

Natives.

I find here in Cape Town personally that it is becoming more difficult to work with the natives. To a white man it is interesting but somewhat difficult. I think the missionary is losing by being a white man, whereas he used to gain by being white. Personally I am glad of it. It is a sign that the native is coming forward on sound lines a bit, but it is awkward sometimes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think the reason is that he is becoming class conscious?- I think so.

DR. ROBERTS: Has not that been the progress of the church all down the ages that after a time they wanted their own missionaries and not men from elsewhere. That was certainly the experience of Scotland?- Yes, but at the same time there has been real recognition on the part of the natives of the benefits given to them by white people. The scout movement for instance is proving a great help ~~and~~ ^{and wayfarers} ~~and~~ the pathfinders⁷ - the native girl guides - are helping too. One feels that the native wants to stand by himself and is looking forward to the whites for sympathy and leading but not so much for control.

MR. MOSTERT: Don't you think he is a good follower but a bad leader?- Yes, I should think so.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it not rather the nature of the leadership that is required because in his own savage state he had his leaders and they led him very well according to the demands of those days. Do you mean that he is a poor leader towards civilization?- I think so; he always goes crash on the financial side.

MR. LUCAS: Is not "always" rather a big word for that?- Yes; I mean that there is the danger point.

DR. ROBERTS: Don't you think that is to his credit?- The churchwardens do not think so.

so.

I have noticed during my 12 years here that an increasing number of natives do not return to their own territory; an increasing number call their girls down here to be married to avoid the extravagant weddings apparently, and an increasing number of natives are becoming permanent residents here, boys whom I have known myself have got married and settled down in town.

THE CHAIRMAN: How does the question of labola affect the marriages which take place here?— There are two classes. Some will call their wives from Kafirland after having settled labola and they will be married here quietly. Then there is the runaway marriage which generally ends in disaster. There are a good many of the runaway marriages and they do not come very much in my way.

In that case there is no labola?— Yes.

In the other case it is paid whether it is a Christian marriage or not?— Yes. Labola is still very strong among natives, even here.

I do not suppose you would find the custom here of milking an animal when somebody dies, when an adult for instance dies?— I have not come across it.

That would be difficult I take it, because they do not keep animals here?— No.

How long have you been in Cape Town?— From 1919; twelve years.

Naturally you have seen a considerable growth of the natives population here?— Yes, very large indeed.

We were told this morning that the War proved a great impetus in that direction owing to the scarcity of coloured labour here during that period?— Well, I was not here then.

I thought you might have heard something about it?— No I did not. I should have thought that the increase of natives in Cape Town was due to the rise in the standard of living in

in the standard of living in the territories and the disinclination of the better class of native to go to Johannesburg. In Cape Town nearly every one among my people has been to Johannesburg but he does not want to go back, not that he says anything bad about it but he prefers here.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: What are his reasons?-- Because of the freer life here and the more civilised life he is able to lead. A boy working in a store here has his own bed and a little room and he sees a bit of town life, whereas in Johannesburg he would have to live in a compound.

MR. LUCAS: When you speak of Johannesburg you mean the mines?-- Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: The native must be freer here than in the other big towns of the Union?-- Yes.

He is able to approximate more to the freedom of the coloured people than the regulations of the tribal native?-- Yes, if he can possibly pass as coloured he gets the privileges of the coloured. If he has married into a coloured family, his brother-in-law may be able to draw an old-age pension while he himself pays the poll tax. The ordinary native has a great idea of the privileges which are given to the coloured people and which he does not have.

I was going to say a word or two on the coloured question. The Dean was talking to me yesterday on this subject and said that the influx of natives into Cape Town was responsible some years ago for unemployment among the coloured people, and the deterioration of the coloured people, because employers could get natives at a cheaper rate. I find down here that the native in the location is very much inclined to associate with the coloured people. For instance in football and cricket teams and in daily life.

The native from the territories usually thinks himself a cut above the coloured. The native young man does not intermarry it seems to me unless he is either very highly educated or else he has lost his own native ideas altogether. I have known cases of highly educated natives, young men, marrying coloured girls, and I have also known some of the wasters pick up with coloured girls and marry them.

The boys down here from Rhodesia and farther North like the Portugese territories and so on, are very much inclined to mix with the coloured and if possible marry coloured girls. I have rather gone into that some time ago and found that the few Rhodesians I knew preferred marrying coloured girls to Xosa or other native girls, and I think it was largely because they would not have to pay labola.

I was asked to give my opinion as to whether the native had ~~deteriorated~~ ^{deteriorated} the standard of living of the coloured. As far as I am competent to say I should think it was the other way round. I think the coloured tends to lower the morals of the natives.

But you mentioned the standard of living?-- Yes, it goes together very largely. I do not think the native has had a deleterious effect on the coloured.

DR. ROBERTS: Taking the native as you know him in the Glen Grey district with his well-built clean hut and his clean way of living, is it on a higher scale than the small house or the ordinary coloured man?-- I should think that the coloured man has a higher standard of living, if you refer to how he spends his money. The huts in Glen Grey are clean but you would not find the refinements which you find in the house of ^{the} a corresponding class of coloured man.

And in regard to cleanliness?-- That is a different matter where you have a wooden floor and so on.

MR. MOSTERT: When you were speaking of natives marrying coloured people, did you refer to their marrying or just taking the woman?— No, marrying.

I suppose you have come across a lot of cases too where they merely take a woman?— Yes.

MR. LUCAS: You said that happened in a lot of cases so that they would not have to pay labola?— Yes.

Have you heard a native say that or is it that you have formed that opinion?— I have^{not} heard them say so.

