i.e. for a removal
[Okuotutu]	=	Well done for the cold = What a cold day !
[Okudzoko]	=	Well done for sitting down ( keeping company for a visit.)
[Okuagba]	=	Well done for growing big.
[Okuaile]	=	Well done for honouring us with your presence
[Okuarede]	=	Well done for (having) a wedding = Congratulations for your wedding (or for the wedding of your .....
[Okuale] > [kaɛ]	=	Well done for the evening = Good evening
[Okuan] > [ka+ɔ]	=	Well done for the morning = Good morning

These "Oku-" forms are singular, their corresponding plurals beginning with "[ɛ]" as in [ɛkuɛ]. These plural forms are also used in addressing one's superior either in age or rank.

The phrase " Oku-", is a contraction of the prayer "[o'koniko-]" i.e. "May you never perish in the experience of ...."

Hence [Okuagba] for example would mean, "May you never perish in the experience of growing big."

This ever-present "Oku" in all household salutations led to the Yorubas acquiring a wrong name "Aku" and more often "Oku". (51)

Today the predominant culture of the Sierra Leone Creole is "Oku" and we talk of our children as having acquired "Oku-trick"

The latter term has now become generic and refers in Sierra Leone only to the Creole Population, whether Christian or Mohammedan.

As in Nigeria, all others are alaigbede i.e. uncultured. The Moslem element of the settled Yorubas has preserved its original Yoruba though with a few corruptions (today.) Most of the last two generations of Christians could speak a modicum of it too. Our best proverbs hail from Yoruba. Our social customs are chiefly Yoruba. We cannot help agreeing with Migeod that the settlement in Sierra Leone was an "interesting item of Migration." "The Yorubas" he writes, "must have been more numerous than other tribes released in SIERRA LEONE (capitals mine) for their language to be preserved. (52)

To take a short review we find there is in the Patois (a) proverbs which are more or less pure translations of the Yoruba, a few of which are :

[Pit wet pit ɛn swala blɔd]

[Mɔnki we gɛt lɔ] tel nɔ ba klem tik we gɛt tʃuk-tʃuk.]

[Na wan tin fɔ du akpani-ros amɔ bwɛl am.]

[Na biɛn kɔnk dɛn kin gren ɛgusi]

[agbara nɔ ba rɔn na wan man do mɔt].

[U trowe asis na im asis kin fala]

[Wata nɔ ba drai na krab ol.]

[Tek tɛm kil ant] ju go fɛn in gɔt.]

[Fɔ mas agidi fɔ lɛpɛt nɔ hat; na fɔ gi am.]

[Kɔtin tri fɔdɔm te i hai pas gras.]

[Put jans na faia de tek jai luk fo naf].

[Drai dog swit fo jit, bat wetin fo jit te dog drai].

[Batam kantri pat n'no se san hat].

(b) most of our everyday words are of Yoruba origin .

(i) Words expressing moral qualities:

[daka-deke]	= deception
[aramu]	= cheating
[ojukokoro]	= covetousness
[ofofa]	= a liar, often used in the compound
[biza-badi ofofa]	= a tell tale; a busy-body.
[eke-lodzoti]	= a tale bearer; often used in a jocular sense to mean a false alarm.
[ilenikuwa]	= a domestic traitor i.e. a Judas
[akata ole akata-ole ]	= a thief.
[a/ere]	= a foolish person
[adzε]	= a witch
[awoko]	= a talkative
[omolakori]	= a badly bred child.
[ori-okiki]	= a noisy-headed person
[afo-dzudi]	= insolence, cheek
[alaigbede]	= a churl, a barbarian.
[akpa] (	= extravagance.
[akpa-bobo]	= an extravagant person
[obun]	= a filthy person
[riki] i	= cheating
[dabarun]	= something zigzag, hence deceitful
[okuta]	= ill luck.

(ii) Other words implying intimate household relations.

[jawa]	= a bride
[oko-jawa]	= a bridegroom.
[ara(mi)]	= my sister or brother, not of blood relations. a mere greeting.
[esusu]	= clubbing together
[om-mi]	= my dear child.
[dabalε]	= deference to superiors.

(iii) the names of everyday foodstuffs:

[obobo]	= a dish of beans
[kpo-kponda]	= a species of broad beans
[gari]	= a farinaceous preparation of the cassava tuber.

- [ɛba] a special dish of gari  
 [ɔbɛata] = a special preparation of sauce to eat gari with.  
 [adzɛfawo] = the name of a vegetable used for cooking palaver sauce.

the names of other vegetables are:

[ɪakpa]  
 [ɛfoɔdu]  
 [egbo]  
 [ɔsun]

also

- [adzanagi] = a species of yams that grows into an enormous size.  
 [akpani] = a species of yellowish yams.  
 [ɛdzarɔ] = a species of fish  
 [awudzɔ] = a feasting party ( original meaning = assembly.)

(iv) Names of diseases:

- [dzɛkutɛ] = elephantiasis  
 [ɔka] = enlargement of the skull, due to hydrocephalitis.

(v) names of herbs (often used for medicinal purposes)

[ɛgbɛsi]  
 [gbo-gbo-ɪe]  
 [gbangba]  
 [manfani]  
 [eweakoko]  
 [ɔdzuologbo] - our local cinchona  
 [igira]  
 [igiata]  
 [atorɪ]

(vi) names of animals

- [agbadu] = the black mamba  
 [kpara mɔlɛ] = the adder  
 [ɔka] = the viper

(c) Our local customs are mainly Yoruba. When we marry, the family is the unit not the individual. The parents of the bridegroom contract with those of the bride, after the couple have come to a private agreement between themselves. An official engagement then takes place when the bridegroom's family makes a present of a ring and a bible and other various articles to the bride through her parents.

In many cases two or three days before the actual wedding, another similar presentation is made when another ring is sent with a few other presents.

The Church Ceremony now merely ratifies the wedding already arranged and approved by the two families. This seems to be the contribution Christianity has made to our original custom.

Always before a wedding, there is family feasting, when the whole family congregate together to celebrate the occasion. It is implied that the gathering consists of all members of the family both dead and alive and so libations are poured to invoke the support and blessing of the dead relatives.

Again when a baby is born, he is presented to the outside world more or less in the same fashion as the Yorubas do. The [kɔmɔdzade] or Presentation of the child takes place seven days after it is born. (for a boy nine days.) Then it is brought out of the room of confinement. We Christians have a short prayer to mark the occasion, before anything else is done. As a rule the child is given an African name then.

It is later taken about the house and then to the main road. In these days of child deliveries at hospitals, when mothers are kept in bed for ten or more days, this custom is gradually being interfered with. The fundamental idea behind it is not however breaking down, but has assumed a more elastic application. Parents still mark the return home as the time when the child is to be officially presented to the world.

Again our attitude to funerals is also similar to that in Yoruba land. We believe with all our African brethren that there is a life beyond the grave. We vividly experience the presence of our dead relatives and believe they continue to exist as before, but not in a physical form of course. After a funeral there is usually a family feasting to mark the occasion, especially in the case of aged people.

Some well-meaning Christian Missionaries, and even some African Clergy, have usually condemned these practices as heathenish. But a more sympathetic attitude will soon discover that the principle involved is not altogether heathenish. The best is yet to be in Africa, and Time the old Justice is to be left to decide.

Personally, I think the criticisms usually mailed at these practices are often due to the poor knowledge the critics<sup>have</sup> of the real background of our people.

The standard of Christianity now in vogue in these parts of the world is that of PURE CHRISTIANITY, highly tinged with Western Culture, Western Beliefs and Western Practices.

If the goddess Eostre could have made the all-important contribution of giving us an Easter to celebrate the resurrection of Our Lord, the Kedekele festival of the Kroos which falls around Christmas, may yet give to Africa a contribution for a much homelier Christmas Festival.

But how did the African Culture produced in Sierra Leone ultimately acquire such a predominant Yoruba colouration? Two factors seemed to have been responsible.

(a) The economic system backed by (b) the keen power of foresight which the Yoruba man possesses.

To quote Mr T.C.Luke, "He ( the Yoruba ) is the Jew of West Africa ." (53) This capacity for doing extensive trade is seen in the early history of Nigeria. Badagri was famous as a trading centre. We are told that as far back as 1840, many Yorubas in Freetown bought some of the slavers condemned by the Vice Admiralty courts, and having refitted them accordingly carried on a flourishing trade with Nigeria.

Rankin mentions one Betsy Carew, who through her industry and talent rose to great wealth "owning landed and house property and having a considerable interest in shipping." (54)

As early as 1834, Rankin prophesied this supremacy of Yoruba Culture. He was deeply struck by what he termed the "Degeneracy" of the settlers i.e. THE NOVA SCOTIANS . (55) The Nova Scotians had been decreasing in numbers. According to Prince Stober, the young men grew disaffected when the Maroons were used to force them to order during their rebellion in 1800



and so they went out of of the Colony. Their interest in Agriculture then began to wane. "Besides pride, and the desire to imitate the white man", the Yorubas had become their predatory foes, destroying their crops before they could be harvested." Their pride showed itself mainly in their aloofness. They refused to intermarry with the others- Maroons or Liberated slaves, and were most reluctant to enter into competition in agriculture, with those whom they once thought inferior. In addition to this, their standard of living was very high indeed. The Maroons on the other hand were originally less educated than the Nova Scotians but they quickly amassed wealth although they were " ignorant and careless of agriculture, they possessed an acuteness of intellect, an ingenuity and active habit which ..... raised several to a competency and superior situation." (56)

They were good merchants and good labourers. But their ignorance of agriculture was a menace to their future. Large plots of land granted to them were never cultivated or even occupied, and they gradually found the cost of living difficult to cope with.

The captives on the other hand were an improving class of citizens and Rankin states that "to their rising importance and dawning enterprise we must look for the ultimate welfare of the colony. "

Their mode of living was simple, mainly owing to a strong

conservatism to remain what they were. As Rankin puts it "the Liberated, or Captives even when they have risen to comparatively high stations in the Colony, enjoying incomes of a hundred pounds per annum, seldom alter their pristine diet, and often maintain themselves on two-pence a day. They can therefore afford their labour at less cost than the Settler, and defy competition. "..... THEY (mine) need but a meal of rice and palmoil, a little cassada or a few plantains and, excepting upon their(mine) wedding day bestows no more of their earnings upon dress, than will purchase a cotton for the loins or a pair of loose trousers." ( 57)

Besides, the Yorubas in particular, know how to club together. The word ESUSU now on the lips of many people even non-Creoles, shows how powerful this practice became in the social life of the people. Many clubs sprang up and as it were taught their members how to save money.

Before long the liberated Africans became the great leaders of the community- J.H.Thomas C.M.G., S.B.Thomas, Sir Samuel Lewis K.C.M.G., Conger Thompson, Bishop Samuel Crowther, Bishop James Johnson, Archdeacon J.G.M'Cauley, Archdeacon Robbin, and many others.

These are a small few of the illustrious names of men and women who rose out of dire slavery into civilised life. A tour round our churches shows that nearly seventy-five per cent of the memorial tablets to great men and women of the past

record the activities of Liberated Africans.

More than Eighty percent of the Clergy of the Sierra Leone Church belong to the villages and therefore are of Liberated African origin; Waterloo and the suburbs within a two-mile radius have produced more than twenty parsons including two bishops. (58)

It is not surprising therefore that the Liberated Africans swamped the Nova Scotians and the Yoruba strain in particular became dominant, giving to the growing language the word-patterns of its children.

## Chapter 3.

## Phonetic Characteristics.

The sound system of the Patois is derived mainly from the sound system of the English Language. As has already been pointed out, the early German teachers taught the liberated slaves an already corrupt form of English sounds which they had themselves learnt imperfectly, and which they seemed to have very little chance to improve on.

This already corrupt form of English was further corrupted by the liberated slaves and their immediate descendants, either in pronunciation or usage or sometimes in both.

The corruptions in pronunciation were often due to physiological defects which account for an inability to dissect all the sounds heard and in many cases to native speech habits which were transferred to the newly learnt language. These two factors always contribute to the imperfection which is noticed when foreigners learn a new language and cannot reproduce the sounds heard accurately.

A European friend of mine once suggested that we Africans move our lips when speaking far more than Englishmen do. This he thought accounted for the broadening of sounds by Africans who speak English as in [kəmi&l] "shameleon" and [kəm ət] "come out" (1)

Jespersen has also suggested that lack of intimate knowledge of the language learnt makes learners substitute their own familiar speech sounds for those of the newly acquired language.

This principle is true of loan words which are borrowed from a foreign language. "Hence the English and Russians who have no [y] in their own speech, substitute the combination [ju] [iu] in recent loans from French. Scandinavians have no voiced [z] and [ʒ] and therefore, in such loans from French or English as *rusine*, *budget*, *jockey*, etc., substitute the voiceless [s] and [ʃ], or [sj]. The English will make a diphthong of the final vowels of such words as *bouquet*, *beau*, [bukei, bou], and will slur the [r] of such French words as *boulevard*, etc.,. The same transference of speech habits from one's native language also affects such important things as quantity, stress and tone: the English have no final short stressed vowels, such as are found in *bouquet*, *beau*; hence their tendency to lengthen as well as diphthongize these sounds, while the French will stress the final syllable of recent loans, such as *jury*, *reporter*. (2)

In Sierra Leone we also have instances of this transfer of native articulation to loans from foreign languages.

Among the Limbas, we find the aspirate [h] is used before a long vowel instead of [f]; and viceversa the sound [y] before a short closed vowel instead of [w], or when the word begins with a short vowel. Thus "Aberdeen" is pronounced [Yabadin]; Wilberforce > [Yilbahos], "fufu" > [huhu] "head" > [fed], heavy > [febi]. Besides they cannot produce the combination of consonants [ks] as in "axe or box"; and they say instead

akəs and bəkəs . For busybody" they also say [ˈmʌsbɒdi] . It would not be surprising therefore to find that most of the loans of the Sierra Leone Patois have been mutilated in one or more ways viz: pronunciation, accent and usage.

The earliest changes that affected the English loans were due to two important phonetic principles: The stress shift and a general tendency to alter the ends of words, either by dropping off consonants or by putting on vowels . Sometimes combinations of consonants were split up and one of them discarded.

Now one of the earliest characteristics of the language which developed when the Germanic peoples sojourned in Britain was the Stress shift. Hitherto in Indo-Germanic languages the stress was not fixed to a particular syllable, as one may still find in words borrowed from Greek; indeed it was very variable e.g. Phila'delphia, but as'tronomy.

But when the Germanic peoples settled in England, all stress was regulated and fixed on the first syllable. Of course this was not altogether invariable, often the context influenced the position of the stress, as is found in "'down-stairs" and "down-'stairs" "'up-hill" and "up-'hill". Jespersen has argued that the stress shift is of psychological importance as it suggests that the English value more the roots of words - which are usually in the first syllable.

In the Sierra Leone Patois, however, the stress of many once-English words has been thrown on the second syllable, and we find the following changes:

[ɔ'rɪnf] from English 'Orange, [wa'tɔ] < 'water, [ko'ko] < 'cocoa  
 [kɔfi] < 'coffee, [wa'talo] < 'Waterloo, [jak-'as] < 'jack ass,  
 [brɔk 'hɔs] < 'break house = house breaker, [kra'fɪʃ] < 'crayfish  
 [pɑd'lɔk] < 'padlock, [swɪt 'brɛd] 'sweet bread, [pɔs'mæn] <  
 'postman, [pɑm'aɪn] < 'palm oil, [fɪŋgə 'neɪl] < 'finger nail,  
 [ɛ'rɪk] < 'Eric, [kʌm'ɒt] < 'come out, [ɔl'fæʃɪn] < 'old fashioned  
 [Al'bat] < 'Albert.

Now the position of the stress often determines the quantity of the vowels in the various syllables. "There is always a strong tendency to shorten vowels in unstressed syllables." Hence we have in English the following changes which took place during various centuries .

ai > i as in midwife. In the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, this word was often 'midwif, 'midif; although we now talk of midwife, we still say 'midwife.

Jespersen groups the words 'daisy', 'sennit', the old pronunciation of 'fortnight', and even 'garlic' under this head.

a > ə as in 'Durham', and other names in 'han',

as in 'brimstone', petticoat,

u > as in names in -ton, Eaton, Clifton; in -don as in

Swindon, Maldon, and in -mouth, as in Portsmouth, Exmouth.

Many vowels are also shortened in words that have weak sentence stress." e.g. sir, [sɪ], is found with the short vowel in position like 'yes sir', and 'Sir Thomas'; but we also have the full stress [sɪr] as in "I said Sir." Also words like 'equal' [ɪkwəl], 'indignant' [ɪndɪgnənt], 'brigand' [brɪgənd], 'honourable' [ɒnərəbl], 'compass' [kəmpeɪs].

Many similar changes are found in philological works of the English Language.

So too in the Sierra Leone Patois, the stress position has altered many vowels by lengthening such as are in stressed positions and shortening others which are unstressed. And so we find

(a) Lengthenings:

ɔ > a as in 'Albert' > [Albat], 'water' > [wa'ta], jack ass > [jak'as].

Other lengthenings are found in every word in which the original stress position has been moved, as may be seen from the list on page 51.

(b) Shortenings:

Many monosyllables with originally long vowels have been shortened when in unstressed positions e.g.

o' o as in: 'coast' > [kɔs], 'goat' > [gɔt], 'load' > [lɔd].

ɔ' > a, o: as in: 'hawk' > [hak] or [hak-hak],

'coarse' > [kɔs], 'court' > [kɔt].

aɪ > e, or ɛ as in: 'white' > [wet], 'wipe' > [wɛp], 'ride' > [rɪd],  
night' > [nɪt], 'wife' > [wɛf], 'time' > [tɛm].



Again when the stress moves from the first syllable to the second or when any other change takes place as in words of more than two syllables, there is a definite shortening e.g. 'postman > [pos'man] , 'old fashioned > [ol'faʃin] 'palm oil > [pamain] , 'ain't it > [ɛnti] , 'no more > [nə'mɔ], 'kick away > [kék 'we] , = to play the truant;

But why this change of stress position ? It is true that the African like the Anglo-Saxon, has a strong predilection for stressing the ROOTS, which have value for him. The only difference seems to be that the English prefer the first syllable the African the second .

Messrs Greenough and Kittredge have pointed out that many words ( of Indo-Germanic origin I suppose, ) have verbal roots at the beginning. This explains why particularly the English are fond of accenting the first syllables of words. Jespersen seems to confirm this when he says "In native English words the chief idea is generally contained in the first syllables which is often followed by one or more syllables expressing subordinate modifications of the main idea, and accordingly most English words have their first syllable stressed." (4)

African Languages, on the other hand have their verbal roots in the second syllable as a rule. Judging from Yoruba, we find that words in African Languages are formed mainly by adding prefixes ( and suffixes at times ), or by reduplication of

of the verbal root;

Thus when [a] is added to a verbal root, the resulting

word formed is a noun representing an agent- one who does;

[o] or [ɔ], produces a similar effect, with only a few restric-

tions. [ɛ] indicates a noun in the concrete, and [i] a noun

in the abstract. Sometimes syllables are used [ati], [ai], [lai]

[alai], [ti]; [ti] suggests possession. Thus we have :

Root	Prefix [a]
[da] = to cut	[a-da] = a cutlass
[de] = to cover	[a-de] = a crown
[lo] = to go	[a-lo] = going
[be] = to cut	[a-be] = a razor
kpɛdza = to kill a fish	[a-kpɛdza] = a fisherman
kɔnrin = to sing	[a-kɔnrin] = a singer
[mɔ] = to know	Prefix [i]
[mɔ] = to know	[i-mɔ] = knowledge
[ri] = to see	[i-ri] = experience
[fe] = to love	[i-fe] = love
	Prefix [ɛ]
[da] = to make	[ɛ-da] = a creature
[ru] = to carry	[ɛ-ru] = a load
	Prefix o
[lu] = to bore	[o-lu] = a gimlet
[dɛ] = to hunt	[o-dɛ] = a hunter
[lo] = to grind	[o-lo] = a grinder
[we] = to swim	[o-we] = a swimmer

When syllables are added, we have cases like the following:

Root	Prefix [ai]	[lai]	[alai]
[mɔ] = to know	[ai-mɔ] = ignorance	[lai-mɔ] = a state of ignorance.	alai-mɔ = an ignorant person.

Again reduplication is a very important factor in the formation of words: e.g. in Yoruba one finds :-

Root verb	Reduplication
[kpɛdza] = to kill a fish	[kpɛdza-kpɛdza] = a fisherman
[kɔnrin] = to sing	[kɔnrin-kɔnrin] = a song
[da] = to make	[dida] = made
[la] = to split	[lila] = fissured.

This same tendency is found in the Sierra Leone Patois where such duplications like the following are found

[gbara-'gbara], [pega-bega], [dzaba-'dzaba], [was-'was], [wini-'wini],  
[waka-waka], [rop-'rop], [bɔn-'bɔn], [langa-'langa],

It would be right therefore to suggest that for the African mind the second syllable especially in dissyllabic words is of more value than the first .

But beside this Value-stress, there are also instances of musical or Rhythmic stress. In the English Language, this consists chiefly of alternations between strong and weak syllables, instead of pronouncing several equally strong or equally weak syllables consecutively .e.g. " And in a while part into Styx doth glide, And part in-to Cocytus runs away" (5)  
In Yoruba however, and for that matter all other African Languages this rhythmic stress is built round a tonal system - a kind of sing-song mode of speech that is common with the natives .

These tones usually introduce secondary stresses in polysyllabic words e.g. [a, gba'ra], [ko', go'sa], [be, bre'be], ['kiti-ka, ta,] It seems that this phenomenon has enabled the Patois to preserve accents on the first syllables of many English disyllabic words as: 'ginger, ['liba]liver, 'onions, 'sugar, 'finger, 'pigeon, 'pencil, [pənsul], 'Hastings, .

The next development in the words which have been borrowed from English is a general tendency to change the end-forms of the loans.

Two outstanding forms of this change are worth mentioning.

(a) A new consonant-ending is formed by dropping off final vowels or consonants; sometimes double consonant endings are even inverted.

(b) A new vowel-ending is introduced where no vowel was originally.

If we examine the second type first, it would be easy to see that a regular vowel ending for words is typical of at least, West African Languages. Here is a copy of the most recent Temne translation of the Lord's Prayer, as given in the U.B.C. Hymnal:

[ɔkas kəsu ɔwə ʒi ro rianna kankə əŋgəs əmu ənji əsəm;  
kankə rəbəl rəmu rəder; kankə məsələ məmu mə ʒɔnɛ nɔru məhə  
mə ʒɔnɛ ro rianna. ʒer su thenŋ ɛdi ɛbeki su. Terə su  
mətei məsu mələs, məhə mə siəʒ mə sə terə ʒə mə ʒə su  
ɔləs. Te su wɔɔa ka tugbəs, kərə wurɛ su kə mətei mələs.

Ətəsom-e, mundə bə rəbəl, ʒi ənfəsə, ʒi əʒiki təŋkə  
thabana . Amina . ( I have changed y in the text to j.)

Out of 72 words in this translation, only ten end in a consonant 5 of which are 's-es'. In the English equivalent, Prayer Book version converted into phonetics, out of 70 words, only 23 words end in vowels.

It is not surprising therefore that there has been a regular backsliding from consonantal endings in the original English forms of words borrowed into the Patois, to more homely vowel-endings. As a result words like the following have been developed: [traŋga] < 'strong', [laŋga] < 'long', [krio] < 'creole' [jɛ] < 'yes' [ma] < 'ma'am' < 'madam'.

One finds the same phenomenon in Mendi :

[brɛdi] < 'bread', [kɔpu] < 'cup', [plɛti] < 'plate'.

Of the new consonant-endings, [s], is most frequent.

Final vowels or consonants are cut off and the resulting s-form is adopted. This frequency of s-endings may be reconciled with the predominant s-endings in the sample of Temne quoted above. In the Patois, we have words like these:

[kalbas]	< calabash	[lɛs]	< lazy
[kias]	< ciask < cask	[kres]	< crazy
[wɛs]	< waist	[aks]	< ask
[lɔs]	< lost	[likɛ]	< Lisk
[kɔs]	< east	[mɔs]	< must
[kɔs]	< coast		

Beside these we also find a few other consonantal changes e.g. (1) the continuant nasal [ŋ] appearing instead of simple

[n] or [m]. as in [dɔŋ] 'down'; [tɔŋ] 'town'

(2) the last letters of the groups [ft] and [nd] are lost

e.g. [sɒf] < 'soft', [swɪf] < 'swift'

[kain] < 'kind', = a class, [blɛn] < 'blind', [bihɛn] < 'behind'

[bɛn] < 'bend', [lɛn] < 'lend(t)', [sɛn] < 'send' [wain] < 'wind'

= to go in circular course etc., [faɪn] < 'find' [grɛn] < 'grind'

All these slipping are due to a kind of abrasion; the less important member of the consonant group being dropped as is thought fit. This same phenomenon is found in other words or phrases e.g. we say [fɔl fɛs] instead of [fɔːls fɛs] = a mask again the word [iˈnɪf] has now become [nɪf]. a military post termed I believe "report war" has now become [pɔtˈwɑ];

These abrasions are however mainly due to the speech habits of the Liberated slaves, who of course acquired some of the speech habits of their German teachers. Many vowels were altered because of the general tendency of the Africans to reproduce English words in their African native ways. e.g.

