

DR. ROBERTS: What conditions of contract have your tenants got with you? - It is an annual contract - it is renewable annually on payment of rent.

You can dismiss them at the end of the year? - Well, the tenancy terminates on the 30th of June. It is made that in order to suit the annual crop.

You do not think that this tenancy system would naturally prevent them from bettering themselves and from improving? - No, because they have no reason to support that they will be removed from that ground.

But they have no reason to suppose that they will stay? - I agree with Mr. Kirsten that the native is very fond of his own home. I do not think that they consider that they are in any way prevented from bettering themselves under present conditions.

MR. VAN NIEKERK: Now in twenty years have you chased off any? - Hardly any. The only reason why they are ever chased is when they do not pay their rent. The native knows that so long as he pays he is safe, and generally speaking he pays.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you experience any difficulty in the collection of your rents? - No, none.

Do they come in to pay their rents? - No, I have to chase them.

You have to chase them - do you have to apply three or four times for your money? - I would not say that - you have to make two or three calls, but generally speaking they are very reasonable and they pay reasonably.

Are the natives more or less dependent on agriculture now than they used to be? - It is difficult to say.

I should say they are less dependent than they used to be.

Have you any reason to give for that? - I should say that the opening up of communications is responsible. The whole of the district is opened up now and there are roads leading everywhere. The railway is nearer by.

In the conditions of the past were they faced with such difficulties as shortage of grain? - Yes. In 1896 there was a very serious shortage; in that year we had rinderpest, locusts, and a partial drought. Crops were a complete failure. The whole of East Africa and the whole of Portuguese East Africa had famine conditions, and the same applies to the greater part of the low country here. The Government had to supply grain, Argentine grain, which was sent from Pretoria by mule waggon. The position was very serious and oxen could not travel on account of the rinderpest, which was ravaging these areas. There was no grazing on the roads for the mules owing to the drought, so they had to carry their own food. Grain was distributed among those people, while other people again sold to the natives at I think 4/10d per bag, but I have it on good authority that in many areas the natives had to pay £10 per bag for grain, which meant 1/- per lb.

How did they get the money to pay for that? - They either had to find it or starve.

How could they find it? - Well they paid through barter, and then they bought in a shilling's worth. Many of these people used to go out to work in those days, but you know the nature of the native - when there

was starvation at home they came back to die with their families.

They came back to die rather than live and have food elsewhere? - Yes, rather than have their families suffering. Then again later on there was a big scarcity but I do not remember particulars of that. I can tell you gentlemen that in 1896 it was a common occurrence to find a dead native - a man who had starved along the road.

MAJOR ANDERSON: It has not happened since then, has it? - No, it has not happened since the Anglo-Boer war, although things have been very scarce here, but we have the railways, and it was possible to rush up food, and things were not so bad.

MR. LUCAS: When you say that natives are not so dependent on agriculture now as formerly, you mean if there is a famine you can rush food up? - Yes, that is so.

But there is another aspect, do the natives produce nothing else except agricultural products? - Well, they produce stock of course.

That is an agricultural product - anything else? - No.

So for their own maintenance they are still as dependent on agriculture as they were formerly? - Yes, but not to the same extent as formerly, because prices never ruled so low. The price of transport nowadays is moderate as compared with what it used to be in the olden days.

DR. ROBERTS: Do you find the natives borrowing much in your part of the country; do they borrow much from traders and others? - No, I do not think so.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do they buy on credit from traders - do traders give them credit? - I could not say - I hardly think so. Probably in exceptional cases they would.

Generally it is a case of barter? - Yes, barter or cash, but I do not think there is much credit given.

Are you conversant with the conditions of contract between farmers and their natives on the farms? - Yes, I am conversant with these conditions in a general way. Contracts are almost invariably three-months' contracts. But the contracts are not always registered, because the owner generally knows his boys and the boys know the owner.

The three-months' contract is a general thing throughout the district? - Yes.

You do not find natives working longer than three months and being given additional perquisites for that? - No. Of course that may happen occasionally, but I do not think it is a general rule. Generally the farmer gets the three months' work and then the boy asks for a pass and goes to look for work.

And afterwards? - Afterwards he comes back.

That means that the farmers must sometimes have four times as many families on his farm as he requires for labour? - Yes, that is so.

