OPPOSITION TO CHRISTIAN PROPAGANDA IN IGBOLAND: A STUDY OF THE METHODIST MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE, 1910-1931

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Introduction

In 1931, Primitive Methodism in Igboland celebrated a Jubilee to mark its coming of age in the Igbo country. It was the 21st birthday of the beginnings of Primitive Methodist Missionary enterprise among the Igbo-speaking people of Eastern Nigeria. Meetings were held in all the Primitive Methodist Igbo stations from 29th December 1930 to 2nd January 1931. On 2nd January (1931), mass meetings were held at Uzuakoli for all the people of Igbo churches. A Thanksgiving Fund was opened and the total received amounted to £69[1].

Among the highlights of the celebrations was the launching of a book in vernacular titled AKUKO OKE ONU. (A Tale of Immense Joy). The book as its title suggests, focused on the triumph of the Gospel. Overwhelmed by the phenomenal success which attended the enterprise of Primitive Methodism in Igboland, it glossed over as unimportant the trials which the gospel encountered as it sought to roll from one town to the other. Indeed AKUKO OKE ONU created a misleading impression that right from the onset the harbingers of the gospel found the mission field so fertile that Igboland simply fell like an over-ripe fruit into the warm and waiting hands of Primitive Methodism without any stumbling block placed on the way of the cross. It is this obverse of the case, namely, the opposition which the missionaries encountered during their evangelistic enterprise that is the concern of this paper.

The setting of the paper is the vast section of Igboland on and beside the eastern rail route between the Niger Delta in the South and the Egede and Idoma territories in the Benue in the North. This section is the Methodist area in Igboland east of the Niger. It contains large towns like Port Harcourt, Aba, Uzuakoli, Bende, Umuahia, Ihube, Ovim, Okigwe,

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enabled me to conduct researches on the Missionary Enterprise of Methodist Mission in Igboland, without which this article would not have been possible.Agbani and Enugu and has been described as one of the most densely populated parts of the Igbo country.[2]

A Foretaste of What Awaited Primitive Methodism in Igboland

The Cradle of West African Primitive Methodism was Fernando Po. It was in the second half of the 19th century that the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society took possession of that island with the establishment of a Mission at Santa Isabel in 1870[3]. But in season and out of season, the mission lived and worked under fear and suspicion that the Roman Catholic Spanish authorities of the island might at any time deal ruthlessly with it in terms of forcing it out of the island. In 1858, the authorities "at the instigation of Roman Catholic priests"[4] expelled from the island the Baptist Mission which was the first christian body to work in Fernando PO. It was partly to wriggle out of this ugly situation of labouring in an area where it was not sufficiently recognized and partly to enter into a territory offering enough scope for aggressive evangelism that the Mission sought for a base on the mainland (Nigeria).

The first attempt was made in 1885. Opobo an Igbo town, was considered a very suitable area. However, King Jaja, the paramount ruler of the town opposed bitterly the entry of the methodists into Opobo. He was a great defender of the religion of his fathers. Ayandele said of him:

Determined on preserving indigenous religion and institutions at all cost even when events began to show that he was resisting the irresistible, he spared no effort to oppose the christianization of the Niger Delta[5]

It is not surprising therefore that the Methodists from Fernando Po failed hopelessly to win over Jaja in spite of the numerous apostolic visits to him. Indeed if King Jaja had been more compromising, Opobo would have been the first town in eastern Nigeria to be missioned by the Primitive Methodists. The treatment which the Opobo potentate meted out to the Methodists from Fernando Po was a foretaste of what awaited the Primitive Methodist Mission in Igboland.

Primitive Methodism Enters Igboland: Opposition Galore

Having suffered one bluff after another from King Jaja, the Primitive

Methodist missionaries in Fernando PO, turned their attention to Efikland. Through the cooperation of Prince Archibong the traditional ruler of Calabar, the Rev. Robert Fairley in 1893 succeeded in his search for a foothold. Land was acquired at Archibong Town and in December of the same year, the Church Missionary Committee sent out from England Rev. Marcus to commence missionary work there[6]. A second station also in Efik land was established at Jamestown in 1897 by the Rev. W.J. Ward. The occupation of Archibong Town did not last long for the station was soon after transferred to Oron located sixteen miles north of Jamestown.