ʌ > ɔ or o : as in [kɒp] > [kɔp], [kɒt] > [kɔt], [bɒt] > [bɔt], [dɒm] > [dɔm],  
dɒf > dɔf, [dɒmp] > [dɔmp], rɒb > rɔb, [iˈnɒf] > [nɒf], [hɒzbænd] > [hɔs-band]

ə > ɔ : as in [kɒmpəs] > [kɔmpəs], [Dzizəs] > [Dzizɔs], [kwɛstʃən] > [kwɛstʃɔn], [vɛntʃə] > [vɛntʃɔ], [tɛntʃ] > [tɔtʃ], [ɒdɪtʃən] > [ɒdɪtʃɔn], also, curious, labour etc.,

ə > ɛ : as in [aɪən] > [aɛn], [ɛɪprəl] > [ɛprəl], [sɛlləns] > [sɛllɛns]

ə > a : as in [hɒz-bænd] > [həs-band], [kɒlə] > [kɔlə], [glɒstə] > [glɔstə], [lɛstə] > [lɔstə], [lɛstə] > [lɔstə], [ɛvə] > [ɛvɔ], [aʊə] > [aʊa], [aɪdɪə] > [aɪdɪa], [faɪə] > [faɪa], [ʊgə] > [ʊgɔ]; also words like paper, our, hour, annualetc.,

In addition to the above characteristics, there are also found a number of words which belonged to the standard English of the Eighteenth Century and which the Englishmen of the early days of this colony taught our parents. These forms have been preciously preserved by the first learners and we their descendants still use them although they are no longer found in the standard speech of Modern England. The first element in this connection was the influence of the Authorised Version of the Bible. The Bible was the most popular book that every body was introduced to, chiefly by the missionaries and before long many people who could not even read, could read parts of it by heart. Thus the language and style of the Bible gradually crept into the language and style of the people. In addition to this, the Prayer Book became a second book, and parts of it were also learnt off by heart. Thus the word LEARN as found in Psalm 132 (Prayer Book Version) came to mean both 'teach and learn'. Also the prefix MAN, as found in Exodus chapter XX: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house .....his man-servant ...etc, became a descriptive word for denoting gender.

Then again we find forms of speech which today have become vulgar or belong to provincial usage:

#### A. Consonantal forms.

1. Prothetic j added before a round back vowel as in

"yeere" for 'ear'; "yeate, yeating," for 'eat and eating'. Wyld suggests that this form was certainly used in the West as far back as the Fifteenth Century. By the Sixteenth Century, it had penetrated into the London dialects and later the standard language of the following centuries.

Jespersen also thinks that these forms were prevalent in Shropshire and Wales, Somerset and Devon. (6)

These forms have been slightly extended in the Sierra Leone Patois thus: [jəri], = to hear; [jes] = ear; [jiit] = food (b) = to eat;

2. The reduction of th-forms to either an older [t], or to [d], as in "think" > [tink], 'anthem' > [antəm], 'farthing' > [fardin], 'fathom' > fadam. Jespersen quotes Hart as pronouncing [t] in 'orthography, parenthesis, sabbath', as far back as 1569.

Also Elphinston (1787) seems never to have heard any other sound than t, in words like 'apothecary'. Today, in English 'Thomas, thyme, Anthony and Thames' are still pronounced [təməs], [taim], [əntəni], [təmz]. We in Sierra Leone have preserved these t-forms and still [mət] < mouth, [mənt] < 'month' [kətreɪn] < Catherine.

3. The reduction of [st] into [t], as in 'stink' > [tink], 'strong' > [traŋgə], 'strip' > [trip] 'stone' (n) > [tɒn], although we say [stɒn] for the verb = to throw stones at someone; we also have [stəkin] < stockings and [stəbən] < stubborn.



4. There are also various losses of [t] in colloquial speech which are today found only in dialectical forms or among the uneducated classes of Modern England. e.g.

must be	>	mʌs bi	>	[mʌs bi]	in the Patois
next	>	neks	>	[neks]	.. ..
last	>	la·st		[las]	.. ..
half past	>	ha·f pa·s		[af pas]	.. ..
text	>	teks		[tɛkə]	.. ..
clothes	>	klos		[klos]	.. ..

There are of course other words which lost their [t] in standard speech and came down to us without it e.g. wristband > [risband] postman > [pous(t)man], 'fasten' [fasn], 'listen' [li:n], 'christen' > [kri:n], 'Christmas' > [kris mɛs], 'captain' > ['kæpn > kiapin], 'Westmoreland' > ['wɛsmələnd], 'asthma' > [æspmə] > [asma]. (7)

There was also a loss of the aspirate, often due to rapid speech. This seems to have dated as far back as the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, when many educated people sounded only the [w] in [hw] as in 'white when' which were pronounced 'wite wɛn' respectively.

Other instances of this phenomenon are also found among unstressed syllables as in 'historical and is'torical; 'hibernal and i'bernal'; hence there is in English: the

"some historical plays" [səm is'torikl pleɪz] but 'Historical plays' [hi'storikl pleɪz] .

Jespersen mentions that Walker's pronouncing Dictionary 1791, classifies this voicing of an unvoiced sound, the "not sounding [h] after [w] as a fault of the Londoners.

It is not however, nowadays regarded as nearly so 'bad or vulgar' as the omission of [h] and is indeed scarcely noticeable by most people." In fact a great many "good speakers always pronounce [w] and look upon [hw] as harsh or dialectical. Wyld states that this loss of the initial aspirate was quite regular in the Sixteenth Century and gives instances from Cockney Machin who uses circa 1553, 'ede, 4head 'alf ,4half. Jespersen also associates this omission of [h] with uneducated speech. This phenomenon he says, is found "indifferently in all classes of words in all English dialects except ..... Northumberland and perhaps also portions of North Durham and North Cumberland." In this case, he goes on to say, the [h] has disappeared as a "significant part of the sound system." (8)

6. (a) The change of [dj] to [dz] as in soldier came down to us. [soldier] > [soldiə] became [souldzə] > [so'dzə]. Wyld claims to have known an old cavalry officer born circa 1817, who always said [so'dzə]. This word came down to us and has undergone slight alterations. We say [sodzə], or [sodzi] often as euphony demands. (9)

(b) The palatisation of groups like kj; pw; bw. which took place in the Eighteenth Century. These led to a few important changes leading to 'gap' becoming 'giap', 'get' 'giet'. Jespersen quotes Hyde Clarke 1879, as attributing this tendency to the Irish who wrongly give 'c' the sound 'cy' before 'a'; also 'g' becomes 'gy' and kind 'kyind'. The

The phenomenon is mentioned in Sheridan's Dictionary 1780 and by Elphinston. He also quotes Grangent saying of America "in many parts of the south and especially in eastern Virginia,.....card > kjad; kind > kyaind; guard > gjad; guide > gjaid, girl > gjala

These tendencies were also found in England in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries. According to Wyld, Elphinston regarded the introduction of this sound as necessary to polite speech; Walker also circa 1801, thought that the introduction of "fluent liquid sound after [k], [c], or hard [g], before [a] or [i], gives a smooth and elegant sound, and distinguishes the polite conversation of London from that of every part of the island."

This process of palatisation led to other formations involving words of similar consonantal structures. Thus the Patois developed: [kian] < 'can' (= a tin), [kiandul] < 'candle', [kiaʃ] < 'cash' [kias] < 'cask' [kiat] < 'cat', [kia] < 'care', [skiad] < 'scared' [giad-rum] < 'guard room', [giap] < 'gape'.

The Patois has also preserved the "pw,bw" forms in which "w" is inserted between "p,b, and o," as in "spwoil < spoil. bwoll < boil. These two words have undergone further changes, and the Patois has [pwəl] and [bwəl], with secondary forms [pwəl-o] = a rotter; [pwəl] = to destroy, [bwəl] = to cook, or an abscess. In addition to these there has also developed "gw" forms as in [gwata] < gutter; this may have been produced by speech habits which found it easier to say 'guava', 'iguana': [gwava], [igwana],

than gutter [gʌtə].

Wyld quotes Wallis, 1653, as saying that after "p and b" before "o", [w] is pronounced, but not by all speakers." (9f)

(c) Various consonant endings which are now obsolete, in Modern English.

(a) n-endings where modern English has . e.g.

[hʌntɪn] < [hʌntɪn] < 'hunting', [fɑːdɪn] < 'farthing', [stɔːkɪn] < 'stockings'  
[mɔːnɪn] < 'morning'

(b) loss of d in various endings:

[blɪn] > [blɛn] < 'blind', colɛ [kɔːl] < 'cold', poun > [pɔːn] < 'pound',  
thousan > [tɔːzɪn] < 'thousand', frienship < 'friendship',  
Wensday < 'Wednesday', lændady < landlady ; the Patois  
has also developed [kain] for "kind".

(c) loss of [f] as in hankercher > [ɛnkɪtʃə] < "handkerchief." (10)

## B. Vowel forms.

Some words now spelt with [oi] were spelt with [i] only in the late Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries. e.g.

groin M.E. grynde) early Mod E. grine, gryne. We have preserved the form gryne [grain].

There was also a tendency for all short vowels in closed syllables to be lengthened and long vowels in open syllables to become short. Thus [aː] in father was lengthened and [ɔː] in blood was shortened. The Sierra Leone Patois has preserved the tendency to lengthen vowels, and now all vowels whether in closed or open syllables are ordinarily long. This tendency is found chiefly with the use of the

long and wide back vowels [aː] and [ɔː] which developed in English in the early Seventeenth Century. (11)

Jespersen has pointed out that these wide sounds are natural under the influence of certain emotions, hence probably, they were very adaptable to their new users. (12)

There are many other words and word-forms once in regular (often in the vulgar) speech of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. e.g. "ax", 'ask', is mentioned by Strong in "England's perfect Schoolmaster," as the regular pronunciation; "gi" = 'give' is also mentioned by Elphinston in his Principles of English Grammar, as being the form in use when "give me" is said quickly. Then we have "gimme or gih me". Ben Johnson also has "gi you joy" which has now become a regular Patois idiom. There are also: "sass" for "saucy"-an American vulgarism; "Sal" for 'Sarah', "gaf" which was a past tense of "give" belonging to Caxton's time; also "ingine" for 'engine', "dhe" for 'the', "[windɔːwinda] for 'window'. Some of these are found in Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary of 1791; also "feller" which has become Patois [fɛlɛ] for fellow; warter which became "warta" was produced by the spelling of the uneducated who try to make their spelling match their pronunciation. This last tendency is seen at work also in "dorter" for 'daughter', "orsepital" for 'hospital'; "bin" for 'been'. This last word has been

mentioned by Hart in his Orthographie as an Irishism. It has however become a very useful auxiliary verb indicating the aorist tense in the Patois.

All the above words are still found in the speech of the uneducated classes of England. (13)

Lastly, none of the modern diphthongs like those in go(u), ke(i)m, as may be found in the words "go, door, house, poor," had become universal in the early days of the settlement. Jespersen believes that the diphthong [ei] can be dated as established by 1750, although it was not a universal pronunciation. It seems that English phoneticians were only able to recognise it in the early part of the Nineteenth Century. According to Wyld, the diphthongisations of many vowels was known in some parts of England but were not universal in the South West and London dialects, during the Eighteenth Century. That means that our people learnt the plain vowels like [ho'm, go', mi', do'], at a stage when there was a kind of transition as e.g. from [u] to [ou] in 'house'. (14)

Hence we find the open vowels in the Patois e.g.

- e < ei, -- [pepa] < [peipe], [kes] < [keis], [mek] < [meik], [ples] < [pleis].  
           [de] < [dei], [let] < [leit], [bet] < [beit], [el] < [eil],  
           [pen] < [pein], [red] < [reid], [tel] < [teil], [tes] < [test] < [teist]  
           [wes] < [west] < [weist], [fel] < [feil], [ren] < [rein].
- o < ou, -- [go] < [gou], [blɔ] < [blou], [bot] < [bout], [kro] < [krou], [mon] < [moun], [sop] < [soup], [ton] < [toun], [kot] < [kout], [slo] < [slou].

It would be clear by now that the Sierra Leone Patois, has not merely collected English sounds and adopted them; It is true to say that the Sprachgefühl of the Liberated Africans has had its effect on the new language which developed.

The marks of this effect have been pointed out as far as possible, but it would be further useful to enquire into the question of TONES, which was mentioned before.

Judging from Yoruba, most West African Languages are TONE Languages. Then meaning of a word often depends upon the musical notes with which it is uttered, and often the syntax must be so determined. In Yoruba the following combination of sounds [ɔwɔ] may mean:

- (a) a flock of birds or beasts or a crowd
- (b) a hand; a branch
- (c) a broom
- (d) honour

according to the different tones used.

So too in the Patois, the combination of letters [kaŋga], may mean (1) 'magic' or (2) 'hard dried tunny fish'; [dziŋdza] < ginger, may mean (1) the spice i.e. the ginger plant or root, and (2) 'a European footballer' - now a generic term, from ginger-haired artillerymen, who used to be good at football. Also [wata] < 'water', may mean the noun 'water' or the verb 'to water', according to the tones employed.

This point is further borne out by the commentator referred to on page 37 above, on the mistakes of pronunciation of the Sierra Leonean. He pointed out that mistakes of pronunciation could be explained by the introduction of "tone", which came in the words "work" and "walk". "Tone" he said "was used to express delicacy, humility or respect or when a favour is asked. THEN (capitals mine) a falsetto, a most whining tone IS employed." (15)

When a Methodist Party came out to Freetown in 1934 they could not appreciate this question of tone. It was very difficult for them to understand the language of some of our educated Africans during their deliberations at Synod.

One of them remarking on the situation when they paid a visit to Fourah Bay College said "What dreadful English these people speak ? "

The commentator above pointed out that it was doubtful whether Yoruba and therefore the Sierra Leone Patois had accents at all and said "It may well be that what we call accent is what in the Yoruba grammar would be described as a "strong falling tone". This is noticeable in such words as do and must, and this also has the tendency to mark the close of a sentence or clause.

It may therefore be correct to say that the stress positions discussed above depend upon tonal rhythm than on any other factor .



## Chapter 4.

## Accidence and Syntax.

The usage of the Sierra Leone Patois, has always been a kind of enigma to Europeans. They often feel it is akin to English on the basis of its vocabulary, but when they come to grips with the language itself, they find it is more African than they had imagined. Any foreigner who tries to study the question would be very struck by the total absence of the article, either definite or indefinite, except for the few cases of very special signification. e.g.

Patois: [a si snɛk] = I see a snake.

[wata de na hos]? = Is there any water in the house  
( i.e. at home ) ?

[Babu lɛk hala ju go gi am wat]-man wok] = The ape  
likes to shout (and) you now ask him to be a  
watchman.

[Buk nɔ ba lai] = A book will not tell a lie i.e.

~~When emphasis~~

Figures never lie.

When emphasis is to be made, the words ["dis, da, di and wan"] equivalent to "this, that, the' and 'one' (a) " are often used e.g.

[dɛbul de na da bus de] = There is an evil spirit in that bush

[dis wok ja plɛnti ɔ] = This work is (too) much indeed.

[di bɔi nɔ wan wok] = The boy does not wish to work.

[na wan tin a wan tɛl ju] = I wish to tell you something (one  
particular thing).

[wan uman bin kam kɛl ju dis mɔnin] = a woman came (here) to  
call you this morning.

In Yoruba we find a similar phenomenon: [kan] or [ɔkan] 'one' is equivalent to the English 'a' or 'an'. 'na] and [ni]' meaning 'that (or the said one)' is also used to mean the English "the". But besides, these, no articles are used.

(2) Nouns have no forms to indicate number. A borrowed form of the noun used is practically like a root and the plural number is formed by adding numerals or quantitative adjectives to indicate number. e.g. man:

[wan man] = one man, or a man.

[tu man] = two men

[twanti man] = twenty men

[plɛnti man] = many men.

Demonstrative adjectives e.g. [dis] (sing) = this [dɛ̃n] (pl) = these

[da] ,, = that [dɛ̃n] ,, = those

are usually used to express number. Thus we have:

[dis man nɔgud at ɔl] = This man is not a kind man ( of no use).

[dɛ̃n man ja nɔ gud] = These men are not kind men ( of no use).

[da bɔd de dɛn dai] = That bird is dead.

[dɛ̃n bɔd de dɛn dai] = These birds are dead.

The Patois however has been very fortunate in adopting the plural form of the Ibo pronoun for 'you' i.e. [unu]. This special achievement gives the personal pronouns both singular and plural forms viz: [a, wi], for 'I, we'; [ju, unu] for 'you' singular and plural,

[i, d&ɛm or d&ɛn] for 'he', 'she' or 'it', 'them'; There is also a generic [ju] = 'whosoever'.

Jespersen would say this use of nouns is based on a "Neutral Number", i.e. a form of number which is neither definitely singular nor plural, which therefore leaves the category of number open or undetermined.

Such a number would be of considerable advantage as generic terms e.g. man or mass words e.g. sugar, can be used without change of form and existing languages would be the richer for it. (1)

In other West African languages, the same tendency is noticeable.

Pronouns and demonstrative adjectives are the only words that have different number forms. It is worth pointing out here that there has developed an indefinite pronoun [d&ɛn] = English "they and their", which is used instead of a singular pronoun even when a noun is in the context.

Thus instead of [misis de k&ɛl ju] i.e. "mistress calls you", it is more idiomatic to say [d&ɛn de k&ɛl ju] = "they are calling you."

The above constructions are found in Yoruba, Mendi and Temne. e.g.

Yoruba: kal& = "good day" to one person, or to an equal.  
 (s)dz&kal& = "good day" to many persons or to one's superior.  
 oko/a = one who holds a whip.  
 amo/a = one who holds many whips.

In Mendi, the demonstrative adjectives "this", "that", are

usually expressed by the suffixes [-dzi ; na ;] which are both inflected. Hence we find :

Singular Number	Plural Number
[njapoi dzi] = this woman	[njapoi dzisia] = these women
[njapoi na] = that woman	[njapoi nasia] = those women.

There are also uses of the indefinite pronoun in Mendi and Temne. e.g. the sentence "mistress calls you will be rendered thus :

Mendi [ta· bi loi ma].	= literally, they call you
Temne [a t(ela mu)]	= .. they call you

Jespersen has pointed out that this use of the indefinite pronoun is based on the desire not to be too definite. e.g. If we wish to ask the question "Nobody prevents you ?," then the second part which should follow is not "does he ?", but "do they ?" "Does he" is too definite, whilst "do they" preserves the idea of indefiniteness. (2)

If this is so in English, then the practice in African Languages may be explained partly by the dominance of reverence, as found in African custom, by which the individual often prostrates before his superiors, and therefore makes it difficult for him to call them by name.

Again there are no gender inflections in the Patois. This again has given the Patois a big lead forwards in the history of languages. The English language of today is more

flexible than the language of Chaucer's time, principally because it is tending more and more to drop case-forms gender forms and complicated verbal endings. The ease with which a single form "had" can be used to substitute fifteen distinct forms in Gothic illustrates this statement: Thus the modern "had" has replaced the forms: "habaida, habaides, habaiedu, habaieduts, habaiedun, habaieduþ, habaiedum habaiedjau, habaiedeis, habaiedei, habaiedeiwa, habaiedeits habaiedeima, habaiedeiþ and habaiedeiMa. (3)

The absence of case forms except the Genitive, the ease with which the same word can be used as both verb and nouns in "I love", and "my love is a red red rose", have all been an inestimable boon to the English Language.

But the need for a more widely used word is very marked in modern languages. Jespersen writes "The advantage of discarding the old case-distinctions, is seen in the ease with which English and French speakers can say e.g. "with or without my hat" or "in and round the Church", while the correct German is "mit meinen hut oder ohne denselben" and "in der kirche und um dieselbe." (4)

But more so does Jespersen value the simplification of Gender forms. After mentioning difficulties in German, Swedish, and French, he writes "most English pronouns make no distinction of sex, e.g. I, you, we, they, who, each, somebody, etc.

Yet, when we hear that Finnic and Magyar, and indeed the vast majority of languages outside the Aryan and Semitic world have no separate forms for "he" and "she", our first thought is one of astonishment;..... But if we look more closely we shall see that it is at times an inconvenience to have to specify the sex of the person spoken about. ....

It has been said that a Genderless pronoun could be substituted for "he" in such a proposition as this: "It would be interesting if each of the leading poets would tell us what he considers his best work", ladies would be spared the disparaging implication that the leading poets were all men.

.....

Anyone who has written much in Ido will often have felt how convenient it is to have the common sex-pronouns (he or she) singlu, altru, etc., " (5)

This most coveted genderless pronoun has evolved in Sierra Leone in the form [i] which represents he or she in the Sierra Leone Patois. Its inflexion is as follows: In the Singular Nom [i] Acc. [im] or [in] Indirect Object [am], Poss. [am or in]. The Plural is [dɪm] for all cases.

This word seems to have originated from the accusative singular of the third personal pronoun "him", in the days when h-es were dropped without much bother.

Wyld gives us an instance of the use of the sentence "conduct am in " for "conduct him in". (6)

At the same time Yoruba also has a sexless third personal pronoun whose singular forms are " a, e, io, ou". It is not unlikely therefore that the general tendency towards Yoruba brought the forms [a] or [e] more to the fore, and these soon developed into the nominative [i] of our present pronoun, whilst [iə] and [am] were adopted from English ['im]. Our sexless pronoun can be used of inanimate as well as animate objects and therefore has the widest application yet known, as it can correctly refer to all forms of matter whether dead or alive, masculine, feminine or neuter.

Jespersen regards simplification as those mentioned above as a sign of progress in Languages. He deplores the old attitude by which "people were taught to look down upon modern languages, as mere dialects or Patois and to worship Greek and Latin." This meant of course that "no language seemed respectable which had not four or five distinct cases and three genders, or that had less than five tenses and as many moods in its verbs. (7)

The decay of these old forms is however a sign of progress along lines of precision and accuracy.

"That Language goes farthest in the art of accomplishing much with little means or in other words, which is able to express the greatest amount of meaning with the simplest mechanism." That is to say we want "A maximum of efficiency and a minimum of effort."

He then quotes Schleicher's simile : "Our (Dutch) words, as contrasted with Gothic words, are like a statue that has been rolling for a long time in the bed of a river till its beautiful limbs have been worn off, so that now scarcely anything remains but a polished stone cylinder with faint indications of what it once was." (8)

"But" says Jespersen, "let us turn the tables by asking : Suppose, however that it would be out of the question to place the statue on a pedestal to be admired; what if, on the one hand, human well-being was at stake, if it was not serviceable in a rolling mill, which would be better- a rugged and unwieldy statue, making difficulties at every rotation, or an even, smooth, easy-going and well-oiled roller? (9)

Again in the Patois, among common nouns, distinctions of gender are mainly made by the use of prefixes: [man, uman], [bɔi, gial, bɔbɔ titi].

[man, bɔi, bɔbɔ] are masculine, and [uman, gial, titi], are feminine; Hence:

[man-pikin]	= a he-man;	[uman-pikin]	= a strongwilled woman.
[man-dore]	= a girl who tends to boyish practices		
[man-pua]	= a Tom cat; a smart thief		
[uman-pua]	= a Tibby cat.		
[bɔbɔ]-Djona	= the son of Mr - Jones i.e. Mater Jones.		
[titi]-Djona	= the daughter of Mr - Jones i.e. Miss Jones		

Other compounds have the form ram to indicate a male, as in [ram-ʃip], [ra]-got = a 'ram', and a 'male goat'.



It is interesting to note that we say [bo] to denote a 'boar,' and [həg] to mean a 'sow'; often [həg] means generic 'pig'. This absence of gender inflections is also found in other West African Languages, prefixes being the only indications of gender. e.g. in Yoruba [akɔ] = a male, [abɔ] = a female. hence: [akɔ -sɪn] = a stallion [abɔ -sɪn] = a mare  
 [akɔnrin] = a man - a he-man; [ɔbirin] = a woman  
 [ɔkɔjawo] = a bridegroom [jawo] = a bride.

This characteristic is found in Mendi and Temne also.

e.g. Mendi [hindo] = male [njaha] = female hence:

[hindo-lo] > [hĩ-lo] = a male child [njaha-lo] = a female child.  
 [hindo-ga] > [hĩga] = the he-men [njaha-ga] = the matrons  
 ( Latin viri)

Temne [runi] = male [bɛra] = female. hence:

[watɔu-runi] = a male child [watɔi-bɛra] = a female child  
 [kakaiku-runi] and [kakaiku-bɛra] are the male and female counterparts of a certain herb.

Mendi has gone still one step further in adopting the English word "boy" [bɔi], with the connotation "servant", and preserved it in the form [bɔi-lopɔi (sia)] = a manservant; hence :  
 [gi bɔi-lopɔi (sia) lɔ] = "this (these) is (are) his servant(s)."

Finally nouns have no case-endings. The tendency to simplify case-endings in English, has gone one stage further by the omission of the -s which indicates possession.