Does a considerable portion of the natives remain after they have worked their three months? - Would you say that the majority of them go out to work for the remaining nine months? - Yes, all the younger men go.

What age approximately do they go up to? - Very little over 45. They go away till about 40 and 45.

How do the older men above 45 make a living? - Well, their requirements are very small, and then invariably they have the assistance of their sons, and in addition they have a few cattle.

And presumably lobola applies? - Yes, that is so. They get cattle in that way? - Yes.

Do the older men work on the farms to any extent? - Generally they do the soft jobs. But I may say that over 45 they would still work on the farms for at least another ten years.

And what happens after that? - Well after that it is perhaps a matter of grass cutting or occasional work. I am talking of the general rule, and generally also the women are supposed to work.

MR. MOSTERT; In the area in your charge you have between 60, 000 and 70,000 morgen? - No, I have more. That is the area occupied by natives, but I have numerous farms not occupied by natives. I have only referred here to the native areas. There are other farms on which I have no natives residing at all.

And you get about £6,000 in rent from these natives? - Yes.

What do you reckon is the value of these farms per morgen? - THE average value is about 35/- to 40/- per morgen.

So that you are getting a very poor return for your money? Yes.

MR. LUCAS: WHAT was the price paid per morgen? - I cannot say. You see a lot of these farms were required by uittreksel. They were bought forty or fifty years

ago by the present owners. The original owner did not have the money to take up the uittreksel and the present owners came along and took them up. I may say that many of these farms have passed from one company to another. You will find many cases where one company has liquidated and another company has come in.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: Do you find that many of your natives leave your farms?- Not many: as a matter of fact many of the natives we have come from the locations to the farms.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do they come from European farms?- A fairly large number do.

Under the contract which they have, can the natives plough as much as they want to? - Yes, just as much as they want to.

Are there any restrictions with regard to the cutting down of trees?- THEY are restricted, but if they want to make lands then they are not restricted. For domestic purposes they can use as much as they want to.

Is there a tendency to cut out the trees and finish them? - Yes, and it is very difficult to prevent. We do everything we possibly can to prevent them cutting down the big trees, but we cannot do it, and you find that trees are cut down all over.

It is often said in regard to the contract system that where a man has natives on farms, and even on your farms, that the contract is too much on a loose footing and that it prevents natives from making progress. Do you think it would make any difference to

the native in his life if you had given him a year's contract or a three years' contract? - I do not think so. The only reason why a native may have to be moved from the farm is that the place may be sold to a white man, who may say to him "I do not want you on the farm". That would be the only thing to make a native nervous. Otherwise he would have no reason to be afraid of his contract being cancelled.

DO the natives prefer the hire conditions to the other conditions? - Yes, they do. It may be that the purchaser of the farm may say "I do not want hire natives on my farm, you must work or go".

MR. LEROUX VAN NIEKERK: Maar die feit dat 'n kaffer op kontrak is meen nie dat hy nie beter kan ploeg nie of nie beter kan werk nie? - Nee, seker nie.

Is daar skole op u plase? - Die sendelings maak voorsiening, nie die eienaar van die plaas nie; maar ons neem dit in oorweging en ons laat altyd toe vir 'n leeraar om heeltemaal vry op 'n plaas te woon. In die Lage Veld is daar 'n half dosyn skole en daar is altyd leeraars beskikbaar; dit is buite die sendelings skole.

VOORSITTER: DIE manier waarop kaffers 'n plaas bewerk is 'n soort van roof boerdery? - Ja, dit is so.

Hul kap die bome uit? - Ja, en wanneer 'n stuk grond uitgeput raak neem hul 'n ander stuk grond.

Het die Maatskappye ooit op die kwessie ingegaan of die inkomste wat hul uit die plase kry genoeg is om hul te kompenseer vir die vermindering van waarde? - Nee, die eienaars van die land het die omstandighede aangeneem soos hul is. Die kaffers is op die land en hul kan hul nie van die land affry en hul moet die beste maak van die omstandighede.

Is dit moontlik dat die waarde van die plaas meer is as die inkomste wat hul daaruit kry? - Dit kan ek nie sê nie.

Daar is altyd 'n voortdurende verbetering in die waarde van die land maar hul versleg dit.

MENEER MOSTERT: Die land raak uitgeput? - Ja, die kaffers maak dit nie beter nie. Hul put die grond uit deur die manier waarop hul dit gebruik en hul kry nie die beste daaruit nie.

