

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

African War, from 1899 to 1902, a very large number of Natives were persuaded to come here to Cape Town to meet the conditions that were created by the enormous amount of shipping in the Docks and in Table Bay. Well, these Natives apparently remained here until the slump, which came after the War, in about 1905/6, and then a whole lot of them went back to where they came from.

And then again, when things improved and when they had got a knowledge of the place, large numbers of them began to come back. We know, of course, that during the Great War they were again asked to come here to assist in the general labour in the Docks and the Bay, and we also know that a lot of them came here and passed through as members of the Labour Corps. Many of them stayed here at the time.

Now, in comparison with the rest of the population, the influx here has never been so marked as it is in other towns. I see that General Kemp gave the number of the Natives here as being 12,000. I have not been able to ascertain his source of information, but we find that, in 1921 the number here was 8,000, so that General Kemp's 12,000 shews an increase of 50%, which is very considerable indeed. In any case, it shews the very large numbers that are down here today.

That, as far as I am able to, is a very brief statement in regard to the arrival of the Native in this part of the country. It was in 1902, I think, after the Plague, that a first attempt was made to put the Natives into a location, and they were placed in this location which is known as Ndabeni. I might mention this, subject to correction, but it should be investigated.

Now, on this question of migration. It is about

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

people being recruited and not returning. I am informed that a large number of Natives were got down for the Steenbras Water Works scheme, on condition that they were to be repatriated, but that the contractor failed in that, with the result that they began to be concentrated all about the country and that they began to find jobs wherever they could. They never had enough money to get home. That is a statement which has been made to me, but whether it is correct or not, I do not know.

That is a brief summary as to how the Natives came here and, as far as I can gather, they are still coming or trying to come.

I understood that one member of the Commission wanted to know how the influx to the Paarl came about. We have made some investigations on that point, but I have not been able to get the information on that. Of course, we know that Paarl and Wellington, the whole of that area, is getting largely industrial as well as farming. A large number of Natives got down there to work on the building of the Phillips Drive and large numbers of them have settled there, with the result that we have got a pretty considerable number of Natives there now.

Now, talking about the economic effects of this, we have rather a curious position. The main economic effect is the overstocking at present of the labour market. Now, the European and the Coloured man says that a Native is competing with him and is undercutting him. The Native, on the other hand, says that because he has to go through the registration pass laws, the European employers are averse to taking him on, with the result that European employees

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

and Coloured employees are receiving preference. They say that the employer will not be bothered by all these things and they say that they are held up by that.

I am sorry that I have not been able to find out the real economic effect of this employment, so far as Cape Town is concerned. I have one statement from a man, whom I hope you will hear, a Mr. Arenson, but it is most difficult.

Now, there is another clause, and that is the economic effect of the introduction of Natives from extra-Union territories. We have a few of those. There again, probably, Mr. Cooke would be able to give you better information, but I just want to say this. We have to look at the matter in this way. I have an example of one hotel in this neighbourhood, in which I think there are 18 Natives employed. 14 of those Natives are non-Union Natives, even Swahilis. They come down the Coast, ships take them down, and then they leave the boats and enter into service. Those are the people who compete with the local Natives, who very much object to them and here you find that there is a social as well as an economic effect. The social effect is, so I am informed, that these people are marrying Coloured women. The ordinary Native woman will not associate with them, so they have taken up with Coloured women, but it is very difficult to get any real information as to the effect of this introduction of these extra-Union Natives.

DR. ROBERTS: You have no information to give us as regards theousting of Natives by the Coloured men in the Docks, in the loading and unloading of ships? - I always understood that they were protected by a union, Coloured as well as Natives. I also understand that the Coloured man

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

of the Cape Peninsula has not the physique to do much of the work at the Docks and they have actually got a location at the Docks which, according to my enquiries last week, contains 400 men, Natives. The place is licensed for 600. Now, those men are there really as a convenience to the White men, because, when I made my enquiry, 200 of them were out of work.

Every now and then, there is a sudden rush of work, when all these people are wanted and at other times there is no work at all. Before I pass from this, I may perhaps mention another element of the Native increase in this country. There is a big quarry at Belleville, which employs about 400 men, nearly all Xosa Natives. Now, those people are living in most awful conditions. I shall tell you their wages later on, but their conditions in that location are extremely bad, which has a very bad economic effect on the Natives.

First of all, they have no water supply there. The water is brought out by train and they get at most, I think, water twice a week, brought out in a barrel. They live there in awful ramshackle old buildings, and there is no sanitation provision at all, except at the school and, when I was there last, the conditions were pretty awful. They are out of reach of the doctors and everything, the shops are far away. Those are the people who work in the quarries two miles outside Belleville.