The Nominative, Objective and Possessive cases are thus determined from the context only.

For example :

- (i) [pikin nɔ ba ple wit faia] = Children should not trifle with fire.
- (ii) [a go wip dis pikin ja main] = Mind, I shall flog this child.
- (iii) [na Sera in pikin klos dis] = This is Sarah's child's dress.

Sometimes of course we use the personal pronoun [in] or [i] meaning generic "his", as in :

[na Meri in buk dis] = (literally) this is Mary her book, i.e. This is Mary's book.

When special emphasis is to be made, the word [jon] English 'own' is added to the pronoun [in], as in:

[na Meri in jon buk dis] = literally, this is Mary her own very book, i.e. This is Mary's own book.

The above characteristic is also found in West African Languages. There also, case endings are only known among personal pronouns. Position is the only safe guide towards determining the case of a word. e.g. in Yoruba the thing possessed seems to stand always before the possessor with the preposition "[ti]" or by mere juxtaposition. hence :

[Iwe ti Musa] = Moses' book ( the book of Moses )

[Iwe Adzaji] = Ajayi's book.

Sometimes reduplication of the final letter of the word representing the thing possessed as in [Iwe-e Musa]; = Moses' book. As a rule the preposition [ti] is always expressed when the noun in possession stands alone.

In Mende one would say "[Musa gɔlɛ lɔ] or [Musa gi gɔlɛ lɔ] i.e. Literally "This is Musa's book" or "This is Moses' his own book."

When we come to verbs, we find an absence of personal endings also. Only the context and sometimes a pronoun or an adjective can help to determine the number and person of a verb . e.g. we say:

[a (wi) lɛk jit ba'd] = I (we) like to eat very much.

[ju (unu) lɛk jiiit ba'd] = You ( sg or pl) like to eat very much.

[i (dɛ̃n) lɛk jit ba'd] = He (they) like to eat very much.

also [ wan man )  
or tu man ) bin kam ja jɛstade = one man or  
or plɛ̃nti pipul) many people  
came here yesterday.

Again there is no Passive Voice. The Active Voice of a transitive verb is used impersonally with the doer of the action to imply the Passive Voice. e.g.

The snake was killed by the servants = [na dɛ̃n bɔi kil da snɛk.]

This means literally, "It is the boys who killed the snake."

The periphrasis employed here makes much use of the indefinite pronoun [dɛ̃n]; We also say [dɛ̃n de kɔl ju] i.e. they are calling you for "you are being called." also [dɛ̃n bin tot mi] = "they carried me" for "I was carried."

In Mende for example all the  characteristics mentioned above in connection with "verbs" are found.

For example : There are no personal endings :

[nja loŋgəi la] = I like it

[Njapoi dzi loŋgəi la] = This woman likes it.

[Wu loŋgəi la] ? = Do you (pl) like it ?

(b) There are no Passives. Instead of the normal passive

Mendi has a periphrastic construction similar to that of the Patois. e.g.

A snake is killed = [Ti kali wa] , i.e. They have killed the snake.

A snake was killed by Joseph = [Jusufu lə kali wa] = literally

It is Joseph that killed a snake.

The last two sentences would have been rendered in Yoruba thus:

(a) [a pa ɛdzə kan] = he killed the snake.

(b) [Jusufu li okpa ɛdzə na] = It is Joseph that killed the snake.

The forms of the tenses also show close similarities to the processes at work in other West African Languages. The form of the Present tense can often be used to express the Aorist or the Future in an Interrogative sense. e.g.

[I kill am] = he kills it (now)

[I kill am las wik] = he killed last week

[a kil am] ? = Shall I kill it ?

Sometimes the form [i kill am] could be used to mean " he has killed it". This last tense is often expressed with the use of the auxiliary verb [dɛn] from English "done = finished".

Similar uses of this auxiliary are found in Mendi and Temne

For example:

Mendi [Ngi kpɔjɔa a piela] = "I have finished doing it"

Temen [I pon di] = "I have finished eating."

The Sierra Leone Patois however, through its contact with English has however produced a more complicated system of auxiliary verbs : viz:-

[bin]	English been or "bin" expresses the aorist tense.
[de]	..... indicates the continuous tense
[bin de]	..... indicates the Imperfect tense
[go]	..... indicates the future tense
[dɔn]	..... indicates the perfect tense
[bin dɔn]	..... indicates the Pluperfect tense
[bin go dɔn]	..... indicates the continuous future-perfect found in conditional sentences
[go dɔn]	..... indicates the simple future-perfect tense.

and so we say in the Patois,

[a bin hangri]	= I was hungry
[a bin de bruk]	= I was washing clothes
[a de dai o!]	= I am dying !
[a go dai]	= I shall die
[a dɔn kip di buk]	= I have kept the book ( in question)
[a bin dɔn kip di buk]	= I had kept the book
[a go dɔn dai bifo ju briɔ di nja-njam]	= I shall have died (of hunger) before you fetch the food.
[a bin go dɔn dai bifo dis jia, if gɔd nɔ bin hɛp mi.]	= I should have died before this year had God not delivered me (in a very miraculous way.

It is interesting to note that the [de] forms convey a special sense of continuity of actions. e.g. [a de go] means strictly "I am on the way going." [I de go kill da leopard] means "he is going (determined) to kill that leopard. In many ways these [de] forms, resemble the future participle in Latin.

This part of the verb can be used to express resolutions or determinations. e.g. 'Turnus entered the field determined to die' = "Turnus moriturus proelium it."

Migeod feels that these de-forms are characteristic of African Languages . (19)

If this is so then we have a simple explanation for the rather extensive use of the "historic present" in accounts of incidents or conversations when given in English.

There is a very noticeable use of the Present tense when our people are expected to use a past tense in English. The narrator seems to forget all about time, and imagines, in his report, the scene live again as if the whole story was re-enacted. This historic present agrees in almost every respect with its Latin counterpart. But in English a past tense is always required except in Vulgar speech.

There is some difference of opinion on this point. Some scholars are inclined to the view that it is due to literary influence from abroad. But Jespersen thinks it is a Native English element. He bases his arguments on the numerous use of "says I" or "says he", in reports of past conversations as in Shakespeare Henry V Act IV, Sc vi ll: 20 ff.

"He smiled ~~me~~ in the face, raught me in his hand  
And, with a feeble gripe, says 'Dear my Lord  
Commend my service to my Sover~~ign~~' "

Or in Hardy's "Under the Greenwood Tree":

"If there's work to be done, I must do it says he, "wedding or no." (11)

As far as African Languages are concerned, Migeod has suggested that this phenomenon is a kind of "Continuous Mood" which is not so easily recognised as such. If we accepted Migeod's explanation, then the Patois has developed a very strong Continuous Mood from the African Languages of its speakers.

Besides there is also an absence of True Subjunctive Moods. This is best seen among the card players who say "[ma wini ma losi]; [ju tek dis ju win, ju tek dis (the other) ju los. Win los; win los.]" - shuffling three cards in their hands. This statement strictly means: " You take this you (will) win; you take this (the other) you (will) lose. Win lose; win, lose. The introductory phrase merely means " a game of winning or losing ."

Again in the Sentences :

[u du gud, gud go fala am] = (literally he who does good  
good will come back to him)  
i.e. Kindness will return to  
those who practice kind acts

[u trowe asis na im asis go fala] = (literally, he who throws  
ashes into a bin will be  
followed by some as he return  
i.e. Evil deeds will come  
back to those who do them.

We see similar implications. There is very little suggestion of

A Subjunctive. Each sentence seems to imply two originally independent actions. e.g. (1) He does good (2) good actions return to him; both of which are involved in an implicative system in which we can work out a complete proverb "If one does a good act, good acts will return to him."

There is also a general absence of Participial phrases, like John having returned home, we had a set of four to play a game of tennis. In the Patois, such a sentence would have to be transformed into the form "When John returned, we had a set of four to play a game of tennis." Once again this tendency is found in all other West African Languages.

Also like all other West African Languages, the use of "have" as in "I have it", is always expressed by circumlocution. e.g. The above sentence may be expressed thus :

- (a) In Mendi [Ta nja jeja] or [Ta nja gama] Li~~k~~ It is with me  
or it is in my hand.
- (b) In Temne [I ba ñi]
- (c) In the Patois [I de to ma] or = It is with me o~~r~~  
[na mi tek an] It is I who took it.

When we examine the adjectives in use, we find that there is only one form which is not inflected at all, whether adopted from English or from any other African Language.

The English loans are usually borrowed from the Positive degree viz: good, bad, sweet, bitter, wicked, long, short, etc.,



These are modified by suitable adverbs, conjunctions or conjunction-phrases, prefixed to them to express comparison .

The conjunction [pas] "past" is equivalent to the English "more than". Thus

"[mi ŋuga ken swit pas ju jon]" = "my sugar cane is sweeter than yours."

[got lɛk kasada pas gras] " = "goats like cassada more than grass. i.e. goats prefer cassada to grass."

We also use the same word with [bɛtɛ] as in "[fri po bɛtɛ pas tait dz ntri]" which means "Freedom even when coupled with poverty, is preferable to (better than) wealth with many restrictions."

The superlative degree is often expressed by the phrase ' pas ..  
.....dɛm (unu) ɔl ' as in

[mi buk big pas dɛm ɔl jon] = my book is bigger than any of theirs

Sometimes one hears the phrase' .....fɔ ..... ɔl', as in

"[a big fɔ dɛm ɔl] = "I am older than all of them, i.e. I am the oldest of them all."

At other times, the superlative degree is formed by adding the word [ba'd], used as an adverb, to any adjective. e.g. we say "[di sup swit ba'd]" when we wish to say "the soup is very sweet indeed" Often the word ba'd is reduplicated as in the phrase "[bita bad-bad.]" i.e. "very bitter indeed."

There is a growing tendency to substitute the word ' gud' for 'bad ' possible because of recent developments in taste. The ban seems

to be growing round the form "[bad-bad]", probably because it meant "very bad" originally. As a result, the modern form of the superlative is "[nə gud nə gud]". I heard a man talking of a heavy rainfall say, "[Di ren kam nə gud nə gud]" i.e. "It rained cats and dogs."

Sometimes mere reduplication serves as a superlative as "[na gud-gud bɔi]" i.e. 'he is a very good boy' ( he is a really good boy.)

All the loans from other African Languages are also treated as being in the positive degree, and are modified accordingly as the English loans mentioned above. e.g. '[Dzən rɔdzu pas mi brɔda]' means "John is looking more goodlooking than my brother."

There is however a peculiar use of adjectives as nouns without the use of the article as one finds in English, to express actions or states. e.g. in the Patois we say:

[bɛtɛ de] = literally, "good things are about" i.e. There is something good in store.

[bad nə ba pe] = wicked actions do not profit.

[gud nə ba ɪs] = good deeds never perish ( are never lost).

Adverbs. There are very few adverbs, qua adverbs, in the Patois. As a rule usage decides more the function of the word than any clues of structure. Adverbs are therefore either coinde from English adjective loans, or are formed by reduplicating such adjectives. e.g.

English Adjective	Adverb	Secondary Adverb.
[fast̄ > [fas]	[fas] e.g. [waka fas̄]= walk fast	[fas-fas] e.g. [waka fas-fas]= walk quickly
fine > [fain]	[fain] e.g. [mek am fain 0̄]= = make it well please	[fain-fain] e.g. [mek am fain-fain 0̄]= = do it as well as you can.
bad > [bad]	[ba'd] e.g. as used above	[bad-bad] as used above.
good > [gud]= ( more often ) kind.	as used above	as used above

It must be here mentioned that the Accidence and Syntax of the Sierra Leone Patois is very closely bound up with the formation of words, chiefly through the formation of reduplications. As in Yoruba, reduplication is often used to express emphasis and the kinaesthetic imagery involved in cumulative feeling. This cumulative feeling is usually produced by frequentative actions, a kind of habit; hence it is often the means of expressing plurals and past or completed actions. Jespersen holds that this tendency to reduplicate especially in verb-forms is a real plural of the verb. "If the plural of one walk or one action is several walks, actions, the plural idea of the verb must be to undertake several walks to perform more than one action."....."If we say "they often kissed" we see that the adverb expresses exactly same plural idea as the plural forms ( and the adjective) in (many) kisses.

In other words, the real plural of the verb is what in some languages is expressed by the so-called frequentative or iterative- sometimes separate "form" of the verb which is often classed with the tense aspect of the ENGLISH (mine), as when repetition (as well as duration) is in Semitic Languages expressed by a strengthening (doubling, lengthening) of the middle consonant or in Chamorro, by a reduplication of the stressed syllable of the verbal root." (12)

When Jespersen later discusses the Perfect and Imperfect tenses, he argues that the "imperfect in Latin, Romance and Greek has two functions; for besides the lingering action,..... it ALSO (mine) denotes an habitual action in some past period. Here therefore the time-notion is bound up with the idea of repetition, which is really a numerical idea." (13)

In Yoruba, most of the repetitions describe either a habitual action or a lingering feeling which certainly produces a cumulative effect. Hence we have the following forms of reduplication:

(a) Nouns: The verb stem is repeated twice over.

Root	Primary Noun	Secondary Noun.
[kpɛdza] = to kill a fish	[a-kpɛdza] = a fisherman	[kpɛdza-kpɛdza] = a fisherman
[kɔnrin] = to sing	[akɔnrin] = a singer	[kɔnrin-kɔnrin] = a song.
[du] = to be black		[dudu] = blackness.

(b) Adjectives. These are formed from verbal roots or other adjectives.

Root	Predicative adjectives	Attributive adjectives.
[da] = to make	[da] = made	[dida] = made.
[la] = to split	[la] = split	[lila] = fissured
[mɔ] = to know		[mimɔ] = known
[gbona] = hot (adj)	[gbona] = hot	[gbigbona] = hot
[dara]	[dara] = good	[didara] = good

(c) Adverbs These are formed from adjectives.

Root (Predicative Adjectives)	Adverbs.
[dun] = sweet	[didun-didun] = in a very sweet way
[dara] = good	[dara-dara] = very well.
[daru] = covered	[daru-daru] = entirely
[tɔ] = to be enough	[tɔw-tɔw] = reverently

## 2. Attributive Adjectives.

[fiɔ] = high	[fiɔ-fiɔ] = very high
[tɪan] = long	[tɪan-tɪan] = very long
[roki] = yellow	[roki-roki] = very yellow or yellow indeed.
[redɛ] = foolish	[redɛ-redɛ] = foolishly

Like the Yorubas, we Sierra Leone Creoles, use a series of reduplications like the following:

English Original	Patois reduplication.
[fain] (adj) = beautiful (adv) = well	[fain-fain] = dandy (adj) = well or very well (adv)
[bɔŋ] (adj) = burnt	[bɔŋ-bɔŋ] = the crust of rice left in a cooking pot. (n)
[rop] (n) = a piece of string	[rop-rop] = a snake-used at nights only

## English Original

## Patois reduplication

[bad] (adj) = wicked

[bad-bad] = very bad (adv)  
= a sign of the  
superlative  
degree.

[krat] (vb) = to scratch

[krat-krat] = a caterpillar

sand (n)

[san-san] = sand

[ton] (n) = stone

[ton-ton] = a rocky  
patch of land.

wasp (n)

[was-was] = a wasp

[wit] (n)

[wit-i-wit/i] = a witch

[tək] (vb) = to speak

[tək-tək] = a chatter  
box.

[beg]

[bega-bega] = a beggar(n)

[tʃʊk] (vb) = to pierce

[tʃʊk-tʃʊk] = a thorn

[sɪk] (adj) = to be ill

[sɪk-sɪk] (adj) = too sickly

In some cases one finds reduplications involving words belonging to two different languages or sometimes two words are joined together with the same meaning that each of them has.

e.g. [brezin tekʊ] = a vivacious person' is from "brazen" and Mendi [tekʊ], = a young vivacious fish.

'[babu-woto] = a very ugly person', is from Eng: 'Baboon' and Tenne [woto], = an ape.

'[biza bɔdi ofofo] = a busy body' is from Eng: "Busy body" and Yoruba [ofofo] = a busybody.

'[mata-odo] = a mortar' is from English Mortar and Yoruba [odo], = a mortar.

'[fala-nakata] = to imitate' is from Eng: follow, which has come to mean "imitate", and Eng: mock, with a remote sense of imitating.

In many cases the reduplications are found in the forms of

epigrams e.g. [blak lɛk dudu] = literally "black like (as) ~~black~~ blackness."

[tara de tək pan tara] = "the blind is leading the blind."

In some cases, it is very difficult to tell where the members of

the duplication have come from. Many words of this class seem to be onomatopoeic in origin and have been mere efforts to express the gestures associated with certain feelings.

Some of this kind are :

[wara-were]	=	in the twinkle of an eye.
[for-ſara]	=	utter nonsense
[boto-bata]	=	.. ..
[rata-rata]	=	.. ..
[nə]i-nə]i]	=	.. ..
[ta'-ta']	=	.. ..

[map-map] - used to describe brief intervals of time; and suggestive of the speed of a flash of lightning. It may have originated from a syllabic but implosive "p" as is found in primitive life when a lightning flash goes by. People make a sound with their mouths as if a pop-gun was fired.

[patə -pətə]	=	a marsh, probably from the sound [kpətəu] which is made when one walsk in mud.
[wini-wini]	=	very small, tiny.
[dzin-dziŋ]	=	whining, miserable object, probably from the whine of a miserable puppy.
[gbere-gbere]	=	half witted.
[kiti-kata]	=	a description of "flight", a rout, similar to the English "helter-skelter".
[kop-kap]	=	a description of the sound of a leather shoe.
[dzaga-dzaga]	=	rough and tumble
[t]aka-t]aka]	=	untidy

All the above cases of reduplications show most clearly that the Sierra Leone Patois is an African Language. It would be interesting also to see a few other instances of reduplications from other African Languages not mentioned above .

Limba.....	[sigaməga]	=	rice
	[kpaga-laga]	=	rice and sauce.
Susu .....	[mərə -mərə]	=	a poser
	[wongé-ségé]	=	how are you?





modifications- [tɛnki] and [tɛnk-ja]; [tɛnk] "thank."

It may well be that the [tɛnk-ja] form was suggested by the 'yeer' of the West of Ireland.

(iii) Other forms of "em" for "them" and "am" for "him" or "her" are mentioned by Wyld as survivals in English of "hem" after the first half of the Fifteenth Century as in the following sentences:

(a) "ax of em that felde the strokys"

(b) "Goe Dame, conduct am in."

" "em" was in frequent use in the colloquial dialogue of the later Seventeenth Century and became quite common in the writings of the Eighteenth Century." (16)

This may have been the beginnings of the Patois forms [im, am] for generic 'him'.

Again the weak form "a" for "he" was quite common in the South-West and South-East Midlands.

Wyld states that this "a" is used by Trevisa as a Neuter or Masculine. "Henry Verney writes in 1664: 'a dyed one newersday a is tomorrow carried to his own church.' And again in 1647, 'a proves by fits very bad'." (17).

(iv) The American "We-uns and you-uns" used in the Southern States and in Scotch dialects were also brought to Sierra Leone. The origin of the idiom seems to have been a desire to distinguish Y O U singular from Y O U plural. This suggestion is justified by the greater prevalence of 'you-un

The Patois, probably after making some modifications found it very much easier to adopt the nearest African word which made the required distinction easy. This was how the Ibo word [unu] seems to have been absorbed into the Patois.

These -un" forms may also be traced to tendencies in English for combinations like "bad-uns" and "un little uns". (18)

(v) An old English phrase "the top one" has become in the Patois "[di pan (upon)-tap wan]". (19)

(vi) I think also that the Patois phrase "[a go du am]" I shall do it, where "go" is used as a future auxiliary, belongs to the "going to" usage with respect to prospectiveness, either of the Past, Present or Future. e.g. In English one finds the following sentences :

She is going to cry - Present

When was he going to cry - Past

When will he be going to write - Future.

Similarly the use of "done" instead of "have done" belongs to old English usage. In vulgar English one hears, "we done our work quick", instead of "we have done our work quickly." (20) Incidentally, this phrase contains as well the use of "quick" as an adverb instead of the correct "quickly".

The Patois has preserved the form "quick" as in [go ɛn kam kwik]" or [waka kwik-kwik] i.e. "go and return(quickly) soon; walk fast

It is interesting to note that the Patois has also

developed a facility to use words as different parts of speech. For example [wata] <water may be used as (1) a noun = water (11) a verb = "to water" - the difference in usage depends on the tone used. [mared] may also mean (1) a "wedding," or the verb to "marry"; no change of tone seems to exist here.

[kɔba] may also be (1) a "cover," or the verb to "cover"; [kɔs] may mean the noun 'curse' or sometimes "contumely" as well as the verb to "insult"; [lɔs] may be the verb to "loose" or the adjective meaning "rude, loose"; [pɔ] may be either "poverty" or the adjective "poor"; [waala] may also be the noun "worry" or the verb to "bother"; [bɔ] may be the verb to "pierce" or the term of endearment meaning "my dear", or a "boar" - a male pig; [kɔs] may be the noun = "a dress" or the adverb meaning "near", or the verb "to come near".

It is thus clear from the above study that the Sierra Leone Patois has preserved many archaic English usages, richly clothed in the garb of African Language structures. Migeod has studied this question very carefully and come to the same conclusion. He groups all the West African Languages together and finds strong resemblances in their accidence and Syntax.

(a) There is a general absence of inflections and so there is :

(1) An absence of plural forms for verbs and nouns except often

with the help of prefixes and suffixes. Reduplication is the chief method of forming the plural. This he attributes to the fact that "the untutored African .... does not understand what is meant by the plural number .....; only a concrete statement CAN (mine) convey an idea to his mind. Ibo e.g. has no plural form ....If a numeral adjective is not added to the noun, the word "ntutu"=many, precedes it. "

Other languages amalgamate a word"such as many in the noun itself; and its corruption makes the plural inflection.

irregular terminations are found in many such cases.

Even Yoruba forms plurals by adding the prefixes [awɔn] and [wɔnji]. These are in themselves personal pronouns="they"; [awɔn] is used for animate objects and [wɔnji] for inanimate things. Thus [awɔn ɔmɔde fɛran lati ʃire] = "children are fond of playing ; whilst [ɔmɔdena fɛran lati ʃire] = "the child is fond of playing."

For Migeod this tendency to use quantitative adjectives to express the plural "emphasises the negro's conception of a thing as having an independent individuality."

With one exception, viz Hausa, the languages of West Africa are all grammatically sexless.

Also they have no Passive Voice, because " the logic of the negro mind requires that every statement should be concrete and direct, and does not tolerate an inversion."

In the active Voice, both parties to the transaction are mentioned, but when the passive voice is used, only one party, albeit the principal one alone, is referred to." Some languages however approximate to the form equivalent to the English "he is killed," but this is strictly not passive; as a rule however, the strict passive " he has been killed " is absent."

Migeod thinks that this is due to the fact that verbs are used both as Transitives and Intransitives: e.g.

" Mende ' [i gula] ' = he fell. ' [ti gi gula] ' = they threw him down .

The latter is equivalent to the passive of ' [i gula] '. Of course this last statement may mean " he fell " or " he caused himself to fall " .

(4) They have no truly-subjunctive Moods. Instead of the normal complex sentence with a particle expressing causation, in which two sentences are put together "one in the Indicative Mood, the other in the Subjunctive Mood, in the negro languages both are in reality in the Indicative Mood. e.g.

English " If you do this you will die ."

Mende " [Bi dzi jlea; ba ha lo] " = literally, 'You have done this, you will die.'

\* Migeod argues that the two conditions are stated coordinately. On the other hand, he suggests that there is a Continuous Mood, often noticeable in the present tense.

This is similar to "I am going" in English. In Mende, this mood has developed in all tenses and we have :

[li] = to go. Imperative [li] = go; [ga li] (present tense) = I am going.

[nja lɔ lima] = I am (on the way)going - Present tense continuous mood.

[nja jɛ lɔ lima] = I shall be (on the way) going.

(5) There are no present or active participles owing to the desire for concrete statements. Past participles may be used only as verbal adjectives. But sentences like "having washed, he went to eat" can only be rendered in two sentences .e.g.

Temne [Ma pon jak kata, i kɔ di] "=(when) I had washed my hands, I went to eat.

(6) Time and tense are also difficult concepts. The three main divisions of time- Past , Present and Future are easily found, but tenses are slightly different. There are no tense-endings. Often the present and past tense are similar in form. Here also reduplication is the chief method of expressing past time.

But in many languages, the Perfect, the future, the imperfect and pluperfect are found.

In Mende e.g. [ngi wa] = I am come  
 [nga wa lɔ] = I shall come - a present tense depending on an adverb.  
 [nja wa ma] = I am coming ( about to come )

[nja lɔ wa ma] = I am (still) coming  
 [ngi jɛ wa ma] = I was coming - imperfect tense.  
 [ngi wa lɔ] = I had come.

(7) There is also a general absence of the verb "have" as a possessive verb, and so it is used only as an auxiliary. The English "I have it" becomes "it is in my hand" . e.g.  
 Mende " [Ta nja je` ja] " (21)

## Chapter 5.

### The Vocabulary of the Patois.

The last two chapters have been employed in describing the phonetics , accidence and syntax of the Patois.