For five full years, the missionaries on the mainland concentrated their evangelistic efforts on consolidating work already begun in the two stations. In 1902, a third station was established at Urua Eye and from there, Primitive Methodism through the daring drive of the Rev. William Christie a most dynamic man[7] extended its influence to Okot Ekpene in 1909. Christie made Ikot Ekpene his residence soon after he missioned it. In February 1910, he was joined by the Rev. W. Groves. The entry of Groves into the field enabled him to proceed northwards to open a station in Igboland into which he had longed to enter[8] because of its teeming population and sturdiness of character of its inhabitants.

Christie first attempted to find a base at Arriam "where for a few weeks he lived in a palaver shed, with a tent-cloth hanging over its entrance".[9] By "a palaver shed" Christie meant a hall, with thatched roof, where the male adult members of the community held their meetings. But his exertions made little or no impression on the people who were overtly opposed to his presence and message, and remained irrevocably committed to their indigenous religion. He was at Arriam up till Easter 1910.

Finding Arriam a difficult nut to crack the ardent missionary withdrew and proceeded further north to Ndoro. Here he settled down to work in earnest, counting heavily on the people's initial demonstration of great enthusiasm for the christian message. A school was built and missionaries' quarters set up on a suitable piece of ground. The erection of these infrastructures was scarcely completed when fierce opposition to christianity broke out. As one of Christie's colleagues reported:

The chiefs ordered that no boy must attend school, and no man must accept

a job even as a labourer.[10]

The inevitable outcome was a total boycott of the mission by the indigenes. Deflated, the missionary suspended further work at Ndoro and restricted his evangelistic efforts to Ikot Ekpene.

The District Officer In-charge of the Bende District at the time was Major Cockburn. He was dismayed by the amount of social ills prevailing in the District. Cannibalism, kidnapping and head-hunting were rampant. Also rife were human sacrifice and various aspects of infanticide, twin murder being the most revolting. The officer was loath to believe that the pacification of the area and establishment of congenial atmosphere needed the application of force. The planting of christianity amongst the people, he was convinced, would achieve the desired results. Accordingly, he invited Christie to mission Bende District.

The missionary honoured the invitation and took possession of Bende town, in March 1910. Cockburn himself was around to give him the assistance and encouragement he greatly needed. But for his compelling force of character which paved Christie's way for his entry into the town, the missionary would have failed as woefully as he did at Arriam, for Bende was not yet disposed to receive him and his message. Wrote Christie in his first report on his entry into the town:

We are still moving alone. I was nearly driven out of the Igbo country. The people have been very difficult to manipulate. They really want to remain in their pagan life. They fear our religion as a tramp fears a bat. Their dread is, if they abandon the claim made upon them by the departed, they will suffer destruction. They are governed by the hand of the dead. It is awful to think how powerful is the influence wielded by the spirits of their fathers.[11]

All the same, Christie had come to Bende with the determination to stay and work, indeed to stick to it whether good or bad. He was in Bende for three months within which he succeeded in erecting a temporary mission-house, a church and a school. Before returning to England in January 1911, he had sent a native Agent to Uzuakoli to open a station and had endeavoured in vain to mission Ozuitem.

Christie's successor in Bende was the Rev. F.W. Dodds who had already

established a thriving mission centre at Adadia a fairly large non-Igbo town between Oron and Bende. And here is a reminiscence of his early days in Bende town:

The people were nice enough to us. But they were very suspicious. They could not believe that we had really come to do them good. It took years to persuade them of that. It was a very hard time - very hard! We visited the chiefs and talked to them. No good! We went to the compounds and preached. No good! We laid ourselves out to give them medicine. No good! The church did not prosper. And yet we were always welcomed in the compounds. It was very strange.[12]

Dodds was in residence in Bende till April (1911) when he was invalided home. During the four months he was there, he undertook evangelistic tours to Ozuitem and Uzuakoli. But he had awful stories to tell about his exploration to the latter town, for at a certain point,

he was surrounded by the men of the town and fiercely harangued by the chiefs, who had determined to kill the next white man to visit their town.[13]

Evangelistic trips were also made to Ibere Obi Ohia, Ogu Itu and Ndoro with the hope of establishing a church and school in these places.