Hul verniel die land? -- Ja.

Do you know that the natives on the farms are working better? - I cannot say that offhand. I do say this - they plough now, but they do not improve their methods generally. They do not pick anymore, that is so; they only use the picks to pick in seed, and they use the picks to clean, and they use them for cultivation. They do not use hoes or cultivators.

They do not use cultivators at all? - not in these areas.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you tell us which system is more largely used, that of ninety-days' work or of two days a week? I am referring now to native tenants on the farms of Europeans - So far as I know, the system which is generally used is that of working ninety days in one stretch.

Is that in vogue more than the two days per week? - Yes, the other system is used very little.

Do the farmers find that that system answers, or do they find that during reaping seasons they are very short of labour? - I cannot say - there are a few months here when more labour is required. Many farmers use the women to clean the lands and to assist them in various other ways during the busy seasons.

The ninety-days' contract, does that include the labour which the native himself has at his disposal? Does it include his sons and his women folk? - Yes, it includes

his family. But there too I believe that the practice varies. What I want to say is this: many of the contracts are not registered. Where a native knows his baas he is satisfied to go along and work for him according to the custom which generally prevails in the area. The women are called upon to come and work in the kitchen and they work for three months, but generally speaking they are only called out to do certain classes of work. They are called out to cut the grass and to clean, to hoe and to help during the reaping season generally.

Looking back over the period you have been here, can you indicate any particular changes in the economic conditions that have taken place - can you indicate any changes now that have taken place as compared with forty years ago? The plough has come in, so you have told us. In regard to provision of food, they are no longer dependent absolutely on local production. Now, apart from the introduction of the plough has there been any further progress in their cultivation methods? - Yes, I should say that his cattle are better secured against disease.

MR. LUCAS: That is a thing which the European has introduced, it is not? - yes.

Has he better cattle nowadays, or were his cattle just as poor forty years ago? - No, the cattle are just the same. There is no attempt made to improve the cattle. Occasionally you come across some cross-bred cattle, but as a rule you may say that the natives do not like them and do not like a good class of cattle, because they are not so hardy as the scrub type.

So they go in for the hard-bred cattle? - Yes.

Now in the cultivation of their fields, apart from the introduction of the ploughs, has there been any further progress that you can speak of? - Not that I can speak of, no.

Have the lands been more wastefully worked latterly than was the case before? - No, I should say it is very much the same.

Are the conditions which we see now the result of wasteful cultivation? - I think the old methods still persist. When the land becomes sterile they leave us alone and simply take another piece.

The cutting down of trees, is that in your development? - Oh no, that has been going on for quite a long time.

At present the position may not be serious, but it may become a serious problem in the future. If that thing has been going on for forty years one can say that it has probably gone on for longer and that being so it would probably have become a serious problem before that. Now, do you think that it is a serious problem now, whereas forty years ago it was not? - Well, forty years ago it was not as wasteful as it is now. I think one can say that things are more noticeable today than they were in the past.

But if it had been going on then surely the bush should not have been so thick, because after all the natives have been here hundreds and hundreds of years? - No, that is not the point. There has been a big increase and the natives today are more concentrated than they were in the past, because they have left the areas in which they were to a large extent and those areas are today occupied by the whites.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is an increase of population both black and white? - Yes, in these particular areas. All the circumstances have led to the concentration of the natives in the way I have indicated.

And I presume there has been an increase of stock as well? - Yes, that is so undoubtedly.

And they have more stock today than they had in the past? - Yes, that is so.

MR. LUCAS: I take it that the white man has also been responsible for a great deal of the destruction of trees, and so on, which has gone on? - Yes. The white man has done a lot of burning, but not otherwise. Of course, near the towns the natives have brought in firewood, and so has the white man, but miles away the white man has not done that.

THE CHAIRMAN: The natives do not practice grass burning as part of their method of farming? - I should not say that.

Do they do it now? - They burn patches and they cultivate them, but they are very often careless about the spreading of fires.

The burning of patches of land in order to get green fields - do they go in for that? - No, that is purely a white man's method.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: The grass has been fed off very short? - Yes, of recent years with the increase of stock that is so. On certain farms the neighbours are very reckless in respect of the number of cattle they have. They very often over-stock, and that is more noticeable in the locations than elsewhere. But that is not a matter on which I can say much.