This has involved an elementary study of the principal languages from which the Patois has evolved and especially of the speech-forms of the English Language, during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.

This study has made it easy to distinguish between the sounds and forms of English words which were actually introduced in Sierra Leone, because they were standard then, and the clippings and mutations which were produced by the African learners.

We have also been able to see that the main characteristics - phonetic, accidence and syntax- of the Patois, suggest a very strong link with West African modes of thought as they are known to exist in other West African Languages.

Let us now enquire into the origins of the vocabulary.

The vocabulary of the Patois can be traced down to two main source groups (a) European Languages and (b) West African Languages.

Of the loans from Europe, the Spanish (and Portuguese) belong to the earliest strata. The De Ruyter Stone testifies to the early contacts already referred to on page 1 above.



The following words have come down to us:

(a) of Spanish Origin.

- [sabi] < savvy = to know; we also have saba = skill  
 [pikin] = a little child.  
 [kokorioko] coquerico - the sound produced when a cock crows.  
 [boto] = a stupid person from which we have the compound  
 [boto-bata] = arrant rigmarole,

- [kamarad] < camarada = a comrade, a play fellow.  
 [caramba] - wonderful, now used as a Proper name only.  
 [kagbona] carbons, - carbon, used to describe a special preparation of cassada in public cookeries.  
 It is doubtful however, whether this word was not associated with the Yoruba '[gbona]' = hot.

- [konk] < concha - a mollusc, = a snail.  
 [kukuruku] < Cucurucu - used as a Proper name only. A Mr Sibthorpe used to call himself 'Prince of Cucurucu.'

- [farinja] < farinaceo = a special preparation of cassada into a dry meal like grape nuts.

- [fiha] < fiebre = a fever  
 [mi] = to or for me  
 [mion] < mio = mine  
 [kama] < cama = a pair of tight fitting trousers.

(b) There are also words from the French Language.

- [baku] < beaucoup = plentiful  
 [pantoo] < pantoufle = soft slippers: used here to describe a rough canvas shoe with hemp soles.

(c) But the greatest number of foreign loans comes from the English Language. It is difficult to collect all the words in current use but the following lists give an idea of the range of the loans.

#### A. Nouns.

These were borrowed from two classes of words: (a) Singular Nouns and (b) Plural nouns. After some slight modifications have been made, the words have been used without any change

for inflexional purposes. Thus we have the following:-

(a) Legal and Military Terms.

[wa] < "war", [kot] < "court", [gɔn] < "gun", [dɔbul-barɛl] "a double  
barrelled gun", [kiaps-gɔn] < "caps gun", [poda] and [pauda] < "powder"  
[dze] < "jail", [sɔdza] < "soldier", [kɔnsibul] < "constable", [sadzɪn] <  
"sergeant", [kɔpul] < "corporal", [tɔd wɛs] < "Third West African  
Regiment", [giad rum] < "guard room", [militrɪ] < "Military grounds",  
[Polis] < "police (smɔl or big) "Police Station (District or  
Central", [sɛl] < "cell", [pared] < "parade (noun and verb)",  
[mat-pas] "march past" (noun), [maks man] "marks man" [bɛg-nɛt]  
"bayonet", [sɔ·d] "sword".

(b) Religious and Educational Terms.

[tʃɔtʃ] < "church", [skul] < "school", [minista] < "minister", [rɛvrɛn] <  
"referend", [kɔmiuniɔn] < "communion", [krisɪn] < "christening",  
[kɔnfameɔn] < "confirmation", [prɛa-mitin] < "prayer meeting",  
[hɑ·t] < "heart", [sol] < "soul", [maɪnd] < "mind", [hɛvin] < "heaven",  
[hɛl] < "hell", [dɛbul] < "devil", [Setan] < "Satan", [ɛndzɛl] < "angel",  
[buk] < "book", [ɪnk] < "ink", [lɛd-pɛnsul] < "lead pencil", [pɛnsul] =  
"Estate Pencil",

(c) Household Terms.

(1) Personal. [man] < "man", [uman] < "woman", [bɔɪ] < "boy", [giəl] <  
"girl", [wɛs] < "waist", [jaɪ] < "eye", [lɪp] < "lip", [tɔ] < "toe", [bɛlɪs] <  
"belly", [fɪŋgɚ] < "finger", [kɔt] < "coat", [skat] < "skirt", [tʃɔtʃ]  
"shirt", [frɔk] < "frock", [kɔlarɛt] < "colaret", [tʃɛn] "chain",

[riŋ] < "ring", [han] < "hand", [fut] < "foot", [mɔt] < "mouth", [nos] < "nose"  
 [lɪg] < "leg", [jes] < "ears", [trɔsɪs] < "trousers", [drɔz] < "drawers",  
 [bɑŋgʌl] < "bangles", [sʌs] < "shoes", [tɪt] "Teeth", [kloz] < "clothes".

Names of animals associated with the home

[dɔg] < "dog", [pus] < "pussy cat", [mɔnki] < "monkey", [pidzɪn] < "pigeon",  
 [pɔli] < "polly"- a parrot, [fɔl] < "fowl", [gɪni-pɪg] "guinea-pig",  
 [kənəri] < "canary".

(3) Names of plants and fruits.

[mɑŋgrɔ] < "mango", [pɔpɔ] < "pawpaw", [brɛfɪt] < "Breadfruit"- tree  
 or fruit, [plɔm] < "plum"- any kind of plum, [ʃʊgɑ-kən] < "sugar cane",  
 [gwɑvɑ] and [gwɑbɑ] < "guava", [ɛpl] < "apple", [pɑmtri] < "oil palm tree",  
 [kɔkɔnɑt] < "coconut", [kɔkɔnɑt tɪk] < "coconut tree", [tɑmɑtɪs] <  
 "tomatoes", [pʌŋkɪn] < "pumpkin", [pɛpɛ] < "pepper", [gɑdɪn ɛg] <  
 "garden eggs", [bɑnɑnɑ] < "banana" [plɑntɪn] < "plantain",  
 [pɛtɛtɛ] < "potatoes.

(4) Words denoting domestic utensils.

[faɪɑ tɔn] < "fire stones"- stones used in the hearth for  
 resting pots over the fire. [pɛpɛ-ton] and [pɛpɛ-ton pɪkɪn] =  
 "Pepper stone" and "pepper stone pikin" i.e. a set of two stones  
 used for grinding cooking ingredients, originally pepper only.  
 [pɔt] "pot", [plɛt] "plate", [spun] "spoon" [nɛf] "knife",  
 [mɑtɑ] < "mortar", [pɛnsul] < "pestle", [bɛsɪn] < "basin", [kɔp] < "cup",  
 [bɔkɪt] < "bucket", [bɑskɪt] < "basket", [tɪ-kɪtul] "tea kettle"  
 [tɪ-pɔt] "tea Pot", [tɪ-kɔp] "tea cup", [brʌm] "broom", [dɪʃ] < "dish".

## (5) Names of foodstuffs.

[rɛs] < "Rice", [brɛd] < "bread", [biskit] < "biscuits", [dʒam] < "jam", [ləsindzɪs] < "lozenges", [pamain] < "palm oil", [puɔɪn] < "pudding", [la:d] < "lard", [bʊtə] "butter", [grənət] and [grənət ɔɪl] < "groundnuts and groundnut oil", ham, "ham", [eg] and [ɛg] < "eggs", [hɛdʒ-bɒn] < "hitch bone", [briskit] < "brisket", [ʃɪn] < "shin", [bif] < "beef" - used to mean meat in general.

## (6) Words implying domestic relations.

[mæn] "husband", [ʊmən] = "one's lady love", [wɪf] = "wife", [swit at] < "sweetheart", = a paramour, [ɪntɛndɛd] = "a fiance" [sɪstə] = "sister", [brʌðə] = "brother", [dadi], and [papa], = "father" [mami] and [mama] = "mother", [grani] < "grandmother", [ʊnkul] = "uncle", [anti] = "aunt", [kʌz] and [kʌzɪn] = "cousin", [mɔðən lɔ] = "mother-in-law", [brən lɔ] "brother-in-law", [fɑðən lɔ] = "father-in-law",

## (7) Various.

[æʃɪs] < "ashes", [kɔl] < "cold or coal", [wɪtʃ] "witch", [sɔɪ] wata] = "the sea", [rɪbə] < "river", [mɑkɪt] < "market", [ɔktʃɪn] "an auction" [ɔktʃɪniə] < "auctioneer", [lɛbrə] "labourer", [tæl] < "tally" as in the phrase "mark tally" i.e. "mark the tally card"; in Patois "[mɑk tæl]".

[rɔzɪs] < "rose", [dʒɪrɛnɪəm] < "geranium", [lɪli] < "lily" [haɪbɪskʊs] < "hibiscus";

[laɪən] < "lion", [ɛlɪfənt] < "elephant", [əlɪgətə] < "alligator", [bo-mæn] < "boa constrictor", [lɛpɛt] < "leopard", [snɛk] < "snake",

[ʃip] < "sheep", [babu] < "baboon", [dia] < "deer";  
 [ʃak] < "shark", [skwif] < "squid", [pɔpɔs] < "porpoise", [sɔfis] < "saw -  
 fish", [koota] < "baracoota", [makrɛl] < "makarels", [mina] < "minnows",  
 [hɛrin] < "herrings", [tapɔŋ] < "ten-pounders";

[dɔv] < "dove", [hak-hak] < "hawk", [aul] < "owl", [kiŋfiʃa] < "king-  
 fisher", [bat] < "bats", [spaida] < "spider".

### B. Verbs.

There is a large number of English verbs in use in the Pajois.

These have been adopted mainly from the present infinitive.

e.g. [tek] < "take", [tai] < "tie", [fiks] < "fix", [slip] < "sleep", [gi] < "give",  
 [drink] < "drink", [go] < "go", [bai] < "buy", [sel] < "sell", [rɔn] < "run",  
 [wek] < "wake up", [lus] < "loose", [briŋ] < "bring", [kot] < "court",  
 [pwɛl] < "spoil", [it] < "eat", [smok] < "smoke", [gid ap] and [grɔp] <  
 "get up", [waka] < "walk", [wok] < "work", [gro] < "grow", [kɔm ɔt]  
 "come out", [tʃuk] < "stick", [kratʃ] < "scratch", [pul] < "pull",  
 [drɔ] < "draw", [drɛg] < "drag", [wep] < "wipe", and many more.

Some have been adopted from the past tense forms. e.g.

[lɛn(t)] = "borrow" as well as "lend", [lɔs] "lost" = to lose,  
 [lɛf] < "left" = to leave, [brɔk] < "break", = to break, [skiad] < "  
 "scared" = to scare, [mared] < "married" = to marry,

Caxton's 'gaf' is also used in addition to the ordinary 'gi',  
 in a sense which implies revolt. e.g. if a person when asked to  
 give of something replies "[a go gaf ju]", he will be understood  
 to mean "I shall NEVER give you the smallest fraction thereof."

This word is however heard among children only.

There are a few other verbs which have double forms like  
[gi] and [gaf]; e.g.

[drink] and [drɔnk]: [drɔnk] = "to be tipsy, to grow infatuated  
to be beside one's self."

[go] and [wɛnt] : [wɛnt] suggests revolt as "gaf" above.  
[a go wɛnt] = I shall NEVER go.

[dai] and [dede] "dead": [dede] also means to "die". "[a go dede]"  
literally means I shall die, but often means  
I shall laugh my sides out (to death).

#### 4. Adjectives.

The adjectives which were borrowed seem to have been taken  
mainly from the positive degree :

[gud] <"good", [swit] <"sweet", [bita] <"bitter", [baɔ], [wickɛd] =  
"wicked", [lɔŋ] and [laŋga] <"long", [fa] <"far", [trot] <"straight".

But there are also forms taken from the Comparative degree e.g.

[bɛtɛ] <"better", [wɔs] and [wasa] <"worse", the latter being used  
for emphasis.

There are no superlatives except the words [bɛs] <"best",  
and [las] "last"; the former is used mainly in the vulgar  
speech of the common people usually in the phrase '[ju gɛt bɛs]  
which means, "carry on as you please." . This use of "best" is  
probably derived from Koro Pidgin.

[las] is used with its ordinary signification - "last".  
As already mentioned, the Patois has developed modes of expressing  
degrees of comparison. see pp 84 et seq.,

There are also a few adverbs:

[naisli] "nicely", - used in children's games to mean "fine", in the phrase "[a kət di ʒkrə naisli]....." i.e. I cut the okra ( a mucilaginous fruit of the 'hibiscus esculentis) in fine strips....."

Also [nau] < "now", [dzis nɔ] < "just now", [de] < "there", [we] < "where", [ja] < "here", [fa] as in [fa we] < "far away", [ja so] " here (so) i.e. this very spot. [from we] = since ( probably a corruption of the phrase "from the time when.... " [wɛn] "when", [tumarə] < "tomorrow",

#### B. Prepositions, Conjunctions and Interjections:

[to] = "to", [fɔ] = "for", [wit] = "with", [bai] = "by", as in [bai nau] = "by this time", [from] "from", [te] "till" as in "[te nɛks jia] = "till next year", [bikɔz] = "because", [ɛn] = "and".

[e:] = "aye"! with a reduplicate form [e! e!]; [a:] = "ah!", also with a reduplicate form [a! a!]; [o ja] < "Oh dear"; also swear words like "[lɔkɔs]! probably from "Lawks", [masi!] < "Mercy ( on us )"; [bai Dzo:] "by Jove"; [Lad a masi]! Lord have mercy ( on us )!

Our next group of loan words comes from African Languages, some of which have lost their original meanings or usage.

These are :

A. Yoruba loans. These comprise most of our Proper(African) names. As usual all these names bear specific meanings .

Olubumi	----	God has given this child to me.
Èbunolòrun		The gift of God.
Modukpe		I thank God for the child I bore in pain .
Bandele		Stay with me at home.
Omòdele		A child is come to our home.
Aina		A name given to children born with the umbilical cord round their neck.
Adzaii		A name given to children born with breech presentation.
Bandzoko		Sit down with me.
Rémilékun		A child is born to comfort me.
Taiwo		The name given to the first-born of twins.
Kayinde		The name given to the second-born of twins.
Dou		The name given to the child born after a set of twins.
Alaba		The name given to the child born next after a Dou.
Dzumóké		There are many of us to nurse you.
Odzumiri		My eyes have seen wonders.
Odzulaféni		People love you only in your presence.
ḡowande		A god has come to say with us.
Akiwande		A brave man has come to visit us.
Onijide		My (own) child has come (at last)
Iyatunde		Mother has come again.
Babatunde		Father has come again.
Abiḡḡ		The name given to a child born on a Sabbath - for Christians, a Sunday.
Abiḡdun		The name given to a child born during a religious festival- for Christians, during Christmas-tide.
Balogun		A commander in chief.
Ayḡdele		Joy has come to the house.
ḡmólara		This child is part of us.
Ayḡdedzi		(Our) Joy is doubled.

Besides these there are quite a host of Yoruba words which are used as household terms.



In addition to those already mentioned in Chapter 2 pp 38 et seq., we have: [(o)gunugu] = "a vulture", [a-kpa'bobo] = a spendthrift", [a'gba] = a lord; " a man of worth, a leader." [koʒɛni] = " of great importance", [ɔkɔʒɛ] "unwilling to help", [dandogo] = a vest, now used to mean a "dunce", [ʒokoto] = " a pair of trousers, now used specifically to describe the wide trousers worn by the foulahs; we are told that one such pair often needs six or even eight yards of cloth to sew.

[agbada] = a coloured embroidered gown, now used to mean any large gown; [kokotaba] = "a pipe; [sa'ra] = "a sacrifice", [gbogbo-a'je] = "literally all the nations, - a crowd", [ɔbun] = "a filthy person", [o'koʒa] = "one who holds a whip", ['fin] = "silence" [ɔwo] = "to beat down the price of an article offered for sale" ['gbahgba] = "an open place", [abada] = "never again, [adza] = "the ceiling of a house", [mana'mana] "lightning", [do-'do] = " an enlarged navel, often used in the compound form [big do-do], to mean the same.

B Hausa Loans, which have come mainly through Yourba.

[a'lafia] = "Peace", like the Hebrew Shalom. This word has been sometimes given to children as a Proper name.

Also [wa'ala] = "worry, trouble", [man'fani] < '[anfani] = a creeper used to bind wood.

C. Ibo loans. We have already met "[u'nu, u'na,]" = You (pl)

In addition to these there are many Proper Names with a significance as in the case of Yoruba e.g.

[Oket] uku]	This is God's portion.
[Ekot] uku]	This is a model of God's Creation
[ɛbɛlɛt] uku]	I thank God for the child I bore in pain.
[Wa't] uku]	A son is given (us) by God.
[Nwa'kaku]	A son is more valuable than wealth
[Ige]	The name given to a child born after twins
[Edzima]	The name given to

There is also the word [kukunduku] = potatoes, often restricted to mean "fried potatoes", sold at workshops and other such places as women hawkers think they can make sales.

D. Temne Loans. These were adopted through contact with the Temne chiefs and people who were the original settlers of the Freetown District.

[ta'ra]	= sister, (kátaman) ; hence the phrase "[tara de tok pan tara]", i.e. "Likes are rebuking Likes", or better still, "The blind is guiding the blind."
[juba] < [ɛjiba]	= the vulture.
[gbɛntɛ]	= a discoloration of the skin - due to some skin disease.
[wɛrɛ]	= remnant
[pa]	= Sir, a title of respect. This use of the word belongs to an old borrowing, at an early stage of Temne contacts with Englishmen. It is merely a sign of respect.

Also: [gbampɔ] = the "bongar fish", [poto fera] = "a white man", as distinct from [poto] = a civilised man, [bunja] "that which is given free, after a purchase," [woto] "an ape", used to mean an ugly person, bobgia = "a common tall grass", [kren-kren] = "a mucilaginous vegetable", [bɔ] < [bɔ] = "friend", now a term of endearment, equivalent to "my dear".

## E. Mende Loans.

[apɔrɛ] - "alas! all is lost", [mɔnɛ] = "calamity", "trouble",

[tɛku] < "[tɛkui]", = a small vivacious fish, used in the compound [brɛzin tɛku];

[gɛndɛmɛ] - "a dwarf", originally the name of a Mendi dwarf.

[fɛfɛ] < "[fɛfɛi]", = the wind, hence [fɛfɛ] now means "as light as a weather cork"; the phrase "[ju lait lɛkɛ fɛfɛ]" means "you are too flippant, too trivial; whereas the statement [di fɔl lait lɛk(ɛ) fɛfɛ] = the chicken is very light indeed hence is not worth much; [nja votɛ] - an oath, [mumu] - "dumb", now used as a noun to indicate a dumb person, [kpakpa] - to impale; there are also names of their dances and the devils associated with them which have been learnt unaltered by the Creole e.g. [humɔi, gbeni, gɔbɔi, nɔwei, nafalei].

## F. Susu Loans.

[mɛrɛ - 'mɛrɛ] - "a peaser, a dandy", - now degenerated to mean a "soft", and used chiefly in this sense of 'spoilt children' or 'coy maidens in love.' [baga] in the phrase "[nɛkɛd baga]" from Baga, a district in French Guinea around Conakry, where children walk about naked, [banki] = a "hut", [biri] = "a large area, now used in the patois, to mean closed space or short intervals of time. e.g. "[dis biri]" may mean, "within this short space of time", or in this restricted area (enclosed space). There is also a Susu proverb "[Baraka siga baraka fa]" i.e. hand goes, (another) hand comes (in return) - suggestive of "reciprocity".

## G. Limba loans.

[wala] and [wala-wala] = "in great quantity", used chiefly of fish, probably borrowed from the idea of a shoal of fishes.

[jen] = "dead silence"; [woroko] and [worok] (often reduplicated) = a labourer "from" "Woroko", the name of a Limba town, from which labourers probably came at first to Freetown.

[kata] = "a head pad for carrying loads"

## H. Kroo Loans.

[kekrebu] < "Kekreboo = a dance of death", = "to die", [gbat&] used in the phrase "[na ju gbat&]" "That is your look out."

[gb&n&] < "[kp&n&] to strike" is the name of a game of marbles.

Also [kpende-kpende] = a mollusc which the Kroos are fond of and which they dislodge by striking against the stones on which they live.

## I. Fanti Loans.

[kongosa] < "[kɔŋkɔsɔ]" = "a tale-bearer, now a gossipier.

[bebrebe] = "in large quantities"; [fufu] < "[fufui]", = a special preparation of cassava or plantains similar to the Yoruba

"[dombai]". There are also a few Proper Names with special significance attached to them as in the case of the others

mentioned before

[Eko]	=	name given to a male born on	Thursday
[Adzua]	2	" " " " female " "	Monday
[Kofi]	2	" " " " male " "	Friday
[Efua]	2	" " " " female " "	Friday
[Kweku]	2	" " " " male " "	Wednesday

It will be observed that many of these loans enumerated above, have lost their original meanings through associations which have developed locally. e.g. Dunce, which is ordinarily, though unhappily associated with Duns Scotus, has been further associated with "Dan" and so the latter term has been likewise associated with "stupidity"; we therefore find the Yoruba word "[Dandogo]", originally meaning a "vest", now means "a big fool". One often hears people say of two people who do not seem to be capable of leading the other, "[dén tan l&k Dan &n Dani&l]" i.e. They are (going about) like two fools.

Also "Tetrarch", as in "Herod the Tetrarch", became first by mispronunciation "[titrak]". Now, "[tit]" suggests the English word "teeth", from which the Patois has developed the word [tit], and "[rak]" also suggests the English word "rack" in "hat-rack", i.e. an array of pegs or hooks for resting hats. Subsequently, a person with a double row of teeth seemed to have an array of teeth stuck on to his mouth, and so the word "Tetrach", in its new pronunciation [Titrak]", lost its original meaning for a more degenerate use, and so it now ordinarily means, "a person with a double row of teeth". Again the word [dzus], has also changed its implication. Some notion connected inability to see the sun with a Jew; and as Albinos suffer much from this disability, the word [Dzus] now means an "Albino".

## Chapter 6.

### The Patois is an African Language.

The above study of the Sierra Leone Patois has shown it to be a language that has developed from mixed origins—partly European, English in particular, and partly African.

As we have already observed, it is very English in its vocabulary, of course with special modifications in many cases, but most Un-English in its syntax and usage.

Many once English words have acquired new or specialised meanings and cannot be rightly termed English any longer.

This change of specialisation of meanings of English words, and the dominance of the usage and syntax of West African Languages has helped the language to grow from a Pidgin English to a decidedly new African Language in all respects except vocabulary . And here a Contrversy begins.

To many people even Africans, the Sierra Leone Patois is a degenerate form of English with which only vulgar thought and language is associated. There are many Africans whom I have talked with on this question, and invariably, as soon as I suggest developing the Patois, they reply in terms suggestive of the idea that the language is too vulgar, as if slang and vulgar speech are not found in every language.

As far back as 1887, Sir Samuel Lewis, K.C.M.G. one of the leading Africans of his day, while discussing the establishment

of this colony and the various problems that had to be solved in the first century of its existence said" . ....It is not very easy at this not distant date to ascertain to which (of the difficulties attending the performance of the duty of the Missionary in Sierra Leone) is due the credit or discredit of inventing the new language through which ideas were exchanged; and which bridging over a temporary difficulty by supplying the means of common intercourse, was nevertheless unfit to become or to be preserved as the medium for the communication of great intellectual truths. " (1)

In 1908, Mr Charles Leopold, late Principal of the Leopold Educational Institute, emphasised in his report for that year, the keen desire of his school to get rid of all "accretions of language", meaning the Patois.

To many other Africans, the Patois is merely "Broken English" which must be abandoned for a more polite form of speech.

In European circles, this pejection is still worse. They cannot understand the language when spoken, except for the few correct English sounds heard, and they jump to the rather hasty conclusion that the Patois is a debased form of English which (I think) hurts the ears of the zealous British Imperialist.

In addition to this inability, they find some strength for a so-called sound argument. Their servants do not speak correct English, but only attempt to talk "house boy English".

And, as they measure all Africans by their boys, they , grossly ignorant of the Patois, offer loud opinions which are heard afar off especially in Government circles. In effect, the servants of these Europeans, are usually natives of the Protectorate who themselves have to learn the Patois and do so most imperfectly, when they come to the colony.

e.g. a College Servant who has been in Freetown for over eight years, praying in the Service held every morning for all servants of Fourah Bay College, once said : "..... [Gɔd wi dadi wi beg ju padin sa, luk ɔl dɛn masta na ja so, du ja wi beg ju padin nɔ mek trɔbul mit dɛn, du ja O! wi beg ju padin....."].

This prayer in more correct Patois would run like this :

"[O gɔd wi dadi wi beg ju, du ja kɔba ɔl dɛn masta na ja so. du ja wi beg ju padin nɔ mek trɔbul mit dɛn. du ja wi de beg ju.]" That is to say, O God Our Father, we beg you to look upon all our masters here (in this College) and protect them from any evils that may beset them."