Dodds was succeeded by the Rev. W. Norcross. The latter was not impressed by what he saw and his maiden report on the Mission station was anything but cheering. He declared:

A school had been attempted but with scanty success. Sunday services too, with scantier success. We tried many things. I recall how we went out with Bible picture roll, and Timothy Nana as interpreter. We would watch a family at first curious, dwindle away one by one, until we were left very isolate, as we had begun.[14]

For one thing, the apparent enthusiasm for the Gospel which the people of Bende demonstrated in the presence of Cockburn began to fade as soon as the political officer was gone.

Meanwhile Norcross accompanied by the Rev. E.E. Pritchard had carried on explorations beyond Okigwe District. The two men were very successful and laid christian foundations at Amuda and Eziama. Exploratory work continued with great attention given to the communities in the north of Okigwe. Ihube was missioned and a decision taken to create

it a central station. Apart from his memorable tours beyond Okigwe, Norcross was successful in establishing a school at Iyiala, much assistance having been rendered to him by the paramount ruler of the town whom he described as "a progressive chief".[15]

Opposition Continues

The position in 1914 was that Primitive Methodism in Igboland had a central station in Bende to which were attached out-stations at Iyiala lying twelve miles north, Amuda located fifty miles north, Ogu Itu situated fourteen miles east and Ihube. Work had also commenced at Ovim, Ozuitem and Uzuakoli. At Uzuakoli, however, the enterprise was facing great difficulties in terms of opposition directed against the first christian converts. To use the words of Dodds in his essay on the early days of Primitive Methodism in Uzuakoli:

Four fine young men, Daniel, Samson, Esau and Peter, were the first christians and had a gruelling time. At first, they were allowed to have a church and teacher. A few pride of Barbadoes trees still mark the site on the back road between the College and the town. But persecution was fierce. They truly carried their lives in their hands, and indeed at one time were roped up and dragged to Owerri for some mysterious reason, to be charged before the D.O. there with revealing the secrets of Okonko. They were released, but were not allowed to return to Uzuakoli on pain of death. For several months they stayed at the Bende mission House until matters could be smoothed over.[16]

Pushing further north still, Norcross proceeded ten miles north of Enama to Ibunta an Aro settlement in response to an invitation from a small christian group. The establishment of the group was the work of Henry Ogolo, a Primitive Methodist and native of Umunze. Henry had lived several years as a slave in Oron where he embraced the christian culture.[17] After his liberation, he returned to Igboland where he founded a church and a private school at Ndiokoroji in Ibunta in Arondizuogu.

In this christian group was Chima Nwana who later became the first Igbo Primitive Methodist minister and his brother Nwosu Nwana. Soon detractors of christianity began floating stories in Arondizuogu about the christian religion. They dubbed white missionaries avaricious

imperialists who had come to Nigeria to carry away the wealth of the natives and to stifle their cultures and Chima's father Nwana Uzuogu was influenced by what he heard. That was in December 1914. Believing that the white man had offended the tribal gods by his presence, Nwana Izuogu persuaded Chima and Nwosu to forsake the christian religion. He was particularly worried over Nwosu's becoming a christian. As the first son of his father, Nwosu would succeed to the leadership of the family as soon as the father was gone. That leadership carried with it the responsibility of attending to the ancestors and tribal gods with offerings and sacrifices. Little wonder that various forms of intimidation and threats were employed to make the two boys change their minds.

But all the strategies proved abortive. Chima and Nwosu were then locked up in a tiny room. The funeral ceremony of Ngboria Anyanegi, Nwana Izuogu's mother had just begun, but the two brothers were forbidden to watch it.[18] At midnight one day, Chima and Nwosu forced the door to the room open and escaped from their confinement. But they were promptly rounded up and brutally beaten up by their father. That was not all. They managed to escape again and through the good offices of one John Uba, they escaped to Onitsha some ninety miles away. The two brothers did not return home until the later part of 1915 when favourable conditions for their return were created. Just as persecution disorganized them so also did it hamper the growth of the young Ndiokoroji christian community. If the christian group was able to ride over the crest of waves, it was mainly because soon after his return from furlough in 1915, Dodds began paying it regular apostolic visits from Bende during which he did all in his power to encourage the converts.