CHAIRMAN: Are you talking of Natives living in a village, or in the town? - No, sir. Those are Natives living in a separate location and they are all people working in a quarry at Belleville. They are not Natives who come to the town at all.

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

Do they live in a location or in a compound ?- It is a location, it is not actually a compound.

And are their wives and children living there with them ?- At the quarry, yes. Then they have a school there, too, at the location.

MR. LUCAS: What we saw there was a compound ?- No, I do not think so.

Is it as bad as the compound which we saw ?- Well, it is pretty awful.

Would it be worse than the compound, do you think ?- Yes, I think so.

What do you think could be done to remedy that sort of horror ?- Well, I want to keep within the mark. If I let myself go, I would have something to say on these things. These places really are a danger. What I cannot get the public to realise is what an actual danger such places are to the European community, but they cannot see it. It is very difficult to make any suggestions, except that these places should be cleared up. I do not propose saying anything about Native agricultural or rural Natives.

Just before you leave that. One point which we are asked to deal with specially is the effect upon the Coloured community of the increased number of Natives in the urban areas. We have had certain evidence before the Economic and Wage Commission, but not in the detail which I should like to have had, as regards the effect of the increased number of Natives. Before the Economic and Wage Commission, it was alleged that it had a definitely depressing effect on

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

the standard of living of the Coloured people. Can you help us on that and give us your views ?- Well, Mr. Lucas, it is one of the things which I have been trying to get at myself. I can only speak from my own personal experience, through a great deal of wandering about, because I am interested in the Coloured people as well.

Now, I would say that I do not think that it has in any way lowered the standard of living of the Coloured people. Of course, you get bad cases right through, but there are classes of Coloured people here who are living far better than some Europeans do, but it is frightful to see some of the houses of those people. I never heard that point put before, as to what is the moral effect of the trend of the Natives on the Coloured people. I shall get you a witness who will probably be able to speak on that. It is probably more a moral effect on the Coloured people, more than an economic effect.

CHAIRMAN: What would you say the moral effect is ?- I have not heard of any moral effect. I would not like to say too much about this, but I shall get someone to tell you what the position is, and I think Father Savage would be able to give you all the information. I would not like to give you any information on that point myself.

MR. LUCAS: Do you think that the presence of the Natives keeps down the old wage ?- Well, I do not know. I was told last week about that -- some people told me that they were getting something extra --- but I do not know. I do not know if the Natives really did keep the wages down.

Now I come to this question of urban areas and I

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

daresay that other witnesses will have something to say about this. As to the administration, I do not want to say too much. As to the internal administration of the location here, it seems to be thoroughly sound, in fact, so much so that it is sometimes carried out so drastically that the Natives sometimes complain about it. You have to take this sort of thing from both sides. There is a broad idea in regard to administration, that the Town Council have not quite realised their responsibility in this matter, and, of course, on this matter, I would much prefer that you should hear them.

Still, I should like to tell you one or two things that we have to put up with. On this question of administration, there is no doubt that, up to the present, with the exception of the internal administration of the location itself, the overhead administration has not been sympathetic. There has, however, been a very big improvement lately.

DR. ROBERTS: Are you referring to the Town Council administration, or to Mr. Cooke's administration? - Mr. Cooke's administration is the internal administration, and the Town Council is the overhead administration, and that was not too sympathetic and it arises out of rather a peculiar situation that the officials do not want the Natives here and, of course, the Natives do not want to be here if they can at all get away. The average person does not know that they are here at all, except, perhaps a few who take some interest in them.

Now, as to the adequacy of the place, I understand that, when they get moved out to Langa, the area is perfectly adequate because nothing like all the Natives are in the

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

location. Langa, I think, is 300 acres and it is adequate in extent. You have probably seen the housing conditions there for yourself. Yesterday, you saw Ndabeni and Langa. At Ndabeni, you saw a place which the average individual would say would be best treated by a fire and got rid of. There is a tremendous lot of complaint about the nature of the housing and the absence of light. If the Municipality adopted the old London precept that one light is equal to a policeman, they might alter and improve things very considerably. It is this absence of light which does make things very bad.

Now, with regard to Langa, when you come there, at first sight everything looks almost perfect, - it seems almost a pleasure to see the conditions there. But then you hear of the rents that they are charging there. I suppose you have got information about them.

CHAIRMAN: We have some information, but we shall be pleased to hear what you have to say? - At Ndabeni, the single men pay 4/- per month and the married men can get into the married quarters at 10/- per month. At Langa, however, they wanted to charge a much higher rental at first, but there has been a discussion on that in the Town Council, and the position today is that a single man^{can} get in there at 7/- per month and a married man with a family at 15/- per month.