In 1834, Rankin described the Patois as "The Talkee-Talkee Patois." (2)

In 1858, Bishop Bowen, Bishop of Sierra Leone ( 1858-1859), termed the Patois a "sad gibberish spoken by many who have passed through our schools." (3)

In 1894 Bishop Ingham, also Bishop of Sierra Leone ( 1883 - 1897 )



writing about the language problem of Sierra Leone said:

" The medium of communication is supposed to be English throughout the Colony, and when education has made better progress, this will be realized; but at present a miserable patois commonly known as 'pidgin' English, does duty for the real thing, and a lazy indulgence in it is not only keeping the people back, but it is a fruitful parent of some of those palavers and misunderstandings of which there are so many in this backward land." (4).

When a Mr H. Osman Newland F.R.Hist.S. F.I.D. arrived in Sierra Leone just before the World War of 1914, he styled the Patois "Kru English". In the book he published after the war, he confused the house-boy English of the West Coast with our Patois. Commenting on it, he writes:

" Once on land, you are assailed by this quaint but not unpleasant tongue Kru-English, which is spoken among the people of Freetown themselves.

" How do ma?" you hear one 'mammy' (married woman say to another, "yes ma, thank God". the other replies. "Wass matter you? You go talk so", says another 'mammy' to her boy attendant (meaning What s the matter? Stop talking;) to which the impudent boy replies " Ma" I no find you pyjama-house." (I won't look for your nightdress bag.)

.....  
After a little initiation, you pick up much of the West African Esperanto and realize that "fit" means "able" or "ready"; "chop" something substantial to eat; "find"=to look for; "look"= see; "kiddens"= Kidneys; "lib"= free or at home; "libba"= liver or bad temper; "savvy"= to know or understand." (5)

The above statement is the most incorrect mis-representation of the Sierra Leone Patois I have yet known.

It may be that such a mis-statement was due to the fact that Mr Newland did not stay very long in Sierra Leone, as could be judged from the accounts of his stay at various parts of the country. It seemed he had a rather hurried and adventurous trip in which he could have been easily misinformed on many points. If a real Creole was carrying on the conversations mentioned by Mr Newland one would expect something like this:

"[au du ma]" by first mammy- mammy is not necessarily a married woman.  
 "[jes ma, ten Gɔd]" replies the other.  
 "[Wes mata we ju de tok so]" by third mammy: but the boy's alleged reply is most Un-Patois. At best it is House-boy English.

Professor Westermann has however taken a more reasonable attitude to the Patois. He has described it as one of the unemotional languages recently born, but in this case, it is serving as a vernacular. (6)

The most recent government official view on the subject is that of Mr S. Millburn, Senior Education Officer, Sierra Leone. He condemns the Patois downright as a "deteriorated form of English" which should not be used as a medium of instruction in schools. According to him, this Patois at best can only be a "~~lingua~~ franca" for those who have no "opportunity of learning to speak correct English or who are too lazy .... to speak standard English". Mr Millburn then went on to say "Since Patois may be regarded as a debased form of English,

every effort should be made to speak correct English and to leave Patois to those who have not had the advantage of learning English properly." (7)

The offshoot of the above views are that the Sierra Leone Patois is a mushroom language which developed because of the nature of the early history of this colony. But as time goes on, as the Creoles learn better English, the Patois will be gradually displaced by correct English.

But as Thomas Decker pointed out in the Sierra Leone Daily Guardian of November 29, 1939 how can this Patois ever die when it has become the woof and warp of the emotional life of the masses of this country who for a long time to come would never acquire correct English?

It is interesting to note that the Lawyers and Doctors who usually spend from three to ten years in England, never lose their Patois. I myself find this problem quite prominent in my various spheres of life. In College, or during other official engagements or talking with someone I don't know well I use English. But whenever I feel AT HOME, I almost mechanically drop into my mother tongue.

If the Patois is the mother-tongue which the best educated members of the community always use, it must be more than a dear treasure to the less educated masses whose standard of English is very low indeed.

Now to the above group of people who cry "procul, procul, es profane", to the Sierra Leone Patois, I submit most respectfully, that a close study of the situation would reveal far richer results and possibilities beyond their expectations. Nearly thirty years ago, Migeod discovered from a study of the Patois that " a new dialect of English has originated. The words are English corrupted in varying degrees according to the education of the individual, but the idiom is African. If the words alone were taken for study, it might be assumed that the possessors of this Language or Dialect were a white race of AngloSaxon stock. When it is found that the idioms and syntax and also some of the grammatical forms are those of the black races of Africa, the difference of race, and that they are negroes becomes at once apparent." (8)

There is only one small modification I wish to make on this paragraph, because it seems to me that in spite of Migeod's thorough knowledge of African Languages, he was rather undecided on the actual status to be accorded to what we all call the Sierra Leone Patois.

In the same paragraph, he calls the Patois a Dialect of English and later speaks of "the possessors of this Language or Dialect." This alternation of epithets-dialect and language suggests a difficulty in Migeod's mind in coming to the correct estimate of the linguistic status of the Patois.

According to Migeod himself, in a few lines above the passage just quoted above, a comparative study of vocabularies will never furnish an adequate system of language relations .

One has to study syntax and grammar. If then in spite of the possibly large number of loan-words, the idiom and syntax of the Patois is African, the Patois therefore constitutes an Independent Language and is not merely a Dialect of English.

Again if Language is an instrument of thinking, feeling and willing, and these show themselves mainly in the idioms and syntax of a people, then the Sierra Leone Patois with a totally different syntax represents a New Language; a language which can never be correctly classified as a dialect.

Even Migeod realised this when he said that " although more than 70% of the vocabulary of the English Language at present are of Latin origin, nobody ever thinks it is a Romance Language, chiefly because of the predominance of Anglo-Saxon idioms which are so striking." (9) Dr Henry Bradley has also pointed out that only 5% of the English language is made up of Anglo-Saxon words. (10)

On this basis therefore, it seems that the Patois is a Language independent of English in actual structure and now indigenous to its users.

Again, students of the Patois would not easily accept Dr Westermann's statement that it is an unemotional language.

Of course he grouped it with the "recently born" languages in various parts of the world, with the proviso that the Sierra Leone Patois was a real vernacular, which the others were not. Chief of these languages are Beach-la-Mar and Oriental Esperanto through which the natives of the different islands of the Pacific Archipelago have developed intercommunication, and Pidgin English, the medium of speech between Englishmen and the people of China, Japan, West Africa and many other places where trade relations have developed. In many parts, it is known as Trade or 'House-Boy English.'

These are jargons produced chiefly by the natives who imitate their masters. Everything is artificial and highly pictorial. But only pictures can be drawn. There is hardly any noticeable emotional element; at least nothing is deep-seated nor is there any other element fundamental to the higher expressions of the mind.

Stevenson gives us instances of conversations held in Beach-la-Mar. in Island Nights Entertainments.

Once when the South Sea trader asked a Kanaka (a Native ) whether any road went Eastwards from a certain point, the Kanaka replied:

"One time one road," Now he dead."

"Nobody he go there?" the trader asked ,

"No good" said he, "Too much devil he stop there." ( 11)

Jespersen suggests that the language is nearly all English in origin, even if now mutilated in form. e.g. "nusipepa" means a letter, and written documents. "Mary" is a generic term for woman, "pisupo" (peasoup) for all foreign goods.

The vocabulary is limited, and long involved sentences are usually resorted to when simple ideas are to be expressed.

The Language Jespersen suggests was formed by imperfect mastery of English and has now lost the structure of its source.

Its morphology, he goes on has reached the vanishing point and its separation is impossible, unless its speakers were completely isolated from English. Such isolation of course implies its extinction.

Pidgin also is similar to Beach-la-Mar in structure and exhibits considerable simplification of the structure and grammar of correct English. Like Beach-la-Mar, it can only give pictorial accounts and does not attempt to express deep-seated feelings.

Mr Clifford Collins of Solomon Islands E.I. broadcasted a talk on Pidgin English on September 4, 1936, and gave a first hand account of the structure and usage of the lingo. He observed that Pidgin was a round about language full of pictures.

"Mary" is a generic term for all females; - "wife, woman, girl."

"sore" is another for all ailments - "headaches, toothaches, or

stomachaches"; e.g. "headache = [héd bilɔ] mi i sɔ fɛlɛ tu mətʃ]."

"[fɛ lɛ]" means anything.

Here is an account of some konversations with some islanders in Pidgin. He once told his servant Vonny, to boil an egg, giving him instructions at the same time to observe the movements of the hands of a watch as the egg boiled. i.e. he was told to leave the egg to boil for a specific number of minutes. After Mr Collins had waited a long time, and the egg was not forthcoming, he went down to the kitchen to enquire. To his utter dismay, he saw Vonny with a long face, looking at the watch which was now boiloing in the pot along with the egg.

Here is she account of the conversation which followed in Pidgin.

C: (giving instructions to his boy re movement of the hands of the watch.)

[Taim dis big f&1 han in wok about dat fo f&1& mak olrait]!

[eg i boil fini] .

Q: (enquiring after the long interval) [Voni! eg i no fini j&t?]

V: [No j&t sa] .

( When C went into the kitchen, Vonny tried to explain the delay.)

V: [Dis big f&1& han i no wok about; i stop da big f&1& ples ol di taim.]

Mr Collins described another conversation he had at his stores when a young man came in to ask for something whose name he had forgotten.

Customer (to Q) [Ju sabi dis f&1&- pul im i kam; pu& im go roba bilj& aks]?



After a long enquiry, Mr Collins found out that the fellow wanted a "sew". (12)

Jespersen describes modern Pidgin variations as the imperfections of a child which everybody tries to discourage as soon after he leaves the Nursery and sometimes in the later stages of the nursery life. He therefore concludes that these 'makeshift languages' as he terms them will not develop into separate languages unless the areas in which they are used are entirely segregated from the other parts of the world- a miracle in this Twentieth Century of easy transport, easy communication, broadcasting and wireless telegraphy. He further suggests that the English in the East will gradually improve and both Pidgin and Beach-la-Mar will eventually disappear. (13)

Professor Westermann in "The African today" has strongly expressed that these languages have little or no philological use to the world.

On the other hand Mr Edwin Smith contends that if a language is ordinarily a form of expression of the genius of a people it is possible that those lingos may be the crude beginnings of a new language era.

He writes " If we reviewed past history, we find instances of similar occurrences. When the Roman legions came into contact with ancient Gaul, there grew up Pidgin-Latin that would have horrified Cicero as greatly as Pidgin English

horrifies us.

Later on in the same page he writes " It (the lingo) is not a transient phenomenon: evidently it has come to stay."<sup>(14)</sup> It is interesting to note that Jespersen is more sympathetic towards Mauritian Creole, a Pidgin French that developed when slaves were imported from Madagascar early in the Eighteenth Century to Mauritius by the French. Here again a French Creole became the inevitable as masters and slaves had no means of common intercourse. Today this Pidgin is as far from French as Pidgin English is from English. Grammar and Syntax have been simplified sounds and spellings have been considerably altered. Original idioms have developed which according to Jespersen, strike a foreigner with a "felicity and even force" all its own. The natives of Madagascar, being cut off from their own island homes developed a mode of speech similar to what we have developed in Sierra Leone. Jespersen has suggested that it might develop into a beautiful language if it is not unduly influenced by correct French .

"If it were left to itself, it might develop into a really fine idiom with out abandoning any of its characteristic traits. But as it is, it seems to be constantly changing through the influence of real French, which is more and more taught to and imitated by the islanders, and the day may come when most of the features ( OF THIS BEAUTIFUL LANGUAGE) caps mine

will have given place to something which is less original but will be more readily understood by Parisian globe-trotters, who may visit the distant island." (15)

It would have been obvious by now that the Sierra Leone Patois is more original than Beach-la-Mar and Pidgin English, and expresses fine shades of thought and feeling. But it is this very point that Dr Westermann contradicts when he says that the Patois is an Unemotional Language. But can any Vernacular be Unemotional?

Messrs Ogden and Richards have in their valuable book "The Meaning of Meaning" shown the importance of the emotive aspect of languages.

".....There is a common and important use of words which is different from the scientific or as we shall call it, the strict SYMBOLIC use of words. This is the EMOTIVE use. Under the symbolic function are included both the symbolization of reference and its communication to the listener, i.e. causing in the listener of a similar reference. Under the emotive function are included both the expressing of emotions, attitudes, moods, intentions etc., in the speaker and their communication i.e. evocation in the listener. Again "except for technical languages, notably the scientific languages, which are by definition outside life, the expression of an idea is never exempt from a nuance of sentiment." (16)

If this point of view is clearly kept before our minds, we would readily recognise that Professor Westermann's opinion on the Sierra Leone Patois was based on a superficial knowledge of the use of the language, and therefore he must be wrong.

The Sierra Leone Patois, is the regular vernacular of our people many of whom use English as a second language that is half understood.

Today there is a strong tendency to produce songs in the Patois. When these are rendered, our best English speakers many trained in England, are found losing themselves completely under the influence of the music. The common folk, give their self-expression a complete outlet then.

The typical ease with which other African children are known to compose songs and music is highly noticeable among our boys and girls. Even little children of two or three attempt to versify in the Patois.

Interesting enough, like other African songs, they are usually correctives especially of a moral nature. When someone does a foolish act, or gets into some trouble, a song is soon composed on him as a theme, to express to others the gravity of the effects of his foolish action. (17) e.g. There as a famous doctor say about forty years ago, who was very brutal and I

understand, was very fond of amputating people's legs. One Sunday, he went out for a ride in a hand trolley. (The Sierra Leone Railway was just being laid then.) Unfortunately, they ran into a goods truck and Dr Paris in his trepidation tried to stop the collision by putting his foot out to kick the truck. He miscalculated the distance and speed of the trolley and so fractured his leg in the attempt. An amputation was performed and the doctor died not long afterwards. The public disapproved of the Sunday ride- The Sabbath was a holy day then, and thought Paris' fate was a just retribution. A song was soon composed which ran thus :

[Peris fut haz bin tekin awe]

[Peris fut haz bin tekin awe]

[Peris go relwe Sɔnde]

[Dzɔdz-mɛnt mit am bai di we]

[And his fut haz bin tekin awe,]

[haz bin tekin awe.]

A translation of this song will run thus:

Paris' leg has been taken away (repeated twice)

Paris went for a railway ride on a Sunday

God's Judgment met him on the way

And his leg has been taken away (in consequence.)

Sometimes a song is composed to mark an event of public concern.

When Governor Pope Hennesy (1873) withdrew house taxes, as well as other land and road taxes, (18), the people celebrated the great occasion with a song, one version of which runs thus :

[ɔl dɛn gɔvna du bɛrɛ wɛl]

[ɔl dɛn gɔvna du bɛrɛ wɛl]

[ɔl dɛn gɔvna du bɛrɛ wɛl]

[Bɛt Pop Hɛnɛsi du pas wɛl] that is to say

All (previous) Governors did well for us (repeated thrice)

But Governor Pope Hennesy has excelled them all.

It is worth mentioning that these songs are not made of words thrown about at random, but are in a definite verse form, with a marked rhyme in addition to the regular rhythms which usually characterise African songs.

It is obvious therefore that the Patois is the Mother tongue of our people and the medium in which they express themselves most readily and in which they are most easily understood. Tegner 1784, used to say "That which is easiest expressed is easiest understood". We also affirm most emphatically that our best selves are most easily expressed in the Patois and therefore it is the ONLY medium in which we can help others to understand fully our inmost feelings.

The truth of this last statement and its importance for the natural growth of the Sierra Leone Creole had been

foreseen for many years by the late Right Rev James Johnson, himself a Sierra Leone Creole, who had laboured for years in the Church in Nigeria where he rose to be Bishop, and was in a position to appreciate the problem of the Sierra Leone Creole. When preaching the Jubilee Sermon of the Sierran Leone Church in 1913, The Bishop said inter alia:

" The Christian religion was from the circumstances of Sierra Leone being originally a settlement of recaptured and freed negro slaves of many different tribes, speaking different languages and having no common medium of communication between themselves,..... taught to them (the slaves) through the English Language, a knowledge of which they were expected to acquire in order that they might know something of the new religion which they were invited to accept.

.....  
 The new knowledge acquired of it through this channel, by adults especially who at home spoke continually and commonly only their own separate native language and by their children also, particularly at the beginning, must have been very small indeed, and though more than a hundred years have been over the colony's existence, yet the English Language as spoken by the English people themselves has not become indigenous to the soil or assumed the position or character of the country's vernacular, or ceased to be a language

the force of many of whose expressions is often but poorly felt even when they are understood; whilst an endeavour on the part of the people to clothe their own native ideas in this new, foreign and little understood tongue, has resulted in the production of what is often described as a Patois of the English Language, which is as different from it as possible and to the everyday language, the vernacular of the people but which has not been pressed into service for them." ( 19)

There can certainly be no further doubt in the mind of my readers that twentysix years ago, this sainted African leader was correct in his opinion of the needs of our people viz:- that they need to recognise the Patois as a vernacular.

Twenty six years has not altered the use of this language. It may be true that there has been a strong tendency to teach pupils of the schools better English; indeed independent reading has received much encouragement in the schools in the last few years. But the results are still debatable. The Patois is still the only common medium of communication in the colony, as I have already mentioned and is rapidly penetrating into the fastnesses of the Protectorate of Sierra Leone. If then the Patois is our Mother-tongue, it must have for us the same importance other people attach to



their own Mother-tongue.

Mr Edwin Smith says of vernaculars:

".....The mother-tongue is the key which unlocks the door of the people's heart. It is the road which leads to an understanding of their mind. It is the bridge across the gulf that yawns between their soul and OTHERS' (capitals mine). Unless and until ONE can speak to them man to man, heart to heart, soul to soul, ONE can never attain to that intimate sympathy which is based upon knowledge and which gains ONE the right to influence them." (20)

Again he writes, "Every language is a temple in which the soul of the people who speak it is enshrined.....Losing its native speech a people loses its continuity with the past and present and sinks to intellectual helotry....."

There is no path to the heart save through the mother-tongue. The mother-tongue! That in which the mother croons lullabies over the cradle, that in which the infant learns to lisp, that in which he jokes and plays with his fellows, that in which the youth whispers words of love into his sweetheart's ears, that which enters into all the most sacred memories of a man's life! The mother-tongue! - the music of the heart and the home!! Men may learn many languages but they pray in their own as they make love in their own. Whenever they wish to express what is deepest in them, they use the speech they drew in with their mother's milk.....

"An African Bishop who was well versed in our English declared that God had never spoken to him save in his own language...(21)

Now the Patois has been the medium used in marital relations from the earliest times when the women were submitted for choice to "leige lords", of the country. "Short was the courtship then; for the languages of the various pairs were generally unintelligible to one another." (22)

It has also been used in devotions either at home or in women's meetings, but it has not yet found a place in our official services.

Bishop Johnson realised the immense value of using the Patois as a medium for worship and I believe was thinking that mainly in that connection when he said " The Patois....is the everyday language, the vernacular of the people, but which has not been pressed into service for them."

PRESSED INTO SERVICE!! This is the watchword we need in this age. It is high time our youths were educated on this important question. It is time we ~~waited~~ <sup>started</sup> to look around for the more vital ideas and thought-forms which would stabilise our people.

Our Youth need to be rooted in our "concrete native traditions". This can only come through a respectable vernacular.

Our Christian religion is certainly not deeply rooted yet, because it is so much associated with the language of officialdom, a foreigner, and an entirely different culture.

The Patois has not yet been PRESSED INTO SERVICE, in spiritual matters, and so its vocabulary has not yet been enriched with the higher values of Christian teaching. Words like LOVE", ETERNITY", "TENDERNESS", SOBERNESS", "CHASTITY" and the like are not yet fully part of the Language, and so we are pretty poor for moral and religious terms . This is an urgent need.

On December 9, 1938 at a Public Missionary Meeting of the Sierra Leone Church, held in Freetown, an old lady was to speak. When she came up, she started her talk by saying a few things in English, and then suddenly dropped to the Patois by saying "[a no no buk O] [so a de tek mi mada to]". i.e. "I am not lettered, and therefore I cannot speak English well. I shall therefore use my vernacular." And she did. The hall was crowded. Europeans including a distinguished visitor like Rev Dr E.G. Pace, Reader in Divinity at Durham University, many Africans, some very highly educated, and a large company of average people were all present. The address was one of the most telling I have ever heard. It was a heart to heart talk. The audience was touched. Collections flowed into the plate from all quarters and the meeting was a decided success. Such an enthusiasm would never have been felt had that good lady feebly struggled to express inadequately what she felt about the needs of the work of the Sierra Leone Church Missions.

Recently, the Christian Church in Sierra Leone, as one body arranged a Week of Witness during the week November 19 to 26 1939, as a follow up of the Madras Conference to which a delegate had gone from this country. The whole Colony was asked to join in this week of prayer, three meetings being held per day. I happened to be sent to York as one of the leaders; During my stay at York I realised more fully the utter futility of speaking English to the village folk who were never privileged to enjoy higher education. At most of the meetings the pastors who were already conversant with their people spoke the Patois and drove their points home. After some time, I was able to follow suit and the effect of the change of my mode of speech was unexpected. Everybody understood what I was trying to say and the meetings became more enjoyable than before. The people were only touched by what was spoken in their vernacular. As for the prayers offered by the congregation, except for a few men, they were all in our dear mother Patois.

Surely these experiences are positive proof that we are badly in need of employing our dear mother Patois, to express our "higher intellectual truths" and possibly "abstract and otherwise difficult philosophical disquisitions."

When I once raised the question with Rev Dr J.F. Musselman, General Superintendent of the U.B.C. Mission in Sierra

Leone, he was quite emphatic about the need for using the Patois in religious matters and strongly depreciated the negative attitude our people adopt towards the Patois. Dr Musselman who has been in Sierra Leone for over thirty years has studied the Patois closely and is one of the few white men who can speak it well. Dr Musselman went on to tell me that the British and Foreign Bible Society had once asked to make a translation of parts of the Bible into the Patois, but he did nothing about the request because he was not sure of the African patronage. He however thought there is much good in the Patois as a Language.

This last suggestion is now amply justified by the recent interests that some Sierra Leone Creoles have taken in this language problem. A series of interesting articles have appeared both in the Sierra Leone Daily Guardian, in Sierra Leone Studies Number XXII- September 1939, and School Notes - several issues. Some of these articles discussed the origins and nature of the language, and all emphasised that the Patois is to become a recognised language of the Sierra Leone Creole; suggestions were also offered for achieving the best results in the new language programme.

One writer under the pen name "Observer" said:

It is to be noted with some amount of appreciation that the Sierra Leone Patois as now accepted by all writers (referring to previous articles on the subject) as a

Language. THIS (capitals mine) description was formerly tardily accepted." (23)

He then went on to suggest the formation of a "Language Committee" TO "work out a scheme so that the Creeo Language (as he termed the Patois) may be systematised grammatically." Another writer Dora, next suggested that the Creeo Language should be written in phonetic script. This he thought would eliminate the possibilities of errors now experienced when the ordinary English characters are used.

Another writer Thomas Decker is opposed to a phonetic script on the argument that few people can understand such hieroglyphics and that special training would be necessary for people to be ready to read the Patois when it is reduced to writing.

But Mr Decker has written most to defend the rights of his vernacular and has also published a drama written in this "unique of modern languages." The Play is entitled "Wahalla" i.e. trouble. It is a light comedy describing an incident at a funeral wake; and ends quite happily.

In my opinion it is both a good attempt on the part of the author to dramatise local incidents as well as an eloquent appeal to our detractors to give the Sierra Leone Patois a place in the literary world.

Of course we must admit that the Patois is in a very crude form at present and cannot be expected to produce

accurate shades of thought, e.g. "[gi mi af] = literally 'give me a half, but actually means "give me a piece.", " Such an inaccuracy has been also used as an argument against developing the language. But many people forget that such a characteristic is not peculiar to Sierra Leone, but is present in all languages, especially at their infancy. Technical terms concepts which are not yet part of the native thought-forms and all words which are of value to a language but not yet part of it, are usually borrowed from the original sources and adopted with or without modifications. Sometimes a new idea is borrowed with the original word but soon after a native word is coined to express the same notion, but in a homelier language. Thus in Mendiland, the a bicycle was first introduced, they adopted the word *baisuku*. This was however supplanted by the native word [goregendze] which means "that which runs standing." In Fanti, and Hausa similar words have been coined :

Fanti [Tsatsiana] = a train = sitting walking  
 Hausa [gitigi] = a train = sitting walking.  
 In Susu a bicycle is [botokuts] = a dancing  
 gig.

Already the Sierra Leone Patois is developing new words which are more suggestive of a definite genius being produced. A number of words and ideas which have been coined from English and other sources, have been freely used to enrich the vocabulary of the language. e.g.

[dede wek] from English "dead" and "awake", alternately, is used to describe a person (a child in particular) who is frequently ill. and The phrase as it were gives the hearer the impression of a person dying and returning from the dead. The Biblical phrase "Save me O God", abbreviated into S.M.O.G. for short, has been adopted to describe an evening dress collar of extraordinary height.

[man dore] has been coined to describe a girl who likes to stay in the company of boys

[man boy] also describes a girl who behaves as a boy should. The phrase "I acknowledge my transgression", is a local description for an enlarged scrotum, The idea that the disease is produced by bad living underlies this neologism.