It was also in 1915 that the Methodists commenced regular work at Okoko Item through the instrumentality of Emmanuel Hart. Hart at his tender age was sold into slavery at Bonny where he was converted to christianity. He had vowed that if ever he regained his freedom, he would return to his fatherland to preach Christ to his people. At the age of 20, he obtained his liberty and redeemed his pledge. But it was a herculean task for him to do his job peacefully for his countrymen put all sorts of obstacles on his way. To quote an eye witness:

No one will ever know the hardships he endured. He made himself known to Mr. Dodds at Bende with a small party of his followers because of the terrors they had suffered. Their little church had been burned down, themselves flogged, their women horribly outraged. Despite such support as Dodds could give, the trouble continued, instigated by a chief whom no one could placate.[19]

In 1916, the evangelistic work spread to Amaki Item. It was the District Officer In-charge of the area who invited Dodds to enter the town in order to use christianity as a weapon to tame the unruly nature of the inhabitants. The strategy worked very well. The town professed her readiness to accept christianity whose introduction led ultimately to the people's submission to the Government. Dodds was quick to give the credit for the occupation of the town not to himself but to Emmanuel Hart. The latter who had now devoted all his time to christian evangelization had taken up permanent residence at Amaki Item. Courageously and tenaciously, he reasoned with the paramount chief of the town and his subjects. But "once the chief so engineered things that Government issued an order for the mission to transfer Emmanuel elsewhere".[20] That did not work. Dodds and his confreres came up with the demolishing argument that the call for a transfer was unrealistic as Hart was a son of the soil and thus ejecting him was impossible.

Meanwhile the construction of the Eastern railway had commenced and work had advanced to Enugu the coal city in 1915. Apart from providing good and reliable communication link between the South and North, the railway rendered accessible numerous towns in the interior of the Igbo country. The accessibility of Igbo hinterland whipped up the desire of the Methodists to take possession of these towns along the rail route. Accordingly, in 1916, the Rev. A.H. Richardson was detailed to occupy Enugu and the Rev. W. Groves was released from Bende about the same time to start rudimentary work at Port Harcourt the railway terminal and seaport town in the South.

Groves secured a nice site at Port Harcourt and every month he went there from Bende to hold services for both Europeans and Africans. Work progressed so satisfactorily that in 1924 the Rev. R. Banham took up

permanent residence in the town.[21]

Richardson also had a lot to cheer his heart. Not only was he successful in laying the foundations of a mission station at Enugu but also pioneered beyond the town to Nike a distance of twenty miles where he lived for sometime. Consequent upon a protest from the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.), he withdrew from Nike and directed his energies to Ngwo from where he took possession of Nara in 1917.

At Nara the missionary toiled on most cheerfully and gallantly in spite of great difficulty and the hardness of heart of the indigenous population. Although he was able to win the trust and affection of some, he conceived himself as a voice crying in the wilderness and later withdrew to Agbani which he made the centre of Agbani Circuit.

Even at Agbani, the same difficulty and opposition to christianity awaited the missionary. Several years came and passed before he was able to win a convert. To use the words of Dodds:

Even after the Circuit centre had been transferred to Agbani beside the railway, the work continued hard and with few signs of progress. Churches were opened only to be closed again. In 9 years, only 8 small churches were at all firmly established. It was not until 1925 that the first converts were baptized by the Rev. H.C. Brewer who after an interval when Rev. C. Finlay had been in charge, had succeeded Mr. Richardson.[22]

Back in the Bende Circuit, there had been other developments. From several towns beyond the railway came repeated appeals for teachers and evangelists. The towns included Eziama Osa, Amafor, Umuda, Isingwu, Umu Awa Alocha and Nonya. Work was begun in all these towns. Operating in the Circuit at the time in a very powerful manner was a secret society known as Okonko to which belonged the cream of the community. The society was overtly opposed to the christian religion and did everything possible to jettison it from every town it entered, thereby creating conditions so difficult for the converts to practise their new faith that some went back to their old religion to avoid being persecuted. And here is a sequel from the same pen:

The first fervour of change began to die away among the people, and the old men were hankering after the return of Okonko and all it meant

in their lives. Persecution sometimes rather bitter broke out. Palavers began to be continuous.[23]