Of course, that is one of these ironies of Fate, that Langa probably is too good and that the Natives cannot pay an economic rent there at all. I think Langa cost the Municipality something like a quarter of a million.

There is one question I want to raise. When the

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

rentals were first fixed, the Town Council attempted to make the rent a fair one and an economic one, plus redemption and sinking fund. Now I hold, and I have told them, that redemption or sinking fund is entirely out of place in regard to an institution of that sort and secondly, it is not contemplated by the Urban Areas Act, which says that the rental shall be fixed by the Town Council, with the approval of the Minister, but the only word used there is "rental", and I hold that it is improper to talk of sinking fund in a place with a person paying who is not going to become the owner of the property.

I notice that this is a prevalent misconception, to my mind, because I have it in the reports of a location such as at Bloemfontein, which is one of the model ones, and I think that that is the cause of tremendous irritation, because the Town Council put the matter a little bit higher originally than they were entitled to. That place was put up entirely by European labour, even the drainage and the roads were put up by European labour and the cost is entirely beyond the abilities of the Natives there to pay. That is the position at Langa.

You can only charge an economic rent and, when you deal with artisans, you must build houses of such a nature that they are able to pay for them, and the same applies to houses which you put up for Natives.

But now lately there has been a much more reasonable attitude. Unfortunately, there was a misunderstanding about the arrangement for the Natives to move from Ndabeni to Langa, and there is a case now pending in the Magistrate's Court in regard to this matter, a case which is going to Appeal.

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

It is so difficult really to get at the point of view of the Natives themselves when you are dealing with locations. In the first place, you have this educated class whom we have to communicate with. There are the Galeka and the Fingoes, two tribes who are always working at arm's length, a sort of peaceful hostility, and you can never get them together. Apparently a meeting of Natives will agree to something when you get them together and a little while after you hear a section saying, "No, we do not agree to that, we were not represented". It is impossible for us to get all sections together. Our difficulty is that there is hardly a person here, excepting the Officials, who can speak the language.

CHAIRMAN: When you raised these objections to redemptions being included in the charges, were you referring to redemptions for the site or the buildings?— I referred to both, really. Of course, Mr. Chairman, I do not want to go too deeply into the statistics with you.

This is a pure matter of accounts?— No, sir, it is the principle which I am dealing with. You may say that rent must cover depreciation.

If it is a depreciating asset?—~~xxxx~~ Yes.

So that would be a fair statement?— Yes.

DR. ROBERTS: I gather what you are referring to are these luxurious Roman roads and these broad avenues, which are quite unnecessary, and you think it is unfair to charge the people with redemption on these roads?— I would certainly say not as regards the roads. Of course, there is more justification for charging them redemption on the

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

roads, because, after all, they have the use of the roads.
(After considering matter for a few seconds) No, no; I cannot see any justification for charging redemption on any of these things, not in any instance.

MR. LUCAS: You draw a distinction as between redemption and maintenance? - Yes. If you keep up your maintenance, you have no depreciation. You make an allowance the one year and put it on the next.

CHAIRMAN: That is substituting one thing for another. Actually, your maintenance along will never keep your assets from depreciating in future -- it may be a long time, but there will be a time when those buildings will have to be pulled down. Now, the question is, for whose account is the loss to go then? - I submit, to the ratepayers, as laid down in the Act.

Well, that means then that Native houses must be subsidized? - Well, I cannot read anything else in the Act.

The Act provides a rental, but it does not say how that rental has to be determined. In ordinary economic housing, surely the redemption is always included in the rental? - No, redemption is only charged if a man has the opportunity of becoming the owner of the property. Only if a man has paid for the property, is provision made for redemption.

MR. LUCAS: Could not a distinction be put in this way; you draw a distinction between the rental and payment under the hire purchase agreement. Now, one comes ultimately to the position --- in the one case, ultimately the property will belong to the renter, and in the other case, it will

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

always belong to the landlord? - Yes. But you see, there is a provision protecting the Natives. It is laid down in the Act that the rental charged, etc., "shall be such as the Minister may, in all the circumstances, consider fair and reasonable in the case of such location, etc." You will find that that is laid down definitely in Clause 9 of the Urban Areas Act, and I think that is perfectly clear.

CHAIRMAN: The whole question still depends on what is a fair rental and I maintain that in ordinary housing, every rental includes provision for redemption? - Well, I do not want to dispute the point with you, Mr. Chairman, but I do not think that I can read the matter in that way.