[gro na trit] , and often [gro na] for short, means literally one who is as it were bred out of doors; hence it now means a harlot, a prostitute;

[waka bot] < "walk about", also means a harlot or a prostitute. Instead of swear words adopted from the Bible, one hears oaths of the form "[a sw& to p&p mat f is & n tabaka]; " i.e. I



I swear by (my) pipe, matches and tobacco."

Some other coinages are :

[frɔm we] = "since", [dzɔs lɛk se] and [tan lɛk se] = "just as if."

onomatopoeic words like :

[dudu] = "the African Cuckoo"; [biri] = a description of a 'thud'; also [bɛf] and [bup]; [tʃakara] = to scatter thoroughly; [hawan gɔt] = gluttony, from "[haun haun]" which seems to be the sound produced by a dog when eating greedily, hence [haun haun gɔt] > [hawan gɔt] came to mean "a greedy and voracious mode of eating."

[kpɔtɔɔ-kpɔtɔɔ] describes a boiling pot, chiefly of rice.

[pɔtɔ-pɔtɔ] = "mud", may have been probably coined from the sound heard when one walks in a marshy ground.

[njam-njam] = "food" probably obtained from the sound made by children when they enjoy their meal.

[kraun-kraun] = "cartilage", - from the sound made when one eats cartilage.

[kunkan] = "spoilt or broken"; is used to describe a damaged article, obtained probably from the noise a damaged car makes when dragged along the road.

Other words involving new ideas introduced to the country

[tɔrist] = superfine; the idea originated from the first set of tourists to visit Sierra Leone, who were thought to be millionaires.

[bakfaia] as in the phrase [i bakfaia pan mi] = to explode hence the phrase means "he gave me a very rough reply". The word originates from the tendency of cars to fire because of "pinking".

[Abinsi wata sn&k] = "a fast runner;" the term originated from the S.S.Abinsi, an Elder Dempster Ltd vessel which often the record for the journey from Liverpool to Freetown. On one occasion, she took nine days only, when other vessels usually reckoned on at least ten days.

[bakanti] = a style of jumping and kicking a ball in the air: this style seemed to have been first played in Freetown by the naval ratings of the H.M.S.Bakanti.

There are also formations of words similar to those of other West African Languages to indicate "intensity".

[i blak ti] = it is pitch (jet) black (dark)

[i rɛd gain] = it is scarlet red.

[i wet fu] = he is very pale i.e. whitish.

[ti], [gain], and [fu], being adverbs denoting intensity.

Corresponding phrases to these are found in the Mende Language:

[tɛi gə 'mə 'mə 'mə] = it is pitch dark (or jet black).

[kpəuŋgə 'dze 'dze] = it is bright red.

[kwɛŋgə 'fo 'fo] = it is very (snow) white.

With the preceding evidence before my reader, I maintain therefore that the Sierra Leone Patois should not be regarded any longer as a mere Dialect of English, even though its vocabulary consists of many English words.

It should be given a full recognition as a language with great future possibilities which will develop as time goes on .

It is interesting to note at this stage that French, Spanish and Portuguese were all thought to be Patois in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries A.D. Everybody maintained they were broken forms of Latin. Cicero would have wept to see his dear Mother-tongue so badly mutilated by the Provincials of Gaul and the Spains.

The usage of these so-called Patois was deplored. But several centuries afterwards, and Jenisch (circa 1796), the German philologist referred to French as "that most supple modern language ." Today French is the language of International Politics. It has grown to be a highly literary language producing its won poets, the Voltaires, its own novelists and playwrights. By the Twelfth Century A.D., it had become "the politest language of Europe."

The early attitude towards these Romance languages was due, as Jespersen puts it, to the fact that "People were taught to look down upon THEM (mine) as mere dialects or

Patois and to worship Greek and Latin; the richness and fullness of forms found in those languages came naturally to be considered the very beau ideal of linguistic structure.

.....

To men fresh from the ordinary grammar-school training, no language would seem really respectable that had not four or five distinct cases and three genders, or that had less than five tenses and as many moods in its verbs. Accordingly, such poor languages as had either lost much of their original richness in grammatical forms (e.g. French, English or Danish), or had never had any, so far as one knew (e.g. Chinese), were naturally looked upon with something of the pity bestowed on relatives in reduced circumstances, or the contempt felt for foreign paupers." ( 24)

This last statement correctly explains the attitude of many Englishmen, who condemn the Patois. When for instance Mr Milburn says "Pidgin English or Patois" is a deteriorated form of English, two facts become evident to every Creole. First, he has not stopped to see whether a pidgin is the same as a Patois. The difference is quite obvious to any student of the subject. A Pidgin is a mere corruption of a superior language, without any further internal changes. Such is Beach-la-Mar, and the House-boy English spoken in other parts of West Africa. (25)

A Patois on the other hand is a corruption of a superior language in the first instance which is later blended with the native thoughts, idioms and ideas of the corrupters. Secondly, his basis of measurement is altogether determined by his notions of Latin and Greek, on which Model English Grammars were usually built. " English has borrowed no words from the Patois," he says. But how old is the Patois?. It is almost certain that as soon as good Patois literature are produced, English will almost certainly make loans - at least Englishmen in Sierra Leone will do so.

Whilst I sympathise with Mr Milburn's attitude to the Patois, I am strongly convinced that if his basis of measurement was more reasonable and practicable, he would find the Patois is far more capable of wider applications than he assumes at present. (26)

But the history of the Sierra Leone Patois is not unparalleled in modern times. Afrikaans has a history much akin to it. Afrikaans seems to have been the jargon produced by the descendants of the Dutch, French and German colonists who settled in South Africa prior to the British occupation in 1806.

"It has developed from Seventeenth Century dialects of Holland and resembles North Dutch in sounds, syntax vocabulary and idiom. Isolation from Holland and a new environment has

produced a Dutch grammatically different from that of Holland as Shakespeare's English is to King Alfred's " (27).

It has dropped all its inflexions and has been described as "the most progressive European Language".

In an article in the Listener for July 22, 1936 entitled "The Youngest Language of the Empire", Professor T.J.Haarhoff writes inter alia:

"Afrikaans is not a Patois or a dialect, but a vigorous language in its own right, one of the two official languages of the Union of South Africa. It is not a degenerate kitchen Dutch, as some people used to call it, but a normal development of language, studied by eminent scholars today.

.....

It is not a mere nationalistic superfluity, but a genuine spiritual necessity, the only means for the Afrikaner of expressing intimate feeling and therefore his only instrument for creating literature. Several attempts were made at making it literate before 1899, but these met with considerable opposition. In 1914 however, it was introduced into schools, and in 1919, Professorships were established at Stellenbosch and Bloemfontein. By this time it had been accepted in 1918 as an official language, except for Bills and Acts.

But it was not till 1925 did it receive full sanction". Professor Haarhoff asserted that today Afrikaans can boast of poets and novelists and went on to quote Roy Campbell who had said previously that " The Afrikaans Language is today as full of adventure for the bold and daring as was ever any language in history, and unique among contemporary tongues for youth and freshness."

It is quite obvious that if the Afrikaans needed a language to take their rightful place in the world, we the Sierra Leone Creoles need it much more. Indeed Sir Samuel Lewis had once styled the Sierra Leone Patois " That most unique of Modern Languages."

The Sierra Leone Patois is asking the world of literature to give it the franchise to develop, because on its development depend the mental and spiritual development of the Sierra Leone Creole.

A Modern African Language has sprung up in Sierra Leone, who will deter its progress ?.

## Chapter 7.

A survey of the Educational Implications of the  
place attributed to the Sierra Leone Patois.

In the first part of this work, we have tried to trace the various recognisable stages in the growth of the Patois. It was quite evident from the preceding premises that the Sierra Leone Creole was speaking a language of a most complicated nature. Most of the words of that language are English in origin, but the syntax and idioms belong to an entirely different field of thought. There can be no doubt left in the mind of the reader that the Sierra Leone Patois is not a mushroom language like Beach-la-Mar or even Pidgin English. These languages are not only artificial but do not enter the inner life of their speakers. The Sierra Leone Patois on the other hand expresses the inner life and feelings of its users. It is full of emotion and can represent various shades of thought and feeling.

But because the greater percentage of the vocabulary of this language belongs to certain strata of the English Language, there is often considerable confusion between our (Patois) usage and present-day standard English usage. As I have already pointed out many of the words have undergone much alteration in form and usage; but this very alteration is the secret of all our difficulties in the understanding and use of Standard English .



I cannot forget how terribly confused I was when I first met the passage from Aulus Gellius on "Socrates and his wife Xanthippe". I first of all misunderstood the word "Xanthippe" for the Patois [Santapi] Eng: 'Centipede'. Then as I read the passage with the description of Xanthippe as "...morosa admodum fuisse fertur et iurgosa, irarumque et molestiarum mulierum per diem per noctem scatebat....", I became quite confirmed in my opinion, as I had correctly associated everything unpleasant with a centipede. The fact that Xanthippe was a contentious woman who nagged her husband night and day never struck me. My misapprehension was almost complete. It was sometime afterwards that I discovered my mistake, and realised what a serious misinterpretation I had made of the data in front of me.

I made another similar mistake, and probably just as grave. In the Sierra Leone Patois, a scorpion is called [kək tel]. Now when I was about seven years of age, the older boys in the school which I was attending were learning Browning's "The Pied Piper of Hamelin", and I grew interested in the description of the various species of rats; I soon learnt to repeat the lines and was fond of the "cocking tails and pricking whiskers". But I never fully understood that they were also rats. I can still recall the rather clear picture of the "cocking tails" of the animals in question, but all the time I was thinking of a "scorpion".

It was nearly ten years before I realised my mistake. I was studying the poem for myself and then for the first time I appreciated the fact that the rats in the description approximated very closely to living rats I had seen when up in the Protectorate with my father.

I do not think my experiences are peculiar to me. It is amazing how many of our people think they speak or understand English when they actually do not.

I know a certain prominent man who is very useful in other spheres of life, but who could never use the verb "to be" in continuous sentences; e.g. he always says "You going", for "Are you going?"

The "continuous mood", which I mentioned earlier is also so strong in our ordinary language, that many people cannot satisfactorily narrate incidents in English without using the "historic Present" after a certain stage.

I also used to be condemned for that mistake, and in College our English tutor used to think it almost a "mortal sin", to write with the historic present in a reported sentence.

Later on I examined a few cases and came to the conclusion that this use of the "historic present", appeared only where the narrative was clearest. Sometime afterwards I was asked to report a Dramatic Performance. I was not altogether conscious of the desire to continue the research, and so I

went on with the work unbiassed. While I wrote the account, I could see the drama move before my eyes. The picture grew clearer and clearer, and at the point of clearest vision, when the scene seemed to live most vividly before my eyes, I happened to stop. Lo and behold, all the verbs used in the last few sentences were in the present tense. My tenses had been correct until then.

Again, we have a strong tendency to make analogical translations of Patois idioms into English. I often hear many of our people say when speaking English "God is there" meaning "There is a God." This a literal translation of the Patois "[GOD de]", i.e. "God exists, God lives." This is analogous to the Mendi "[Ngewo ɔna]" i.e. "God (He) is present". I myself have often found it difficult not to use the Patois "[waka fas fas]", or "[waka kwik kwik]" for the English "walk fast". Many times one hears people say "walk quick quick", before they realise they meant to use Standard English idioms. Sometimes people say "He can eat well" when they wish to say "he does eat well," or "he can come here oh!" instead of "he often comes here (to see us)." This is due to a confusion between the Patois [kin] < Eng: "can", and the modern English "can". The Patois word is sometimes used to express frequency as in the second sentence, and very often indicates intensity, as in the first sentence.

Of course [kin] can be used to imply "ability" as in "[A kin tot dis bɔks]" i.e. "I can carry this box."

It is therefore obvious from the above instances that we, the Sierra Leone Creoles, have considerable difficulties in the correct use of English idioms, even when we know what we should say. But in addition to the above, there are cases in which there are no analogical formations or translations. There is a different system of thinking due I suppose to the local conditions of life. The most classic example I can think of at present is the use of the preposition "over", -in Patois "eba". This word means exactly the same as in English and implies a jump, a complete leap over say a hurdle.

Now in England where windows are hardly opened wide and the sliding sash types are those in ordinary use, people hardly ever throw things out of the little space at the top end of the window when it is lowered. Therefore the English idiom is usually "out of the window". In the Tropics, on the other hand the French windows are the most popular windows in use, and these afford one the opportunity of seeing the ledge bare from within.

Thinking of the window then in terms of the ledge, we tend to forget the aperture-probably because we are so used to outdoor life. Primitive houses of course seem to have no windows.

We in the Tropics find it quite easy to throw things "over" the ledge and therefore the concept "out of" the window is almost foreign to our mode of speech.

Next to this comes the word "under" which implies something covered up. In this country where we have whole day torrential rainfall in July and August and sometimes in September, everything seems to be entirely capped by the rain. We therefore talk of "[ɔnda ren]", when an Englishman would say "in the rain". We of course go out during these showers "under our umbrellas."

I have already mentioned phonetic mutilations to many English loan words which have been adopted in the Patois. The reader is referred to Chapter 3 above.

There is therefore no doubt that there is a real problem facing those of us who attempt to learn English thoroughly and a still greater difficulty seems to threaten those who try to teach the subject to others.

At present this problem is very acute, chiefly because educationists have not fully realised that the vernacular of the Sierra Leone Creole is the Patois and not English.

In fact many Creoles do not seem to have a clear distinction in their minds between the Patois and English. One often hears people asking whether a servant seeking employment speaks English when they really mean the Patois.

The actual difficulty lies in the fact that children who learn the Patois as a mother tongue, are taught, or at least are supposed to be taught in English at a time when they could hardly be said to have learnt their first language properly. In homes where parents use both Standard English and the Patois, the situation is slightly different as the children tend to become bilingual; this is what I have observed with our own four-year old daughter at home. She is taught English by her mother and can understand a European and also converse intelligently in English. Yet without any effort, she has picked up the Patois with almost complete perfectness. But not many homes in Freetown use English to the same extent as ours. In the majority of cases, the Patois is the only medium of communication. I was brought up in one such home, and even when our school insisted on our speaking English always, my grandmother always objected to our bookish mode of speech.

Even in this generation, the Patois is the rule in most homes. The verb "[spik]" from English "speak", has therefore developed a very specialised meaning; in the Patois it means "to talk English" and is often used in a rather deprecatory sense. When for example, a person says "[Nɔ spik pan mi]", he means "don't be bookish (i.e. pedantic) .

This suggestion of pedantry implies that English is only

acceptable in official circles and is not normally appreciated when homely conversations are carried on.

If then there is such an attitude towards English in the homes, it must be very difficult for children to learn a second language properly when their mother-tongue is not thoroughly mastered. This is what usually obtains when children of four and five go to school.

There is another and very probably, a more vital problem associated with this language question.

We all know that English is the official medium of communication, and feel obliged to belong to the civilised world.

This is most requisite and at the same time very suitable.

But the history of this settlement as already indicated has been such that our original native languages and customs have been lost to us; And as we are subject-members of the British Empire, all the most important positions either in the Government or in the commercial world are and can only be held by Europeans, chiefly Englishmen.

As a result we all think ourselves inherently inferior to the white man in all respects- in morals, in ability, in mentality etc., An African needs very high qualifications to attain to a post which an Englishman holds as a matter of course even when everybody knows he is not competent.

The less educated men and women of Freetown, usually call

any Syrian who opens a store "Master", they are so used to *thinking that* a white face is a mark of superiority.

Coupled with this is the fact that not many people can speak or understand English, the language of officialdom, correctly. With what results ?

Many people are afraid to speak without being able to speak correctly and so the Youth of our country are Inarticulate. "For it is impossible to speak correctly and fluently if one has to undergo some mental exertion; one will constantly make mistakes in idioms and grammar. Even the native when he is to speak on anything unfamiliar or difficult, finds he has to spend his mental energy on the subject and has none left for grammar. Even he often has a feeling that his phrases are confused and his language incorrect. " (1)

Again language is the medium by which a nation expresses the inner feelings of its soul. A nation therefore which has no respectable vernacular is non-existent. There is no race pride, no self-respect bound up with the greater national life and as these are the groundwork of character, "the concrete bases of native traditions", we who do not enjoy the respect that accompanies a recognised vernacular must be losing much of the *elan vital* of life.

To quote Michael West :

"How ... can a people develop a unified and healthy national life if their thoughts are falsified at the



source by the inaptness of the words used in thinking them, falsified yet once more by the receiver's ignorance of the meaning of the words in which they are expressed? " (2)

In an article entitled the Language question in West Africa, which appeared in Oversea Education, Mr J.D. Clarke reviewed the problem of bilingualism in Wales with special reference to Vernacular Problems in West African

He writes:

"The Welsh investigators draw attention to the sense of inferiority which the child experiences if on going to school it finds that its mother tongue, which it has learnt le some difficulty, is regarded as of little further use for the exploration of the larger fields of knowledge opened to it by the school. ....The sense of inferiority thus haunts the life of the typical child. A Welsh inspector of schools ..... confirmed this, saying that when he was a child, his home language was ignored and he was obliged to learn English at school; he has grown up for years thinking that an Englishman was much superior to a Welshman."

Mr Clarke also quotes Professor Laurie as saying that

"A child cannot live equally well in two languages at

one and the same time, and that if an attempt is made to make the child do so, its intellectual growth is not doubled but halved."

Mr Clarke then goes on :

"The experiments which have been PERFORMED (capitals mine) suggest that the young child who has been obliged to learn a second language from the time when it first enters school possesses serious mental disadvantages which persist through life. By forcing the young plant to produce two blossoms, before one has fully unfolded, both blossoms are injured."

On these and many other grounds the Welsh investigators recommended that Welsh should be included in the time-table and should not be altogether ignored. (3)

Unfortunately the Sierra Leone Patois does not enjoy the same status as Welsh or even as Mendi, because of its seeming similarities to English. Hence to most of our Educationists it seems to be a mere "jargon", a "broken English", which should be annihilated.

But everybody seems to forget that the Patois is gradually spreading over the whole of Sierra Leone and the West Coast in general... From the Senegal to the Congo, there is hardly any territory which has not come under the influence of the Patois, in varying degrees of course.

In Sierra Leone in particular, it is fast becoming the lingua franca. I met a man of about forty-five, from Magbele, more than forty miles up the Port Lokkoh Creek, who spoke the Patois very well indeed, although he was coming to the Colony for the first time. In all the other big towns, the Patois is becoming the medium of communication both between Creoles and Natives of the land and among different tribes who often have no common language otherwise. Thus the Patois is becoming in Sierra Leone and probably along the West Coast what Swahili is in the East. (4)

Besides, the similarities which many people seem to see between the Patois and English even where they exist should be no bar to the progress of the Patois. Even in England where a Standard Language has been in existence for many centuries, dialects cannot be entirely annihilated; in fact Tomkinson takes a definite attitude in favour of dialects. He has use for them and so he writes:

".....Now it is certain that the schools cannot entirely entirely dispossess dialect in favour of Standard English. This is no matter for regret. Dialects have a value quite apart from the sentiment which prompts us to preserve old survivals: they contain, for example a great store of pictorial and fresh words capable, in the right hands, of invigorating the written language.

"A more important value for the teacher lies in the obvious fact that a child using dialect is using his native speech and so may be expected to express himself with more power in dialect than in standard English. But this does not absolve the teacher from making every effort to give the child some mastery of cultivated speech." (5)

If the reader feels satisfied that my arguments in the First Part of this work have convinced him that the Patois is an independent Language, then the above *statement* is a very good argument for asking the schools of Freetown to reconsider their attitude ~~to~~ the Sierra Leone Patois.

There is however at present a serious misnomer which as it were vilifies the position enunciated above.

I have claimed that the Patois should be recognised as a language in its own rights, but have at the same time been calling this what I may call "latest of West African Languages" by a name which is in itself pejorative to the cause advocated. I shall therefore take the liberty of adopting a name by which we shall in the future call the vernacular our people treasure very highly. But some may ask

"What's in a name? that which we call rose

By any other name would smell as sweet. (6)

We however reply, "A rose by any other name would smell as

sweet no doubt, yet no doubt name would so vividly suggest to us its fragrance." (7)

Indeed we Africans attach much significance to our ~~native~~ native names as may have already been observed from the lists in Chapter 5 above. In addition, these names acquire greater importance when the associations attached to them are of great value. "The power of the associations...called forth by any name becomes very great when the word is an old one.....and ....therefore bound up with the most intense experiences of great numbers of men." (8)

If then we should attempt to give the Sierra Leone Patois a name that would be of real value, we should not adopt any name that would lead to a sense of inferiority in the future. We must therefore look round for a name that is at the same time long standing and of some rich association in the minds of Sierra Leoneans.

In looking round for a name, I have realised more and more the need for something local and at the same time of real significance. In view of the early contacts between this country and Nigeria, I have been influenced by the strength of the associations produced between the two countries and propose to adopt the name by which all Sierra Leone Creoles are called in Yoruba-land in particular, namely "Saro".

This suggestion has been motivated mainly by the following reasons:

Firstly: Most of the liberated slaves who were repatriated into this country were from Nigeria, mainly from Yoruba-land. These consisted mainly of Ijebus, Ijeshas and Egbas. There were also many Ibos. These various groups subsequently intermarried as mentioned before and today many creoles can claim their parentage from both groups. The writer's parents have come from the Ibos and Ijeshas on the paternal line, and from the Ijeshas on the maternal line. Hence Migeod termed us, rightly I think, as a "band of Nigerian Sojourners". Secondly, the special experiences and privileges which followed this sojourn gave the settlers a considerable lead over other groups of people on the West Coast. Our people quickly adopted Christianity and were blest with the help of generous-minded Missionary bodies in England. This spirit was soon handed on to the new converts who accepted the divine commission "Go and tell". Before long, many of them took active parts in pioneer expeditions to Nigeria to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their brethren at home. Thus it seemed that Providence "enslaved" a small part of the people of Nigeria in order to equip them to help Christianise their more favoured brethren at home in "un-enslaved Nigeria". We are all familiar with the story of how on one of these

expeditions, Samuel Adjai Crowther, to be later immortalised as Bishop Crowther, met his mother Afala and after converting her, converted many others of his kinsfolk.

Thirdly, the Yorubas who came here brought with them as already mentioned their "trading instinct", and soon established regular trading business with the mother land. In the early part of the nineteenth century, many condemned slavers were bought by these people who later converted them into trading vessels and a flourishing business was carried on with Badagri. (9)

Coupled with this spirit of adventure was the need in the last century for men of certain types of education to serve in Nigeria, first in the Niger Company and later in the Civil Service and other mercantile houses.

Besides, many traders went on their own to carry on private business in hides and other commodities.

Thus the Sierra Leone Creole played no small part in the expansion of civilisation into Nigeria both in the Church, in the Government Civil Service and in Trade.

Lastly, I have already established the fact that a dominant Yoruba culture evolved in the clash of cultures which were brought together at the inception of the settlements. In spite of tribe or creed we are all now "Oku-pikin." In fact I met a Mende man once rebuking his child for not behaving as an "Oku-pikin". This man was quite civilised of course.

With all these varied and some, rich associations, I propose to call the language by the term SARO, which is an abbreviation of "Saroni". This is the term Yoruba people use to describe a Sierra Leonean. [Saroni], that is to say, "those from Sierra Leone, is the Yorubarised corruption of Sierra Leone. I shall therefore call the Patois Saro in future. In the series of recent local articles on the Patois, the name "Creco" or "Kric", has been offered. Mr V.E.J. Buckle for instance, disputes the correctness of the name "Creole", as applied to us and suggests that the local corruption "Creco", should supersede the term "Creole", with which "undesirable and degrading connotations" have now been associated. (10)

In Dakar, Fernandopo and other parts of the West Coast, where the Patois is spoken, I understand there are special terms used to designate the Sierra Leonean and his language. But I feel quite certain that my reader will agree that none of these can have a bigger claim on us than "Mother Nigeria".

To talk Saro, then would signify using a language much undue consideration of its nature and structure. English would be more properly regarded as a foreign language to be learnt as we learn French or Latin. The vigour and freshness of the Sierra Leonean would then be maintained by the development of "Saro" his everyday medium of speech.



The dignity with which the possession of a language is usually associated will then be ours, and our latent possibilities will all be harnessed and brought into action. We shall be able to regard SARO as an indigenous Institution, which will foster the development of the expression of our best selves. The chances of producing a Chaucer, or even a Shakespeare will no longer be a dream, for budding dramatists will find ample scope for expansion. We have already mentioned Mr Thomas Decker's "Wahalla". (11)

In March 1937, I was asked to produce an "ALL-AFRICAN NIGHT", for the Missionary and Literary (now Union Society) of Fourah Bay College. Nothing English was to be acted that evening. Besides a Yoruba scene and a few minor items in Mendi and Saro, I worked out two Saro plays by dramatising two short stories, which were well known to the students. With just a few practices the plays came off very well. I should say better than we expected. To me the most interesting feature of the show was the fact that all the work I had to do was merely in planning the scenes of the plays. The rest was spontaneous. The students who took part in the plays had no rigorous memorizing to do. I merely had to dictate their speeches to them. Very little was written down on paper. The words as it were clung together in the minds of the actors, and were faithfully reproduced with very few mistakes indeed.