Would there be a tendency for the natives to go

out to work more than was the case forty years ago? -
Yes, undoubtedly. Our natives from here used to go to
work in Kimberley.

Did they go out in such large numbers? - Yes,
They used to go out. Nowadays too.

You have noticed a change in that? - Well, they
still go out - probably more than in the past.

MR. ROBERTS: Do you consider that the natives
individually spend more today than what they did forty
years ago? - undoubtedly.

You would not venture on saying how much more? -
I am afraid not.

Well if he spends more he must be earning more? -
Well, he is earning more.

And he is better clothed nowadays, is he not? - Yes.

And he is better fed? - Yes, I think he takes
care of that. There is very consistent complaint
among the people at home that the sons go away and that
they eat up all their money - all the money they earn
at work and that for eight or ten years they do not come
back.

So that his condition today is better than it was
forty years ago? - I have no doubt about that.

And education is spreading? - Yes.

And bigger ideas, wider ideas, are prevailing among
the natives today. Do you agree with that? - Yes.

Now, do you think that that will go on, or is it
likely to come to an end with progress? - THAT is difficult
to say. There is a very strong inclination on the part
of the natives to maintain their old traditions, customs
and habits. That tendency is very strong indeed.

Do you find that? - Yes.

Do you find that more today than it was forty years ago? - It is difficult to make a comparison, but it is very strong. There is a very strong underlying tendency to maintain their own traditions.

That is not so with the younger men, except to a limited extent? - I should not like to commit myself on that.

MR. MOSTERT: DO you say that he prefers his native customs? - Yes.

He prefers his native kraal? - He prefers his old home.

And do you think he feels the influence of the tribe to which he belongs? - I think so.

AND what is the position in the locations? - Well I think the same applies to the locations, but not to the locations attached to the towns.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Are these farms of yours fully occupied by natives, or would you be able to take more natives on them? - SOME of them are thickly populated while others have only a few natives.

Do you want more natives on your farms, or are you refusing to take any more? - It is no use trying to refuse them. Say you refuse a man, you later on find him trespassing in all probability. If a native wants to go on to a farm he will squat there and you cannot turn him off. You cannot use physical force, and if you turn him away today, he will be there again next year. For that reason we take the line of least resistance, and if a native wants to reside there, he makes the usual application, or we do it for him, and if it is granted he remains.

Generally speaking, could you take more families than you have? - Yes, we could.

induced to bank his money.

The banking facilities are very great today? - I do not think the native realises it. My idea is that by an extension of something like the post office savings bank or some institution under the Native Commissioners, good effects might be achieved.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you think the Native Commissioner might be an agent for the Post Office Savings Bank? - I think so.

Why do you mention the Native Commissioner? - Well, I do not mind some other officials possibly as well.

Is it the confidence in the Commissioner which you think would make him suitable to play that role? - Yes, I think so. They are in close touch with the natives. There are natives now, quite a fair number of them, who go to the Bank, or even more to the Post Office, but if one could induce them to make more use of the Post Office Savings Bank facilities, it would be a very good thing.

In regard to this selling of cattle, do they sell to natives or to white men? - Mostly to whites.

And is there a good deal of it? - WHENEVER there is a demand for cattle, or whenever their cattle are in good condition. It is only a certain type which they sell. There is never a sale for cows or for heifers. Those are only saleable to the natives themselves. But they sell to the white man anything that is not suitable for draught purposes or for slaughter.

WHY are not cows suitable for the slaughter market? - Well, the cows of the natives are generally small. The peculiarity about the native female cattle is that they are always small, although the oxen always appear to be on the big side.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: They start breeding very early? - Yes.

And would that be the cause of the cows being small? - Yes, probably it would be. It is a very noticeable thing among all the native tribes that the female stock are small, although the male stock are big.

THE CHAIRMAN: In other words, there is no control in regard to the age of breeding? - That is so.

MR* LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: Have you had any experience where natives have tried to better the standard of their cattle? - I have often suggested it to the natives, but it has never led to anything.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is there any fencing off of agricultural lands in these areas? - No, only some old East Coast fever fences.

Is there nothing that the natives have put up? - No. I may say that the native fences are also a cause of the destruction of timber. Wherever there is game about they cut down the bush and they put up fences round their houses.