Early in May 1917, Dodds left Bende for a well-earned furlough in England. The indigenes of the town misunderstood his absence to mean a weakness of the christian community and began to persecute the christians. Women and boys were mercilessly flogged for attending church services. To use the words of Reginald Cawthorne who was holding brief for him in Bende: Since the departure of the Rev. F.W. Dodds, certain of the old enemies of the work have renewed their efforts to close the churches, being under the impression that as no European is in permanent residence at Bende, teachers were carrying on their work without supervision. This has considerably added to our difficulties and the superintendence of two such stations was already great. We have been sad for the people who have had to suffer these increased persecutions and for the sake of adequate supervision of the station, shall be glad when the opportunity arrives for welcoming a European to Bende.[24]

The First World War had already broken out in 1914 and raged all through to 1918. The war period affected the Mission adversely just as it affected other missionary societies at work in Eastern Nigeria. Money was hard to come by. Many able-bodied missionaries had to return home to enlist in the British army. The rate at which new missionaries were sent out from the Home Base was drastically reduced. Consequently expansionist programmes were only partially executed.

With the end of the war, the currents of evangelization once again began to flow freely, and with the entry of the Revs. J.N. Slater and B. Batty into the field in 1919, the diffusion of the Gospel received a great boost.

However Slater and Batty arrived to meet a great wave of persecution of christianity in Bende. Nevertheless most of the christians stood their ground. Dodds described them afterwards as "my best people, people who have been tried by the bitterest fires of persecution."[25] A year later, the missionary was confronted with problems emanating from secret societies and had to bemoan:

It is a very ticklish task at this time to hold the balance correctly between

the church and the anti-christian clubs and Secret Societies.[26]

The scope of western education expanded as new territories were won. For one thing, one of the first things the missionary did on his occupation of a town was the planting of a school there. His task in this regard was made relatively easy for the people both christians and non-christians had come to appreciate the benefits which western education was conferring on its beneficiaries and were ever ready and eager to assist in terms of raising money locally for the provision of school buildings and paying teachers' salaries.

Medical work was also becoming more and more a high spot in the adventure and through it the missionary raced steadily forward into areas hitherto unevangelized.[27] Indeed many of the numerous requests for teachers and evangelists which the missionary was now receiving from the interior came not only from converts but also from non-converts and were prompted by the mission's corporal works of mercy and educational activities.

In July 1920, Uzuakoli was at long last occupied. The Rev. J.N. Slater was sent there from Bende as the first resident missionary. He was there for nine months during which he built a small temporary mission-house which, on the erection of a permanent building for missionaries some years later, was converted into a general store, a dispensary and a bookshop.

Slater was succeeded by the Rev. R. Banham. The latter greatly improved on his predecessor's achievements. Before his transfer to another station in the first months of 1923, he had opened as many as thirty day-schools and had laid the foundations of vocational education in the Circuit. But all these were achieved not without opposition from the indigenous population. Here is a hint of Banham's experience:

We had a period of severe, savage persecution this time and it was delightful to see how these christian people suffered even to the spoiling of their goods. But they would not go back on their faith in Christ.[28]

Indeed sometimes instead of frightening away christians from the mission, persecution achieved the opposite effect, bringing more and more souls to the missionaries. But that was only sometimes.

After 1925, conditions improved considerably for missionary enterprise. In 1926 alone, Brewer was able to open stations at Ogboho, Owo and Nkalagu. Besides, he undertook proselytizing missions to other towns including Ngbo. But the protagonists of the old ways were on hand in many of these to oppose his presence and warded him off with demoralizing words.[29]

Early in the same year, some churches in certain parts of the Bende District encountered from the native population a movement to stop the christian advance. In one of the towns where the movement was particularly hostile, "teachers were threatened and none was allowed to attend school, and for a time, it has been necessary to withdraw."[30]

For several years, the Primitive Methodists sought to enter the towns of Akaeze and Okpanku both in the Okpanku District, but nothing could be done. The people listened to their Gospel message but were unresponsive. It was only in 1928 that the two towns sent deputations to the Rev. R.F. Skinner in-charge of the Ovim Central Station requesting for missionaries. Skinner reacted at once positively. By the end of the year, he had succeeded in establishing at Okpanku a school and a catechumenate of five zealous inquirers[31]. However Skinner did not rule out entirely the possibility of opposition resurrecting again at any time. He remarked in his 1928 Annual Report on his station: Eastern Nigerian field, observed with joy that during the year, more children, more hearers, more lay preachers, more catechumens, more classes for women and over a thousand more members had been added to the existing statistics. But he added a note of disappointment generated by several problems not the least among which were the persecution of christians and the subtle wiles of the old ways. He lamented:

Almost all the staff speak of disappointments as well - men who have failed us, women who have found markets more attractive than the classes, schools that could not face their financial obligations, churches that have been led astray by the wild manies of spiritism or the subtle lurings of Roman Catholicism. Circuits have suffered through absence of staff, and one hospital has been severely hit by a recrudescence of an old medicine - cult.[33]

Nevertheless in spite of odds, the work of evangelization forged ahead. Ably assisted by the Rev. C.R. Ransome a tireless and ebullient confrere, Brewer in 1931 took full possession of Ngbo which he only visited for the first time in 1926 as already mentioned. From Ngbo, he penetrated into Efiogu located forty miles north.

Summary and Conclusion

Primitive Methodism in Igboland had every reason to declare 1931 a jubilee year. It was appropriate to mark the occasion with a lot of celebrations and rejoicing because of the phenomenal success which the society recorded. For instance, from a handful of inquirers who could be counted on the fingers of the hand in 1910, the sacred returns for all the stations put together in 1931 stood at 250 churches, 200 schools and well over 300 teachers and other religious workers.[34] The Society had even gone beyond the confines of Igboland to establish stations among the Idoma and Egede of the Middle Belt.

However, while enthusing over successes, it is equally necessary to reflect on the difficulties, hardships and disappointments generated by opposition from the indigenous population, which the missionaries had to grapple with in their quest for converts. The Rev. W. Norcross remarked most poignantly in 1921 that:

In any history of missionary work among the Igbo which may be written in the future, the story of opposition through which the infant church is now passing will be told, and if told properly, will occupy a prominent place. If young men and maidens have shown a splendid front to an embittered persecution, it has also to be said that the persecutors have not been one whit behind in their frenzied zeal to break down and destroy.[35]

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Taking part in the celebrations were old chiefs declining from the halcyon days of their power, who vividly remembered how they had done all in their power to drive away the men who came with the name of Jesus upon their lips. There were men who had been beaten mercilessly and chained,

robbed and imprisoned for their loyalty to their church. They stood proudly by, deriving immense glory from the vindication of their faith. There were also school boys brought up in the protection of the mission. They listened most eagerly to the thrilling stories of triumph of the Gospel but remembered too how they had suffered in the name of Jesus in whose power all these successes were wrought.

All through the period under survey, opposition to the Cross persisted as a force which the mission had to reckon with. Very many communities predominantly methodist like Item, Uturu, Ngodo - Isuochi, Eluama-Isuikwuato, Ubaha Okigwe, Olokoro, Alayi, Umuahia, and Ahaba Imenyi in their local church history hold this force as a retrogressive element retarding church growth.[36]

Fierce on several occasions, the opposition was difficult to deal with because among those who perpetrated it were men and women belonging to the cream of the society like paramount chiefs, subordinate chiefs, medicine men, diviners and priests of local gods. These were among the key figures who fought so grimly, having foreseen that the diffusion of christianity promised obvious doom to their exalted position. They used every conceivable weapon to destroy the pilgrim religion - calumnies, falsehoods, intimidations, manhandlings resulting in imprisonments, social ostracism and the like.

The opposition meted out to christianity was aimed at safeguarding the indigenous culture and protecting the interests of the tribal gods. These divinities were greatly dreaded for they were conceived as ever ready to send down at the slightest provocation inexorable fate harmful to the entire community. To quote the Rev. W. Christie:

The African conception of the spirit world and the life hereafter was so interwoven with his present life and all his social customs that the fabric of his social life could not stand if christianity was adopted. Christianity meant a complete break with the past, and this involved, so he thought, fearful consequences to the dead.[37]

1 The Seventh Nigerian Annual Synod of the Primitive Methodist

Missionary Society (P.M.S.) held at Oron from 23rd February to 2nd March 1931, Primitive Methodist Missionary Society (P.M.M.S.) Archives, London, PM/SM/MS/Eastern Nigeria, MMS/1161.

2 "William Christie to Guttery", P.M.M.S. Archives, London, MMS/1162 File 2.