The acting was most natural; expression was correct; intonations were perfect. Everything was spontaneous. If such spontaneity could be obtained among students of a University College, it would be all the more possible in younger children who are best capable of make-believe.

Thus it seems to me that if Saro is cultivated, spontaneity will be developed and Arts and Crafts will benefit in schools and elsewhere.

A stronger argument to convince education authorities that Saro should be given a place in the school time-table, can be based on Keatinge's great dictum "Make your children's unconscious and unconscious of meanings". From the present point of view this statement could be interpreted to mean that the teacher should ensure that the speech habits, and other various forms of behaviour which gradually sink into the child's unconscious mind and become his second nature, should not consist merely of mechanically learnt formulae, but should have clear and precise meanings for him. Otherwise he becomes a mere *bête machine* capable of much action, but only when he is led to it. In such a child the ability of initiating and executing anything creative would be proportionate to the articulateness of his ideas. Hence I stressed before that some definite consideration ought to be given to our Kindergarteners.

I once spoke to a boy of five, who was already attending school and said to him "What are you doing?" There was no reply. Then I spoke Saro: "[wetin ju de du]?" and straight-way the answer came. The child obviously did not understand what I said the first time because he was quite unused to hearing correct English. This is certainly true of many children and of the more illiterate adults. The speech-forms which have become unconscious in them are Patois and not English, and so they cannot carry on an interesting conversation, nor think clearly in English.

My first interest in Saro was aroused when the last Principal of the College now Bishop Horstead, Bishop of Sierra Leone, as ex officio Pastor of a small church attached to the College ( Bishop Crowther's Memorial Church ), found it quite difficult to talk with the children and the elderly people of the Parish. Both the Principal and Mrs Horstead found parish visitation almost impracticable, and so they asked me to teach them to speak Saro.

After the first few lessons, they told me their salutations had improved and visiting was becoming more profitable especially among the sick and aged.

This experience is not singular to the Horsteads.

Dr Mussulman, head of the U.R.C. Mission speaks Saro fluently and has thereby made more friends than he could ever have without it.

Many other Europeans both in Government Service and in the mercantile firms, have found it necessary to talk the language of the people they work with. "For in the strictest sense... information (and for that matter conversation,) cannot be imparted or conveyed. It can only be aroused in the mind of the hearer by the words which that person perceives. And these words can arouse it only if they call up in the mind of the teller the same meanings as those which are in the mind of the teller (speaker). These meanings or ideas as they are sometimes called must have been previously acquired." (12)

Or as Ogden and Richards have put it, ideas need the symbol referent triangle to mean anything to another person. Words mean nothing by themselves except in a given context.

"When we hear what is said, the symbols both cause us to perform an act of reference and to assume an attitude which will according to circumstances be more or less similar to the act and attitude of the speaker; "(13) " that is to say, a symbol becomes when uttered a sign to a hearer of an act of reference. When this interpretation is successful, it follows that the hearer makes a reference similar in all relevant respects to that made by the speaker." (14)

They also define the term "to be understood" as a contraction. It stands for (a) to be referred to † (b) to be responded with

† (c) to be felt towards referent † (d) to be felt towards speaker † (e) to be supposed that the speaker is referring to † (f) that the speaker is desiring etc., etc., "

It is this speaker-hearer relation which needs to be badly righted in Sierra Leone. Adequate steps are to be carefully sought by means of which our pupils can be helped to get the correct meanings out of the symbols which they use and hear in the form of English words and phrases.

I saw an English Composition exercise recently, in which a pupil was asked to make sentences using the words "feverishly" and "frenziedly". The boy wrote the following sentences:

" a boy was feverishly taken to hospital."

" a boy was feverishly and frenziedly taken to hospital", meaning that the boy having had an attack of fever was taken to the hospital. The idea "feverishly" had never been acquired not to mention "frenziedly". Other instances are the use of "disinteresting " for "uninteresting."

"vegetation garden" for "vegetable garden"

"habitat" for "habits".

"stop" for "cease"

"admire" for "wonder"

It is almost certain therefore that if I use any of the above words in the left hand column, it will convey the wrong ideas to the people from whose writings I made the collection .

Here are a few of the sentences I collected from various exercises,

Exercise	Correct Form.
It is hard to know where suggestion <u>stops</u> .	It is hard to know where suggestion <u>ends</u> .
The men ate and left the bone <u>clean</u> .	The men ate all the flesh and left the bone <u>bare</u> .
When I saw how ill he was, I <u>admired</u> .	When I saw how ill he was I was <u>surprised</u> .
<u>Cease</u> that talking	<u>Stop</u> that talking.
I <u>make</u> a step	I <u>take</u> a step
Somebody <u>met with</u> him	Somebody <u>met</u> him

All the above sentences show that the people who used them had wrong notions of the words used. At least if an Englishman had read them he would have found it most difficult to understand what was implied.

Sometimes also, the difficulty occurs in the interpretation of either a verbal conversation or of reading material. The full value of the words used is never realised unless an effort is made to do so. I find this true of all types of boys I have met both in Primary Schools, and in some of the Secondary Schools I have been visiting, as I go round for school supervision work.

To an outsider, it may seem that I have overstressed the facts of the situation. Perhaps a teacher in a Primary school may feel I have exaggerated the weaknesses of his pupils. But I can assure my reader that the situation is on the whole grave and we need to look into it so as to help our young boys and girls to develop a habit of saying what they mean and understanding what others say correctly. We must try to create a real consonance between the minds of hearers and speakers, and between author and reader. This can only be achieved by making the minds of our people especially their unconscious minds, minds of meaningful phrases and ideas. Our success depends largely on the nature of the effort made to give Saro a respectable place among the languages used in Sierra Leone, by which the Creole can freely express his deepest thoughts without fear of ridicule or hostile public opinion. Then and only then will the Sierra Leone Creole be in a position of differentiating correctly Standard English from his dear Mother-Tongue.

## Chapter 8.

"Suggestions for the Teaching of English in Freetown Schools."

In the preceding chapters, I have advocated the recognition of Saro as a language with full rights which should be allowed to develop, as freely as possible. I have also stated the view that this development of the language I call Saro will have two effects on the Sierra Leone Creole. First, it will give him some more self-respect, which he certainly needs at present, and second, he will be in a position to better differentiate English from Saro, even when there is some similarity in the words used.

Our present problem therefore is to suggest a scheme for teaching English which would effectively carry out the ideas enunciated above. How then can we fit Saro in with a scheme for teaching English effectively in the Schools of Freetown and the Colony.

To be better able to arrive at a sound conclusion, let us review the position of Saro in schools.

Invariably, one finds the rule laid down in Freetown schools "No Patois is allowed in school." In the C.M.S. Grammar School, the new Headmaster has taken the attitude of suggestion and puts out notices at certain times which read "We speak English today." "We speak English throughout this day." But the older dictum is the rule in almost every other school. It has been in vogue for years and years, and yet has achieved



no concrete results so far. On the other hand, a counter-movement is becoming noticeable *in* some of the other Secondary schools. In one of the Girls' Secondary Schools in which Saro has been forbidden since its foundation, and which has attempted to give their girls a high standard of English, I understand it is becoming difficult to enforce the ancient rule. In the early days, monitors and prefects were empowered to cite offenders, and they did so most successfully. But today, it is quite a risky business for a prefect or *monitor* to attempt to call another girl's attention when she is speaking the "barbaric language." In fact the girls talk Saro in class and write to each other in Saro so as to escape the interference of their European mistresses, who of course would not understand what is said or written.

The new attitude at the C.M.S. Grammar School, is a definite attempt to encourage the pupils to see the need and value of speaking English correctly. The Principal himself explained the system to me, and gave me some inside information of the supervision involved in making the "We speak English days", successful. On other days, he tells me, boys are free to talk Saro if they like, of course not officially, as a medium of communication in class. It is too early to determine the merits or demerits of this scheme, but it seems to be based on a more psychological understanding of the needs of Freetown.

It is thus evident that the original attitude of opposition to and coercion of the dearly beloved Saro, has not been of much real help in solving the problems of teaching English effectively in the Schools of Freetown. The Secondary schools certainly attest to this judgment, although we must look to the Primary schools in particular for the best guidance on the subject.

Now in the Primary schools, the language situation is decidedly anomalous. The children do not often know any *English* as I have already mentioned, and so in spite of the rigid "No-Saro" laws, they mechanically resort to Saro words and phrases, when they wish to express ideas for which they have no English equivalent.

The teacher on the other hand, however, much he may wish to speak correct English, finds that certain illustrations can best be given in the dear old Saro which he probably knows better than English and which certainly all the children would understand.

In the Kindergarten Departments of these schools, the situation is quite ridiculous. Nearly eighty percent of the conversation between teachers and pupils, especially in the lowest classes, is in Saro. This must be so, if there is to be any conversation at all. Lessons have to be taught in Saro (in the main. Descriptions are usually given in Saro.

At these early stages of school life, the children's concepts of many things have to be carefully developed; their vocabulary has to be gradually increased and as a rule all conversations and descriptions have to be made in terms of words and ideas which are already familiar to them . Hence the work is mostly in Saro which provides the richest background at that stage.

This then is the actual situation in the Primary and Kindergarten schools. Education Authorities decree " NO SARO - they actually say No Patois; the teachers and pupils who are at grips with the realities of the problem find it necessary to use Saro to get on with the informative side of the work. What a conflict of interests ?

On October 10, 1938, during one of my visits to one of the Normal Students of the College who was teaching at the Government Model School, I saw a really good instance of the use of Saro in the schools. This student was teaching Standard I, i.e. the class just above the Kindergarten Department; it was a Scripture lesson on God's promise to Abraham. I discovered that he found it difficult to explain the passage ".....in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and the sand which is upon the sea shore."

The real problem was to convey the idea of "sand", correctly. Suddenly the student said "[san-san]", which is the Saro for

sand. In a later lesson the same teacher found it necessary to say "[pɒmp]" for 'tap' or 'stand-pipe'.

My own personal experience of Sunday School teaching for nearly ten years, first confirmed the view in my mind that more information can be passed on to a group of Sierra Leone Creoles by using the dear Sato, than through English.

In view therefore of this widespread need and use of Sato in educational circles, we cannot any longer leave it out of serious consideration, but we should now try to formulate some definite educational principles to overcome the hindrances already indicated above, and at the same time develop fluency of speech and accuracy of expression in the use of correct English. This would mean a very careful study of all the factors necessary for teaching English correctly so that pupils of our schools would not only learn English, qua English, both language and literature, well, but also be given the right tools (as it were) for a more successful study of the allied English subjects—History, Hygiene, Geography, and even Science and Mathematics.

But first of all, we must distinguish the needs of a Kindergartener from those of a child over eight. The one learns mainly by verbal information from the teacher, the other is (ideally) taught to collect information from books. Let us therefore look at the problem from these two points of view.

Two questions arise here.

First. How are we to impart information to children under eight, who have a negligible understanding of English?

Secondly, how are we to teach older pupils to speak and write correct English without hindering their progress on the informative side?

Let us examine the first question. How are we to impart information to children of eight who have a negligible working knowledge of English?

This is a most bewildering question to many a Kindergarten teacher. In view however, of the view stated above in earlier paragraphs, I venture to say that Saro is the obvious medium of instruction which should be used. Even in England the English child who has "to replace the patois of the home by the English of the school" does not find it easy.

And, if we recall the case of the boy I mentioned above on page 167, it is true to say with Tegner "That which (is) easiest said is easiest understood." (1) I am therefore quite convinced that lessons in the Kindergarten should be given in Saro with complete freedom.

This would ensure a feeling of reciprocity by which the teacher talks to the pupils in Saro, and they reply accordingly in the same medium. Such an order of school procedure will promote greater freedom of expression in class and children will be helped to ask the thousand and one questions

they are ordinarily full of, without being handicapped for words.

Incidentally I wish to mention that the existing atmosphere found in Kindergarten classes and the Primary school is very artificial. There is no true sense of freedom; no happy smiles; no scope for expressing true child nature. All is restraint. Children between seven and eight sit solemnly learning their lessons, in the most well-behaved fashion, all wearing a grave look that befits adults many times older than they. There is little of play-pleasure in the work done, such as is noticeable in extra-school activities of the same children. I venture to suggest that they cannot really play in a medium strange to them. If therefore more freedom were introduced into the schoolroom, if expression became easy and more natural, learning would be more enjoyable and teaching less laborious and more fascinating. Such a provision will make information easy to impart. But the importance that was usually attached to English is not to be tampered with, not even at this initial stage. The present system merely emphasises the fact that English must be taught as a Foreign Language. We want to give our children a sound background which would help them to learn their second language as soon as possible. Hence the suggested arrangement would tend to make them bi-lingual without making

them inarticulate.

The situation seems very similar to the problem of teaching writing in Freetown schools. The children are taught to write script characters in the Kindergarten Departments, and later semi-cursive. As soon as they pass into the Primary school, they are all required to write in Cursive, even for Dictation lessons. As a rule all their work becomes stunted; they cannot write fast, a dictation lesson takes too long, and above all their exercise books become most untidily kept. The reason is obvious. The children are expected to learn and use their full cursive at the same time.

If on the other hand, these same children had been allowed to use script characters which they had already learnt to form, and later learn cursive, in special writing lessons, they would have been able to develop better skill in manual dexterity and general writing ability. I understand the situation is even getting worse. Kindergarteners are being asked to learn to write full-cursive from the beginning, in some schools.

So too, in connection with our language problem. If the Kindergarteners are allowed to master their first language, whilst gradually learning a second, they would be helped to build a sound superstructure upon a still sounder foundation. There is however a very strong opposition to such a suggestion: In July 1937, Rev N.H. McMillan, then Secretary of the Scottish Mission on the Gold Coast, proposed a scheme to be known later

known as the Mac-Scheme, abolishing the teaching of English in the lower forms of the Infant Schools of the Mission. The following headlines appeared in the Gold Coast Spectator of July 3, 1937.

" The Mac Scheme under consideration. Is it sound? "  
 " IF NO ENGLISH IN INFANT CLASSES, THEN PARENTS SHOULD NOT SEND CHILDREN TO SCHOOL TILL STANDARD ONE."

Another article appeared in the same paper with the headline

" "Rev Macmillan chases Wild Goose."

Both articles condemned the proposals, arguing of course, that the natives were familiar with their vernacular and do not need any further training in it. Besides there was no literature available in the vernacular.

In a leader of the 24th July that year, I wrote through the Sierra Leone Weekly News a strong appeal recommending that English should be adopted as a lingua franca throughout West Africa. "There were a few contributory factors" I said .  
 "The Mac Scheme had just been mooted. More important still was a move by the Big Chiefs of the Gold Coast to develop a uniform standard language which would be understood and used by all. The title of my article was "GIVE THEM ENGLISH."

A big controversy was opened. Dr J.B. Danquah PH.D. of the Gold Coast, wrote a strong criticism of my article. He disagreed entirely with the sentiments thus expressed and actually



Deplored the suggestion that English should be learnt with a view to its becoming a lingua franca in West Africa.

Putting his arguments briefly,:

(a) unless the masses were properly educated in the language a pidgin or patois was inevitable. This would mean a loss to the cultural history of the people as English would not adequately express their customs, traditions and music. This would apply very truly to the languages of the Gold Coast.

(b) There is no guarantee that the ruling power of the Gold Coast would continue to be England and so English as an official language should not oust native vernaculars.

(c) A single culture pervades more than half of the Gold Coast, and the new nationalist movement was taking more than "the form of a demand for a native lingua franca to be taught in the schools side by side with English and to be given opportunity to translate its living traditions into living art and literature." He then went on "Our slogan is not "Give them English", but "Let them think."",

Another correspondent Rev S.O.Odutola M.A. later wrote from Nigeria to justify early training in English as it enhanced the children's attainments later on. He pointed out that children who begin their school life in the vernacular are none the wiser for it. These "[ekarə sa]" pupils as he termed them form quite a distinct class all their own.

[ekarə]: Yoruba for "Good Morning"

There were many other correspondents with similar views on the subject. Some were for teaching English right from the start, whilst many others took the attitude that the vernaculars of our peoples should be developed.

It is thus obvious that there are many contradictory opinions on an important subject like this which affects the life of the African in a large variety of ways. Personally I am converted to Dr Danquah's position. I would not condemn the desire many people have for learning English right from the start. But like Dr Danquah I wish to add something to the learning of English; that is, I am strongly convinced that we need to develop our native vernaculars in West Africa.

From this point of view I approve whole-heartedly of the Macmillan Scheme, if, as I so feel, it is the way to develop efficiency in schools and help our people to think accurately. On this basis I further make bold to say that children of Freetown Schools and for that matter children all over the Colony should spend their first two years learning in Saro, as a medium of instruction. Meanwhile, specially constructed lessons could be devised to teach the children English, so as to ensure their immediate progress in acquiring information without depriving them of the necessary tools for future work in the English Language.

Such special lessons should aim (at primarily) helping the children

to develop an ability to understand, and of course to speak correct English. They may start off by adopting the principles of the "Look and Say Method" as a basis for learning the names of objects and the English equivalents for many local ideas. Thus they would be taught:

- (a) the correct English names of objects with the correct accents and stresses properly placed.
- (b) Simple action words and phrases,
- (c) Simple directives- the name given to prepositions and adverbs by the "Basic English" School.

The main aim of the course should be to help the children to say out their minds and to follow a conversation held in English. This would require no compromise of any form between English and Saro. The lessons should all be conducted as far as possible on the Direct Method System.

I have seen two picture descriptions of motions and directives which may be of much use in this connection. I refer to Dr Harold Palmer's figures in his New Method Grammar, Longmans (1938), and the Basic Motion pictures designed by C.K.Ogden for the Orthological Institute.

These two books will furnish inexperienced teachers with much material and guidance which would suggest many other local ideas of considerable value.

I also believe that a graded vocabulary on the basis of the Direct Method may also be worked in a series similar to

Dr Michael West's "Learn to speak by Speaking."

When the child passes from the Kindergarten Department into the Primary School the conditions of work would change accordingly and teachers would be faced with the problem of dealing with speaking, as well as writing, English correctly. We can assume that the child could understand ordinary conversations carried on in English, but does not get write in it. Our first step would therefore be to help the child to continue to learn to speak by speaking, and then gradually to learn to write in English.

At this stage our first problem would be to master the the correct pronunciation of written words when read, and to learn the correct spellings of words which are heard. This will be quite a difficult proposition as English is not written on any fixed phonetic system. Indeed we all know how bewildering it is to find that the sounds of many words do not often agree with their spellings. e.g.

stayed is spelled phonetically [steɪd]

paid is [peɪd]

but said is [sed]

also the endings "ough" and "augh" are always a menace to a foreigner e.g.

cough is pronounced [kɒf] with 'tough' and 'rough';

but dough is [dou]

whilst "through" is [thru]

bough is [bau]

also "laugh" is [la.f]

but "Bredlaugh" is [Bred-lə] with Laughton [Lɔ'tən].

These difficulties show that written English must be approached only through phonetic spelling, so that the children could learn correct sounds from the very start.

The International script or even that devised for the Institute of African Languages and Cultures could be easily adopted. I believe that right from the start, the children should be taught to write English words when dictated to them. This would make spellings easy to learn and facilitate the development of the ability to reduce ideas in the mind to written characters.

Alongside with this will grow the ability to read. In Freetown reading is terribly slow on the whole and therefore very few people have been taught to read for pleasure. People do read novels of course, but it takes so many days to read a single story that it becomes pain in course of time. To overcome that difficulty, children should be encouraged to develop speed in reading. When a book is read with some speed, one is able to get a general "impression" of the whole story before studying it in detail. Facility in reading is an essential for reading for pleasure, which is of course at

the same time a means for developing one's style in writing. The late Professor J.F. Adams emphasised that an average adult should have a working vocabulary of over 10,000 words- 20,000 being the ideal to which educated men should aspire.(2) Suitable fiction should therefore be supplied to the various schools so that the children should be encouraged to cultivate a love for independent reading. This will certainly broaden their general background. The children will be indirectly provided with matter and vocabulary for their Oral Composition Lessons during class.

But reading in class would need special treatment. At present pupils have only one text-book during the year and when they have read through it once, they are in a position to recite passages off by heart. If they are catechised on the subject matter, they answer in the exact phrases of the text, and so have no practice in formulating words to give the required answer. This means that although the answers are usually correct, the children lack the training of formulating their own language. This same fault is found in most Scripture lessons in which the children show profound knowledge of the text of the Bible. The value of repeating passages of a book is however quite debatable as yet. For it seems that the pupils gain somewhat as they can collect thereby a stock of correct terms and

phrases which enrich their language. When they inspectors visited Achimota in 1938, they found that passages which had been learnt by heart were better spoken than passages that were read from books. This led them to the conclusion that learning by heart was probably of some value and they recommended that "the uses of learning by heart should clearly be explored fully." (2b)

For other details common to all teaching of reading a book like Tomkinson's "The Teaching of English," is a very useful guide.

Next come Oral Lessons by which the pupils in Primary schools are helped to speak English correctly.

A wise teacher would grade his material, knowing of course how to prepare for a good lesson. The central aim of such a lesson should be to help the children to feel free to express themselves on some subject with which they are already familiar.

During my recent supervisions of the Normal Students' Teaching Practice in the Primary schools, we set some children certain passages to be read silently and then asked them some meanings of words. Later we asked them to use some of the words in original sentences. The results were quite fair. But the same children when asked to tell a story of their own became almost as dumb as sheep.

This aspect of the Teaching of English is by far the most difficult in Freetown Schools at present. Time and again I have watched our Normal Students fail in an Oral Composition lesson even after they had made careful preparations beforehand. I have also talked with older teachers, men of more than twenty years' experience, and they all unanimously tell me Oral Composition Lessons are most difficult.

In the Lower classes, even Dramatisation fails as a means of fostering Oral work. The chief reason is that these children whom we try to induce to talk, do not have the vocabulary needed to express themselves freely, and sometimes they lack even the matter. Of course there is usually some vestige of self-consciousness.

One headmaster, (3) told me that *if he* intends to hold an Oral Composition lesson, he usually gives some definite time preparing the pupils to collect information on the subject that is to be discussed. Thus for example if the class is to talk on a Fountain pen, he usually conducts general knowledge lessons in which the class learns about the parts of the pen and their uses. So that when the Oral Composition lesson comes round, the pupils are usually able to talk on the "Fountain" Pen", without further difficulty, and as a rule the lesson becomes quite interesting and brisk.

There is much to commend in this method, provided the pupils



especially in the higher classes are helped to collect the necessary information for themselves. This could be easily done by encouraging reading of journals and other periodicals which may be of value.

I know one teacher who once ran a "Project" on an election-eering campaign, and was able to evoke considerable interest in his class. Many interesting speeches were made and the series of lessons were very enjoyable. This was in Standard V. Of course in the junior classes, the topics should be almost restricted to incidents and places which the children are very familiar with.

Now whilst the child is gradually developing his English, in the Primary School, what should happen to his Saro. Here again I say that the early classes should carry on the work of acquiring information in Saro, whilst he is learning English. As the child gradually enriches his working knowledge of English, he will slowly convert his medium of instruction from Saro to English, until he can use English as the chief language for acquiring his future information. But even at this stage, Saro should not be altogether dropped from the curriculum of the school. The language could be helped to develop a literature which will supply the average person with reading material. Boys and girls in the Primary Schools could then be given a chance of writing respectable

exercises in their own language of which they could be really proud.

This seems to me to be a useful way of helping the Sierra Leone Creole to crystallize the Sprachgefühl (Speech-feeling) of Saro.

Of course there will be many attendant problems. Along what lines shall we develop Saro? As already mentioned, Saro is at present a vague language, as yet never employed in expressing accurate scientific and mathematical ideas. When someone says in Saro "[Gi mi af]" i.e. literally, "Give me half, (of what you have), he actually means "Give me a piece." Hence one finds children in Arithmetic confusing the concepts implied in the correct use of 'half'.

But in spite of this initial disability, Saro could be developed to the pitch of expressing abstract ideas in the near future. Newspapers could contribute to this development by providing a special column for Saro. Inspired men and women writers could then write in Saro from time to time on topical subjects and thus give the language a definite literary form.

This may need of course, the use of borrowed technical words which express concepts which are yet foreign to the language; but we may hope that some great genius may be born who may coin words and so fix the language on still better bases.

Jespersen has warned us the "A good prose style is everywhere a late acquirement, and the work of whole generations of authors

is needed to bring about the easy flow of written prose." (4)  
 This is a natural line of development and critics who feel  
 Saro is not fitted to express Theology and Metaphysical ideas  
 should be reminded of the early history of the use of the  
 English Language.