MR. LUCAS: On your lands, are there any schools? - Yes, there are three schools.

Are they on thickly populated farms? - Yes.

Do you know how many children there are attending them? - THERE are sixty children at one of these schools. I happen to know that because as it happens I made an inquiry the other day.

Is that the largest school? - THAT probably would be.

Can we take it that there is no schooling for more than 150 children? - Not actually on the farms.

And is there any schooling available in accessible areas? - No, I am afraid not, because even these schools

are twelve miles apart. They are 12 miles apart and six miles apart. That is to say the nearest to are six miles apart and the next school is 12 miles away.

There are just the three? - Yes, but there are mission schools on the farms in between.

DR. FOURIE: Wat soort van naturelle het U op die plase - is dit kaffers van verskillende stamme? - Ja, daar is Shangaans, Basutos en Mavendas.

Kan U sê of daar 'n neiging onder die kaffers bestaan om vervreemd te raak van die lede van hul eie stam: is daar party van die jong kaffertjies wat weg trek en nooit terug kom nie? - die jongetjies loop baie weg.

Die stam lewe breek baie af? - Ja, en ek denk dit is jammer, baie jammer dat dit so is.

Die meeste wat daar is erken hul kaptein? - Ja, so lang as hul by die huis is.

En as hul van die werk terug kom? - Dan is hul weer heelmaal mak. Ons hoor van kaffers wat terug kom en wat groot Amalaitas is, maar wanneer hul by die huis is, is hul heelmaal mak. DAN WORD HUL OPGEVAS DEUR DIE ANDERES.

MENEER MOSTERT: so wanneer hul terug is van Johannesburg dan is hul mak? - Ja, heelmaal mak, self die man wat beskou word as 'n kwaai Amalaita.

Denk U dat dit goed sou wees om die Amalaitas na hul stam terug te stuur? - Daar sou miskien te baie van hul wees. There is just one other thing I want to say - there are a lot of natives moving on to the farms, but there are also a number moving off.

MR. DANIEL NICHOLAAS DURING, and
MR. PIETER BERNARD WILLEM ELFFERS, called and
examined:

THE CHAIRMAN: I believe you are the Town Clerk, Mr. Elffers, and Mr. During is the Superintendent of Locations? - (Mr. Elffers): That is so.

You have an urban location here, which I think is under the Native Urban Areas Act? - (Mr. During): Yes.

Could you give us any indication of the conditions under which the natives live in the location, what they pay for the stands? - They are given stands for a monthly rental of 10/-. They have no lease at all, and they are there just from month to month.

Do they build their own houses? - Yes, but they have to submit their plans and we pass the plans.

What type of houses do they build? - THEY ARE built of burnt brick, with iron roof, or pitched roof. Generally they have four or five rooms and the natives sublet the rooms to individual tenants.

The bulk of these houses you say are from four to five rooms? - Yes, those they are building now have four or five rooms.

But surely there are smaller houses as well? - Yes, there are some smaller ones.

Are there many smaller ones? - No, not many.

For building these houses does the Municipality make any provision in the way of lending money to the natives? - No.

The natives have to find the money themselves? - Yes.

AND do they do the building themselves? - Yes.

That 10/- per month, what service does that

cover? - That covers the rent, sanitary services and water.

How is the water arranged for? - The water is laid on from the town.

Have they got taps in the locations? - Yes, there are taps in certain positions in the location. I believe they have about six taps there.

And light? - No, there is no light there yet.

MR* LUCAS: What is the size of the location? - We have 45 stands, 33 cottages, and 39 rooms.

What is the size of a stand? - 50 x 50, not less than that, and some are a little bigger.

MR. LE ROUX VAN NIEKERK: Where do the natives get their building materials from? - They have the brickfields there and they make their own bricks.

Have they got any place for gardening? - No.

THE CHAIRMAN: The brickfields are Municipal property? - Yes.

Are they allowed to use as much material as they want? - Yes, they pay a licence of 10/- per month.

How long is the licence for? - It is a monthly licence and they can make as many bricks as they like.

They really hire the right to work in these places? - Yes.

And how do they get the timber which they use for their houses? - They have to buy that locally.

What sort of timber is it? - Well they buy it here, ordinary timber.

They do not go in for thatched houses? - No, they do not. The Municipality regard it as a failure.

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