How did you form that opinion? —I wish I knew, but I have formed it. ~~xx~~One case I was thinking of the young fellow who married a coloured girl is very happy with her. He told me that the morals of the^{local} native girls were not what he wanted and that there were in addition~~x~~ complications such as parents' consent and labola.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was this coloured girl of a better class?— The ordinary coloured servant girl and he was a houseboy. She had a father and mother living. She had a decent home.

DR. ROBERTS: What status would the children of the marriage ~~sake~~?— They would be coloured.

They would not take the status of the native?— No, I do not think so.

MR. LUCAS: Strictly in the eye of the law they would take the status of the father?— Is that the legal position?

Have you known of instances of parents of coloured girls in these circumstances objecting to their daughters marrying natives?— No. There is no feeling about that as far as I know.

To follow that up, would you say that there is very little prejudice between coloured and natives, I mean race prejudice?— I would say that the longer the native stays here the more it diminishes. I would say~~x~~ that the more the native sees of the coloured the less he has prejudice than the other way round.

DR ROBERTS: Geographically, the further West the native goes the easier his prejudice disappears?— Yes, it is very difficult to get a native to maintain his pride of being a native here.

MR. AUSTIN OSBORNE SUTTON, examined

THE CHAIRMAN: You are an attorney by profession?— Yes, I practice down here in Major van Zyl's office. I was born in the Transkei and lived almost all my life there and in consequence I have a fairly intimate knowledge of the native there.

DR. ROBERTS: Are you from Kingwilliamstown?— No, but I know it very well. I am from Umtata. I have been here about six years and being interested in the native I was interested to know what the effect of civilisation had been on the native, on his conduct and so on. I was very alarmed to find out what actually does take place when these people drift to the towns.

They seem to have mixed with the lowest class and in consequence some of them have sunk to a very low level themselves. The native down here in town is quite a different person from the native in his own home in the territories. If there was a possible way of preventing them from coming to the towns it would be their salvation.

It is rather difficult to arrive at a dividing line between those who have certain rights here and those who have drifted to town. There are certainly natives who have lived here for years and have acquired rights, and it would be difficult to take them away.

These natives drift to the towns primarily with the object of earning money to pay their debts at their homes. They are able to earn wages down here varying from 21/- a week to £2-10-0. The labouring class come here as I say purely with the idea of earning money to wipe off their debts, and personally I think that the wages paid to these labourers here are not adequate because the rents down here are too high, or they were too high. I understand they are slightly better now.

now.

That brings me to this. Some years ago I became mixed up with the Langa and Ndabeni trouble. As you have been told, and no doubt you will get information from the superintendent and others, this is primarily one of the causes that is affecting the native down here. They are told that they must go into the locations, and I feel rightly that they should be under some sort of supervision. But this question of rentals is a difficult one.

The native is not earning sufficient to pay these rents, and on the other hand he is threatened that if he does not pay he will be sued. As a result he leaves the location and goes outside the municipal area into the Cape Flats. That is becoming a serious menace. I have come into contact with a good deal of that sort of thing and it is a very serious state of affairs indeed because he is becoming nothing more than a criminal.

Another thing, he is coming into contact ~~with~~ there, and not only there, with the question of illicit liquor. That is also a very serious thing. When a native comes from the territories where he has been used to having his native beer when he liked he finds he cannot get it and then he goes to coloured people and is able to procure liquor, with very serious consequences to himself. There are all sorts of means by which they can get this liquor.

MR MOSTERT: What is the liquor?-- Cheap wine and brandy principally. That they can buy; I know of cases where they can buy gallons of it.

Don't they make skokiaan and other vile stuff?-- They do, some of the Zulus and people like that, but they brew illicitly in Langa location a Kafir beer, and this they mix with this other liquor, wine and brandy, and of course the consequences

are

are serious. It is amazing what they will do to get it. So I feel that it is a pity they are not able to have their own beer and brew it under some sort of control.

Then there is another thing I have come in contact with, that is the enforcement of the municipal regulations, that is, the regulations so far as rents are concerned. I feel that to make it a criminal offence is serious for this reason that lots of them are unable to pay their rents and they are afraid of being sent to gaol for non-payment. There again they mix with some of the worst types of coloured people and native criminals, and I do not think that will have a good effect. It is a different thing entirely when they are sent to gaol in the territories. They mix with a different kind of criminal but here the influence of contact makes them worse.

There is another point I would like to mention. Down here everything is dealt with by the magistrate, and when any disputes arise they cannot be settled according to native custom. They do not apply down here.

MR. MOSTERT: Native law does not apply here?-- No, and I think one might very easily have a Native Commissioner to try their cases down here. It would help them considerably.

THE CHAIRMAN: Have you any impression or have you made any investigation of the effect the presence of the natives have on the coloured people here?-- Rather I should say that the effect is the other way, the effect that the coloured man is having on the native.

Do you mean that when the native comes into a new area he takes on the life that is lived by the coloured people?-- Yes, and he is taking work out of the hands of the coloured man and as a result there is a certain amount of antagonism between the two sections. Those I have talked with look upon the work on the railways and harbours as being the close

close preserve of the natives. And in the stores the native is given employment in preference to the coloured and that has raised a strong feeling.

Do you think the feeling between native and coloured is on both sides?— Well, I am not an employer of labour and can only speak from my experience of those with whom I come in contact in my practice, but I think the difficulty is caused because the native is prepared to accept a lower rate of pay.

(The Commission adjourned at 3-30 p.m.
until tomorrow, the 28th April, 1931, at 10 a.m.)

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