In the Fifteenth Century, it was the mark of a well-  
 educated person, to read and converse in Latin and to know  
 something of Greek. This attitude was due to the fact that  
 Latin was "the living language of the abodes of learning."  
 Men like Erasmus and Dean Colet discussed Theology and  
 Philosophy in Latin, and Colet spent most of his time at  
 Oxford, founding a school where boys could get the necessary  
 classical education. But less than a hundred years after  
 the triumph of Erasmus in the English Universities, Hooker  
 wrote his "Ecclesiastical Polity" in English. This was the  
 first work of the kind on Theological problems, that was  
 written in English. Not long after Hooker came Bacon, who  
 pioneered the cause of Logical Methodology, discussing in  
 English, Metaphysical problems which Erasmus would have  
 preferred to discuss in Latin. In his triumph Bacon wrote

" When I speak of Forms, I mean nothing more than those  
 laws and determinations of absolute actuality which  
 govern and constitute any simple nature as heat, light,  
 weight, in every kind of matter and subject that is  
 susceptible of them.  
 Thus the form of heat or the form of light is the same  
 as the law of heat or the law of light." (5)

Bacon was discussing Forms.

What can be more abstract than such a subject? Erasmus would have wept had he lived to see Metaphysics treated in an unacceptable language, instead of the recognised orthodox medium of the ancients seats of the Schoolmen. Colet would have shuddered to learn of such "heresy". But there it was; Bacon had broken the ice, and soon after Hobbes arrived with a contribution to English Philosophy which made rank as one of the greatest of the early English Philosophers.

These are some of the great masters who emancipated English from the stigma that it could not express abstract speculations adequately. Meanwhile poetry was not in the background. The illustrious Shakespeare produced for England dramas of all descriptions which till today are part of the mental kit boys and girls must possess before they can safely go through a Secondary School in England or even abroad. Everybody finds pleasure in reading Shakespeare's works and many people enjoy his plays when acted. Thus the genius of Shakespeare furthered the progress of the English language. But not long after Shakespeare, one of the best students of his day, no doubt well brought up in the Classics, devoted himself seriously to English Poetry. Thus arose the "Mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies", Milton, the "God-gifted organ voice of England." This illustrious son of England transcended his predecessors and made a contribution to English Literature

in fields highly metaphysical and imaginative. The stories of the Classics were gradually been brought down to the door of the common man.

Meanwhile between Shakespeare and Milton, there was sitting a long conference, lasting seven years, which aimed at releasing the Bible from the chains which bound it to the Latin tongue. The Hampton Court Conference resulted in the translation of the Bible into the Authorised Version, which till today, is still regarded as an unrivalled contribution to the Literature of the English Language.

Thus the English Language was guided on its way to the development of a literature fit to express the more intellectual and spiritual truths of life.

So too if Sars is given a chance, it could readily evolve or probably borrow terms and expressions which would facilitate the discussion of highly intellectual topics.

It must however be emphasised that this would require a very intimate knowledge of the English Language on the part of the pioneer writers. who would combine the ease and polish of Chaucer with the scholarship of Milton.

Education Authorities can be assured of my desire to give our people the best training in English, possible.

Unfortunately, at present besides the difficulties which the similarities in English often cause, there are no good attempts to provide for the emergencies in the Teaching of

If English is to be well taught in the Secondary Schools, if it is to receive the attention it deserves as a key subject for all our other studies, then the Secondary Schools should each have as tutor one Englishman who has studied in the Universities. Such a man could be a nucleus through which other Africans could be helped to teach the subject adequately. This has been the case with the girls' schools where English ladies have always been on the staff, and some holding degrees in English. As a result the girls of those schools are usually able to write better English than the average boy. Of course this statement should be balanced by the fact that as a rule girls are better at languages than boys. Yet in actual fact the girls who stay for three or more years do certainly speak and write better English. Whatever may be said for training the African to teach English, I strongly contend that his work should be reinforced by the help of a native of the English Language.

The British Council Scholarships which are now open to teachers of English in Sierra Leone Schools, will ease the situation considerably, as the holders are given a years training in the subject in an English University. But this will only ease the pressure. We need a very strict specialist system with a sense of freedom which would encourage experiments. So that a careful survey may be made of the best possible lines

along which progress could be made. These are some of the essentials for good teaching of the subject in Secondary schools.

In the Primary schools the existing provision is almost negligible. In spite of the recent pressure put forth by Government to train teachers, there are still many men of the old school who are not in the least capable of talking, not to speak of teaching correct English. The children are therefore handicapped both by their own private difficulties and the faulty teaching of masters who themselves need to be first taught.

It seems to me therefore, that the Education Authorities should appoint a specialist teacher who would give lessons to the teachers first, where they need help, and later go round from school to school, supervising the work of the various schools. This would ensure some knowledge of the standard of lessons conducted in the subject. A regular system of vacation courses on this all-important subject would be most useful, and teachers will be better equipped to teach the pupils committed to their charge. (6)

A few of the most outstanding of the African teachers could then be selected and given special training as subject teachers.

This would ensure that the work is in the hands of a few men and women who have the necessary ability for teaching a subject which they *had* learnt previously.

Of course the present schemes for training teachers is helping the situation, but there is further need for further reinforcements of an army of men and women who can teach the subject well.

In fact the teachers who are actually trained could be classified further and the best English students, might be given specialist courses even when they have gone out of College. Time would then be saved on such a system and better efficiency obtained as well.

I wish here to call further attention to Mr Milburn's attention on the use of Vernaculars as a medium of Instruction. When discussing the Patois as a medium of Instruction, he suggested two possible means of avoiding the persistent use of the Patois (Saro); viz

(1) "School Authorities should attempt to develop an attitude in their pupils that THE (caps mine) Patois is an undignified form of speech ....., instead of issuing instructions that "no Patois is to be spoken.

(2) That an Association might be formed in Freetown with aims similar to those of the 'English Association ' viz:

(a) To promote the due recognition of English as an essential element in the national education.

(b) To discuss methods of teaching English and the correlation of School and University work.



- (c) To encourage and facilitate advanced study in English literature and language.
- (d) To unite all those who are interested in English studies; to bring teachers into contact with one another and with writers and readers who do not teach; and to induce those who are not themselves engaged in teaching to use their influence in the cause of English as a part of education. (7)

The first suggestion however is most suicidal in itself. It is the last thing that a patriotic Creole would like to be told - that his language is AN UNDIGNIFIED FORM OF SPEECH.

Undignified! What a word!

If it is true that "a nation speaks its souls in the words it uses", then according to Mr Milburn the soul of the Sierra Leone Creole is in an UNDIGNIFIED condition. Granted he is right, then we should do everything possible to liberate our souls from its present disgrace, by learning to speak Standard English correctly. This can only be done by standardising our vernacular at the same time. Hence if we need to improve our souls we need to both learn Correct English and build up our language.

It is worth mentioning that the phrase "Standard English" is very elastic even for Englishmen. Very few Englishmen come here i.e. to Sierra Leone, who can speak Standard English correctly.

Besides this probability of contradiction, when we begin to learn from them, they as a rule live a life of complete segregation except during office hours. As a result even if we desire to learn English directly from Englishmen abroad, we can only do so mainly through Africans or from books and not by direct contact with the natives of the Language. How then can we hope to speak Pure Standard English as Mr Milburn enjoins? If the chances of mixing with the owners of the language are very small, then we must continue to learn it second-hand. This means there will be a kind of brogue present in our English, - and almost inevitable fact.

The second suggestion is I think a very good advice to all who are concerned about the Teaching of English in this Land. I believe many people would willingly contribute to such an idea when it is made practicable. But in spite of my willingness to share in the councils of such an Association, I am also quite convinced that the Sierra Leone Creole has lived in an artificial setting for too long, and now needs a definite ballast on which his spiritual life can be anchored. The only possible ballast I can envisage at present is the universal recognition of his vernacular. This will inspire him with self-confidence and at the same time develop in him most of the virtues which can only be imbibed from a feeling of AT-ONENESS and AT-HOMENESS, with others of his kind.

Mr H.A.Harman has wisely said " The education of every child ought to help the whole tribe or country to improve.

.....

Above all, it must train some children to grow up to be leaders of the people, men and women of good sense and great honesty, proud of the race to which they belong, and anxious to make it still greater and wiser so that they may be even more proud of it." (8)

The children of the Sierra Leone Creole are very much in need of the sense of pride referred to above, and can only get it through the expansion of their mother-tongue.

These are some of the more outstanding considerations which local Education Authorities have to bear in mind if they intend to elevate the masses of our people from the quagmire of ignorance, and the embarrassment caused by the feeling of self-defeat. We can only progress in so far as our language defects are corrected. I appreciate the fact that the price is very high, but I must assure everybody that the goal is of priceless worth, viz the emancipation of the souls of our people.

The Sierra Leone Creole is badly thirsting after knowledge but his efforts are usually dammed by this language defect. He needs the power to liberate his soul. How can he without a respectable vernacular?

The Creole also needs to widen his horizon and benefit from the accumulated heritage of the ages in the literary world. But how can he without a first-rate knowledge of the most widespread language of this age?

"Speak ! and you are: " said the Oriental. "Let our sons think"says the patriotic African. How can the Sierra Leone Creole think without being able to speak; what shall he say if his thinking is all lopsided?

The Sierra Leone Creole needs to develop his mother-tongue to be able to speak on the deep-seated feelings of his heart. He also needs to keep his place in the stream of modern civilised life. This is his problem .  
How can he organise all his forces ?

## Appendix I.

A catalogue of German Missionaries who served in Sierra Leone from 1804 to 1865. Numbers in brackets indicate lengths of service. x= trained at the Berlin Seminary  
 §= trained at Basle.

Date	Name of Missionary	Place of training in England.	First Location in Africa.
1804	Renner <sup>x</sup> (17 years)	Clapham for 15mos.	Government Chaplain Freetown- 16 years Kent - 1year Rio Pongas -4 years.
	Hartwig <sup>x</sup>	.. ..	
1806	Nylander <sup>x</sup> (19 years)	.. .. 9 mos	Government Chaplain Freetown- 6 years Yongro-6 years Kissy -7 years
	Butscher <sup>x</sup> (11years)	.. ..	Rio Pongas- 8 years Leicester Christian Institution=3 years
	Prasse <sup>x</sup> (3 years)	.. .. 11 mos	Rio Pongas
1809	Wenzel <sup>x</sup> (9 years)	Bledlow and under Rev T.Scott- 2 years	Fantimania- 7 years Kissy - 2 years.
	Barneth <sup>x</sup> (1 year)	.. ..	Fantimania-1 year
1811	Wilhelm <sup>x</sup> (23 years)	Bledlow and under Rev T.Scott-4 years	Rio Pongas
	Klein <sup>x</sup> (3 years)	.. ..	Fantimania and the Gambia.
1812	Meissner (1½ years)	Apparently no training at all	A catechist working with others. a smith by trade.
	Meyer (6 mos)	.. ..	A catechist- a rope- maker by trade.

1815	Sperkhacken <sup>x</sup> (9 mos)	Under Rev T.Scott	Bullom
	Schulze <sup>x</sup> (2 mos)	.. .. .	not indicated
1816	Johnson W.A.B. (7 years)	apparently no training at all.	Regent
	During (7 years)	.. .. .	Gloucester
	Jost (2 mos)	Trained as a schoolmaster in Germany	not identified.
1817	Decker <sup>x</sup>	Under one Rev Westoby for a few months.	Wilberforce.
1820	Johnson H.M. (2 years)	not indicated	
1822	Metzger (11 years)	Central School of National Society	Wilberforce, Kissy and Wellington.
	Beckhauer <sup>♯</sup> (6 mos)	.. .. .	Freetown and York
	Gerber <sup>♯</sup> (11 years)	.. .. .	Kissy, Bathurst and The Bananas Islands.
	Schenel <sup>♯</sup> (6 mos)	.. .. .	Bathurst
1826	Hansel <sup>♯</sup> (7 years)	C.M.S.College, Islington - 3 years.	Christian Institution Leicester and Freetown.
1832	Schon <sup>♯</sup> (15 years)	.. .. .	engaged in linguistic work; also at Kent.
1	Kissling <sup>♯</sup> (8 years)	.. .. .	not identified.
1835	Schlenker <sup>♯</sup> (16 years)	.. .. .	Port Lokkoh; also engaged in linguistic work.
1836	Graf <sup>♯</sup> (19 years)	.. .. .	Hastings.

1837	Bultman	♩	C.M.S. College Isling-	Bathurst and Charlotte-
	(23 years)		ton - 3 years.	2 years; Hastings and Waterloo- 1 year; Kent and Bananas-18 years
1840	Haastrup	♩	.. .. .	Regent, Waterloo, Free- town and Kissy.
	(9 years)			
	Schmidt	♩	.. .. .	not stated.
	(13 years)			
1841	Frey	♩	.. .. .	Christ Church, Freetown.
	(15½ years)			
	Gollmer	♩	.. .. .	Regent, Bathurst and Charlotte.
	(4 years)			
1842	Muller	♩	.. .. .	not identified
	(5 years)			
	Dietrich Hehlens-Miss			Girls School Kissy, Annie Walsh Memorial School.
	(16 years)			
1847	Koelle	♩	.. .. .	Arabic tutor and Linguist
	(16 years)			
1848	Clemens	♩	.. .. .	Kissy.
	(2 years)			
1850	Mrs Clemens		-n-----	Girls School at Charlotte
	(19 years)			
1852	Reichardt	♩	C.M.S. College Isling-	Fourah Bay College-18
	(18 years		ton -4 years.	years; With the Foulahs
	and			and back to Fourah Bay
	6 years)			College- 6 years
1856	Bleuler-Miss			Girls' School at Charlotte.
	(2 years)			
1857	Knodler	♩	trained at St Chris-	Kissy
	(17 years)		chona, Germany. No	
			training in England.	
	Bockstatt	♩	.. .. .	Kissy and later to Jeru-
	(14 years)			salem
1858	Konig-Miss		-- -- --	Girls' School at Charlotte
	(4 years)			

1865. Caspari-Miss, a Pole,----  
(13 years)

Female Institution, now  
The Annie Walsh Memorial  
School.



## Appendix II.

A catalogue of English Missionaries who served in Sierra Leone under C.M.S. from 1816 to 1880, giving average lengths of service for those who stayed in the Colony for more than six months, in years.

## A. Males

County of Origin	Number	Av: length of Service.
London District	17	5.9 years
Yorkshire	5	12 $\frac{1}{2}$ ..
Somerset	1	--
Suffolk	3	2 ..
Devon	5	10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ..
Gloucestershire	3	14 $\frac{1}{2}$ ..
Buckinghamshire	1	11 $\frac{1}{2}$ ..
Essex	3	4 ..
Hampshire	3	.94 ..
Oxford	2	3 ..
Northumberland	3	13 ..
	(2 spent over 20 years each)	
Wiltshire	1	10 ..
Sussex	1	--
Derby	1	2 ..
Pembrokeshire	1	2 ..
Warwickshire	2	1 ..
Lancashire	2	7.8 ..

Worcestershire	1	5 years
Scotland	2	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ..
Ireland	4	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ..
Jamaica (of Scotch Parentage)	1	28 ..

## B. Females.

London District	3	7 years ( 1 for 21 years)
Yorkshire	4	11 ..
Gloucestershire	2	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ..
Kent	-	-
Hampshire	1	4 ..
Scotland	1	40 ..
Ireland	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ..

## Appendix III.

## A note on the De Ruyter Stone.

The De Ruyter Stone was discovered on February 19, 1923, during the construction of a large outfall drain in Freetown through King Jimmy Wharf.

It is a rock measuring 20 feet by 16 feet, whose surface was covered with various inscriptions lying at the mouth of the now known as King Jimmy's Wharf. This was a safe landing place where ships could obtain water supply and timber for their repairs.

The most important inscription found which could be easily read ran as follows:

M.A.Ruiter I.C.Meppel.

Vice Admiralen

Van Hollan&

En Westvries.

This inscription records the fact that Michael Adrian de Ruyter and Jan Cornelisz Meppel, Vice Admirals of Holland and Westfriesland, landed at Sierra Leone A.D. 1664

B.W.Fitch-Jones Esq, describes the incidents relating to this inscription:

"This Admiral de Ruyter" he writes" is of course, well known for his naval exploits in the Thames, in June 1667, when he destroyed three of the King's Ships, the Royal Oak, the Royal James and London, and captured the Royal

Charles, and also bombarded the fort on the River." In 1664, 'The Dutch' were at war with England, and as de Ruyter, after having retaken Goree, arrived at Sierra Leone to continue the good work. We are told that, after obtaining water supplies in Sierra Leone, he proceeded to Tasso Island, where he disabled and pillaged the English factory as punishment for the alleged treatment of some Dutch Settlers, whose goods had been seized.

Other names cut on the stone include those of William Story, I Andriesen A<sup>o</sup> 1664, W.V.Rupert, Andrens Pewe 1730, F. Scoplet, O<sup>o</sup>Scivsck, Olas Moore, I.I.Haen 1664."

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- (1) The Sierra Leone Daily Guardian, April 3 1936.
- (2) Achimota College Report of the Committee appointed in 1938 by the Governor of the Gold Coast Colony to inspect the Prince of Wales' College, Achimota. paragraphs 165
- (3) *ibidem* paragraph 179

## Chapter II.

- (1) T.N.Goddard; A Handbook of Sierra Leone pp 14 et seq  
*Bull-Thompson: Sierra Leone in History and Tradition Chapter I*  
A Tropical Dependency, by Lady Lugard chapter 35.
- (2) William Tamba, one of the First Africans employed by C.M.S. was first taught English in a slave factory.
- (3) The History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, by Thomas Clarkson Volume I, pp 67-77
- (4) The Church of England Mission in Sierra Leone, by Rev S.A.Walker Introduction pp xxii.
- (5) Handbook of Sierra Leone, supra pp  
The Church of England Mission in Sierra Leone pp xxiii  
*The Missionary History of Sierra Leone by Seddall p 39*
- (6) Sierra Leone Studies No 18 p 27
- (7) *ibidem*
- (8) Walker supra xxiii  
Sierra Leone Studies No 18 p 27.
- (9) Clarkson, The History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Vol II, p 343.
- (10) Sierra Leone Studies NO 18 p 43.
- (11) *ibidem* p 60.

- S.L. Company's Report 1795.
- (12) Walker op cit, p xxiv and Sibthorpe, The History of Sierra Leone p 9 mention that 16 ships set sail for Sierra Leone. But Clarkson op cit Vol II, p 343 states that fifteen ships came out under his brother containing 1,100 passengers.  
*Seddall op cit p 41*
- (13) Clarkson op cit Vol II, pp 344 - 345.
- (14) S.L. Company's Report 1795 p 88
- (15) do
- (16) Lieutenant J. Clarkson, Governor of Sierra Leone's Diary. reprinted in Sierra Leone Studies No 8,
- (17) Walker op cit p xxvi.
- (18) Sierra Leone Studies No 18 p 22
- (19) *Goddard op cit*  
*Butt-Thompson op cit chapter 11*  
*Seddall op cit p 28*
- (20) Major J.J. Crooks quotes Trevelyan- Life and letters of Lord Macaulay; vide his History of Sierra Leone p
- (21) Sierra Leone Studies No 18 p 85 - Civilisation.
- (22) C.M.S. History Vol I p 83 et seq.  
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- (23) W.B. Marke Methodism in Sierra Leone p 13  
*Goddard op cit p. 65*
- (24) C.M.S. History Vol I p 83
- (25) Proceedings of C.M.S. Vol I pp 15 et seq
- (26) do Vol II pp 71-2
- (27) Register of Missionaries C.M.S. Vol I  
*Butt-Thompson op cit chap 22* *Ingles gives a list of Missionaries in*  
*Sierra Leone after a Hundred Years.*
- (28) Methodism in Sierra Leone by Charles Marke passim.
- (29) Sierra Leone Studies No 18 p 33  
*Butt-Thompson op cit p 115*
- 30) Clarkson, The History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Vol II, pp 569 - 587  
Walker op cit p xxviii.

- (31) same as (30) supra .  
*Goddard op cit p 30*
- (32) T.N.Goddard op cit p 31 et seq.
- (33) op Cit p
- (34) *op cit* p 51
- (35) op cit p xxxiii.
- (36) *do* also ~~books~~ *Historical Records of the Royal African Corps* p 87 et seq.
- (37) Goddard op cit
- (38) C.M.S. History Vol I p
- (39) The History of Abeokuta by E.O.Moore pp 4 2
- (40) C.M.S. History Vol I p 98.
- (41) op cit p 38.
- (42) C.M.S. History vol I p 98
- (43) Sibthorpe (History of Sierra Leone) mentions that W.A.B.Johnson wrote to the C.M.S. Secretary in London prescribing the qualifications of schoolmasters and missionaries viz: Husbandry, Mechanics, Land-Surveying, Geography, Arithmetic. op cit p 42.  
*See also Add. Reses, Petitions etc. to His late Majesty William IV.*
- (44) Op cit p 38
- (45) Walker op cit p 16.
- (46) do p 15
- (47) op cit p 28
- (48) Walker op cit p 33
- (49) Memorials of Centenary of Sierra Leone and Jubilee of H.M. Queen Victoria 1887
- (50) Memorials of John Bowen by his sister, pp 26-7
- 51) The word [oku] by itself means a "corpse."
- (52) Migeod , Languages of West Africa pp 44

- (53) Sierra Leone Studies No XXI  
Walker op cit footnote p xxxiii
- (54) Rankin, The White Man's Grave Vol I p 224  
C.M.S. History Vol I p 456.
- (55) Rankin op cit pp 91, 98  
*Burt Thompson traces the rise of many liberated Africans through their trade with Nigeria Chapter 20*
- (56) do p 224; C.M.S. History Vol I p 456
- (57) do p 99
- (58) *For a detailed account of the liberated Africans vide Burt-Thompson op cit Book II and Dennet: Nigerian Studies Chapter III*  
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- (1) Rev H. Brandwood, Tutor of Fourah Bay College 1929-1938
- (2) Banguage p 207
- (3) do chapter 9 passim
- (4) A modern English Grammar Vol I chapter 5.22  
Greenough & Kittredge, Words and their Ways in English speech p 70.
- (5) Jespersen English Grammar Vol I p 151.
- (6) do do chapter 4.4, & 9
- (7) do do ,, 2.62, 6.92, 7.242  
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- (8) Jespersen English Grammar Vol I chapters 13.5 13.6  
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- (9) Jespersen op cit chapters 12.52, 10.482
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- (1) Jespersen Philosophy of Grammar p 198  
do English Grammar vol II Chapter 5.51
- (2) do Language p 332  
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- (3) Jespersen Language p 332
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- (5) do do Chapter 18 passim
- (6) Wyld op cit p 327 et seq.
- (7) Jespersen Language p 321 Chapter 17 para 2
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- (9) do do ,, 326 do ,, ,, 5
- (10) Migeod op cit p 202
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- (21) Migeod op Cit Chapters 7 & 8

Chapter VI

- (1) Jubilee memorials of Her Majesty the Queen and Centenary Celebrations of Sierra Leone 1887
- (2) Rankin The White Man's Grave Vol I
- (3) Memorials of John Bowen p 526
- (4) Bishop Ingham Sierra Leone After A Hundred Years p 317.
- (5) Newland, Sierra Leone, Its People, Products, and Secret Societies Chapter 2 pp 10-13
- (6) The African Today
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- (8) Migeod op cit Vol I p 77.
- (9) do do p 78
- (10) Bradley "The Making of English" p 195  
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- (11) *Migeod op cit* Vol I p 78  
page 108.
- (12) This talk was taken from over the wireless and checked over when the recording was given.
- (13) Jespersen Language Chapter 12 par 1-6
- (14) The Shrine of a People's Soul p 32
- (15) Jespersen Language Chapter 12 para 7
- (16) page 149 et seq.
- (17) Milton in Samson Agonistes makes Samson ask the Chorus  
*Tell me friends,  
Am I not sung, and proverb'd for a fool  
In every street?*  
ll 203-4.
- (18) Sibthorpe's History dates this event as August 22, 1873 p 87.

- (19) Jubilee Volume of Sierra Leone Church p 205
- (20) Edwin Smith op cit p 45
- (21) do
- (22) Rankin Vol II p 108  
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- (23) Sierra Leone Daily Guardian
- (24) Jespersen Language p 321.
- (25) Cp School Notes October 1939.
- (26) do
- (27) ~~Notatt:~~ Article in Encyclopaedia Vol 21 14th Edition.

#### Chapter 7

- (1) Jespersen Language P 325
- (2) Language in Education p 9
- (3) Oversea Education January 1930
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I am still of opinion here that as long as the name "Creeo" is associated with unpleasant ideas, we must find another.

- (11) Published in the Sierra Leone Daily Guardian.
- (12) Dumville How to teach p.3
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- (14) do p 193.

### Chapter VIII.

- (1) Jespersen, Mankind Nation and Individual p 88
- (2) Adams J.F. *The Student's Guide* p 168
- (2b) Achimota Report para: 178  
See also Cadwalller's very interesting article on the Teaching of Reading in the African Vernaculars - in Overseas Education October 1936.
- (3) Mr V.E.E. Williams, Headmaster of Holy Trinity School.  
see also Hughes and Hughes p 161 on Projects.
- (4) Jespersen Language p
- (5) The Cambridge History of Literature Vol V
- (6) There was a vacation course held in Freetown in July last year for the female teachers, and special lectures were given on English.
- (7) See School Notes for October 1939 p 41.
- (8) The Citizen of Africa p 217.