Otherwise, you would not want 12% to make it economic? - No, you want 10%. I am putting it on that point that that was what the Town Council said they wanted and, of course, the thing got talked about ^{and} the Natives got hold of it themselves and they said, "You can only just impose a fair rental in the ordinary sense of the word, and we are not going to pay these other charges". - It was the cost of construction which made the rental so high, but I mention this because I think that that expression in regard to redemption should not be used in the fixing of these charges.

MR. MOSTERT: Well, the only thing, so far as the Municipality is concerned is this - as you say yourself - the whole concern cost them a quarter of a million? - That is so.

And how many people are living there at present? - They have accommodation for 3,000 and I understand that the place is not full.

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

And for that the Municipality get 15/- per month ?-
No, they get 15/- per month for the married quarters, but for
the single quarters they only get 7/- per month.

So it really comes to this, that the Municipality is
not coming out on it ?- Of course, they are not, everyone
knows that. The only point that I was taking was that the
Municipality cannot expect to come out at the expense of the
Native. You see, they have there an utterly uneconomic
proposition and, of course, it is impossible for them to come
out. I have no doubt that they themselves will have some-
thing to say about this when they come to give evidence
before you.

DR. ROBERTS: Are we to understand that your view
is that the Native is there for the benefit of the town? Has
he been brought there to do work for the town, a passer-by
not an actual citizen of the town and not an actual citizen
of the town and that, therefore, he should not be regarded
as financially in the same position as a citizen of the town?—
That is the origin of his appearance here and that is the
position now. There are some people who say, "We can do
without him," but there are others again who say, "We want
him". But there is another point we have to think of.
Once the Urban Areas Act is enforced and these Native villages
or Native townships are appointed, the Natives have to live
there. They have no choice, they cannot go and seek houses
with lower rentals elsewhere, and I think that is a considera-
tion which one has to take into account.

You mean, that he is not a free citizen who can go
wherever he likes ?- Not in any way.

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

And, therefore, he cannot come under the same obligations as every other citizen of the town? - Naturally, because he has not the same opportunities as a free citizen has. I raised this point, because I thought I should do so, but I cannot dogmatize on many of these things. There is one other question here which I should like to touch upon, and that is the question of a recreation provided for Natives.

There is nothing done for the Natives, by the Europeans, in the location. The Natives really are in poor conditions, although attempts are made to give them some facilities for recreation. It is the night recreation which troubles me and I should like to see some system adopted, such as they have on the Reef, I should like to see something of that kind introduced here, but the trouble here is to get the money to start with. I spent a week going along the Reef from end to end, investigating Native conditions. This was two years ago. It was through a missionary effort and it afforded me a pretty good insight into what things are like there, on the Reef, and in Johannesburg.

Now I come to this liquor question, and I am afraid it is rather a sad one down here. You will hear the Natives say that they have no difficulty whatever in obtaining any liquor that they want in the location. When I say liquor, I am referring to European liquor. They are allowed to make beer at times, and, of course, they overmake it. Speaking for myself personally, I am very much in favour of a regularized supply of kaffer beer among the Natives. I have seen it working wonderfully well and giving the greatest contentment to Natives in other places and I really was surprised at the change which the system had brought about. I saw a

Sir Clarkson Tredgold

model beer hall at the Bulawayo location last Winter.

DR. ROBERTS: Do they allow the women to get any drink there ?- When I was there, it was 11 o'clock in the morning and the place was full of women and the men were at work.

But do you think that that is wise ?- Well, there is a very astute individual in charge there and I asked him this very question and he did not have any fear about it. They have a hall there which may also be used for entertainments. I only want to put this to you and I shall probably have some of my Committee up against me for what I am saying on this question, but my personal view is that the best thing is to allow a supply of kaffer beer for Natives at the present time. The whole trouble, of course, is to restrict them, and how to restrict them.

MR. MOSTERT: May I put this to you, are you in favour of Municipal brewing ?- Municipal brewing is what we have at Bulawayo.

And do you not have it here ?- No, they do not have it here.

Would you advocate it ?- Yes, from what I have seen I would certainly say that I would advocate it.

DR. ROBERTS: Do you really think that that system which they have at Bulawayo is a good one ?- Personally speaking, I do not think the system is really a good one, but I think it is the safest course to pursue, bearing in mind the state of transition through which the Natives are passing at the present time. One does not like to advocate it at all, but, on the other hand, in regard to European liquor,

Collection Number: AD1438

NATIVE ECONOMIC COMMISSION 1930-1932, Evidence and Memoranda

PUBLISHER:

Collection funder:- Atlantic Philanthropies Foundation

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of the archive of the South African Institute of Race Relations, held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.