3 Edwin Smith "What Primitive Methodists Bring into the Union" The Kingdom Overseas, January 1933, p.6.

4 George Bell, "Fernando Po: A spiritual Clearing-House" The Kingdom Overseas, September 1933, p. 206.

5 E.A. Ayandele: The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914, London, Longman Group Ltd., 1966, p.77.

6 "Invasion for God", P.M.M.S. Archives, London, N/T 23. These are manuscripts written by the Rev. F.W. Dodds containing useful information on Methodism in Igboland.

7 Francis Anyika "The Missionary Enterprise of the Rev. William Christie in Eastern Nigeria, 1904-1911", 1918-1920" Neuezeitschrift fur Missionswissenschaft, Vol.42, Part 3, 1986, p. 206.

8 "William Christie to Guttery", P.M.M.S. Archives, London, MMS/1162, 10th January, 1910.

9 "Ibo Openings", P.M.M.S. Archives, London, L3/23/NIT/569/1843-1943. These are manuscripts written by the Rev. F.W. Dodds containing useful information on the history of the Methodist Church in Igboland.

10 "Ibo Openings" (Cited).

11 "William Christie to Guttery", P.M.M.S. Archives, London, MMS/1162,

File 2, 6th May, 1910.

12 F.W. Dodds, "Children's Corner: Tommy and Polly Green Come Along" No. 52, Advance, August 1931, p. 159.

13 "Ibo Openings (Cited).

14 W. Norcross, "Iboland - Twenty-one years", Advance, March 1931, p. 43.

15 "Ibo Openings", (Cited).

16 "Ibo Openings", (Cited).

17 The Second Annual Report of the Methodist Missionary Society of 1933, June 1934, pp. 92-93.

18 Sometime in 1974, the Rev. Chima Nwana was interviewed extensively at Nsukka by one of his sons, Prof. O.C. Nwana who is now the Director of CUDIMAC, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. In the interview, Chima gave what can be considered as his autobiography which was recorded and neatly preserved in five radio cassette tapes. The tapes were made available to me by the courtesy of the Professor and really furnished me with vital information on the subject matter.

19 "Ibo Openings" (Cited).

20 "Ibo Openings" (Cited).

21 Francis Anyika, "Methodism Establishes in Port Harcourt, Eastern Nigeria, 1924-1926", Neuezeitschrift fur Missionswissenschaft, Vol. 43, p. 267.

22 "Invasion for God (Cited). by the courtesy of the Professor and really

furnished me with vital information on the subject matter.

19 "Ibo Openings" (Cited).

20 "Ibo Openings" (Cited).

21 Francis Anyika, "Methodism Establishes in Port Harcourt, Eastern Nigeria, 1924-1926", Neuezeitschrift fur Missionswissenschaft, Vol. 43, p. 267.

22 "Invasion for God (Cited).

23 Reginald Cawthorne's Report of May 31st, 1917, P.M.M.S. Archives, London, MMS/1163.

24 "F.W. Dodds to Barkby", PMMS Archives, London, MMS/1164, 22nd September, 1919.

25 "F.W. Dodds to Barkby", PMMS Archives, London, MMS.1164, 8th January, 1920.

26 "Invasion for God" (Cited).

27 R. Banham, "My Last Term on the Uzuakoli Station", Advance, March 1923, p. 59.

28 "Invasion for God" (Cited).

29 "From the Secretary's office, Advance, April 1926, p. 75.

30 The 5th Nigerian Annual Synod of P.M.S. held at Oron from 14th Feb. to 19th Feb. 1929, P.M.M.S. Archives, London, PM/SM/MS/Eastern Nigeria. MMS/1161.

32 The Fifth Nigerian Annual Synod of P.M.M.S. (Cited).

33 The Fifth Nigerian Annual Synod of P.M.M.S. (Cited).

34 A.S. Fenby, "Ibo Field Coming of Age Celebrations" Advance, April 1931, p. 63.

35 W. Norcross "Our Work at Ovim", The Herald of the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society, Vol XV, August 1921, p. 78.

36 In 1985 and 1986, with the assistance of local church leaders and some of the undergraduates of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, I was able to collect local church history of many flourishing Methodist centres in Igboland including that of the towns mentioned.

37 W. Christie "Pioneering in Nigeria" Advance, Feb. 1923, p. 31.
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