

The most influential class of people among the Bantu just now is that of the ministers, chiefs, headmen and teachers, and once the confidence of these is enlisted and their co-operation is secured in periodical conferences one can see nothing to hinder the achievement of the full solution of the problem of Native farm labour.

### TEACHING NATIVES HOW TO FARM.

To the Minister for Native Affairs, Pretoria.

3rd December, 1919.

Honourable Sir,

We, the Executive Committee of the Native Farmers' Association, have been directed by our association to call the attention of your department (as we had already done in our memorial to the Secretary of Native Affairs on the 12th July last at Burnshill, Middledrift, C.P.) to the alarming rapidity with which poverty is growing among, and pressing upon the Natives in our districts, due (1) to the enormous loss of stock and failure of crops, (2) to the fact that they have very small holdings, (3) to their ignorance how to utilise such holdings to the best advantage, and (4) to the limited commonages.

The association feels that there is a crying need for a Native agricultural school that will definitely specialize upon the best methods of cultivating such small holdings as are possessed by Natives, and inculcate in them the futility of overstocking present commonages.

Our feeling is that a great deal of good could be done if there existed some large experimental or practical school-farm divided into small plots, such as could be successfully worked by one horse on intensive lines, as done by the one-mule-and-thirty-acre system in the

Southern States, U.S.A.—each student being provided with one horse and a plot to be used under proper supervision (for we are told by those in a position to know that one mule or horse could plough a much larger extent of land than the average acreage possessed by Natives in these parts). The prevailing ox traction system is proving an absolute failure as through the heavy losses of stock from droughts and shortage of grass, few Natives have cattle sufficient to constitute a span of four oxen wherewith to plough, while on the contrary they have many horses in the locations, which are of no farming value on account of our people's ignorance of horse-agriculture. One horse is said to be of more economic worth than four oxen as a traction power in agriculture.

Native people around here have been astounded by the possibilities of horse agriculture as seen through the performances of the demonstrator from the Southern States whom you have so graciously supplied for the members of our association during the last twelve months. Our association also sees a great opportunity for making the Natives a great asset to the country in the line of poultry growing, if this were taught them in a practical farm-school. Pig-raising and bacon-curing on a modest scale would greatly add to the value of such a farm-school, for Native people have not even a rudimentary knowledge of these common industries which would mean a great help in the present crisis. The amount of agricultural training and the number of farm schools open to Natives are, in the opinion of the association, not at all commensurate with their members and the taxes they render towards the country's revenue; and they are in dire need of this kind of training and such schools.

Never in their history, not even in Nongqause (which

in effect was a localised and circumscribed disaster) have the Native people generally been faced with such a serious economic crisis as they are to-day. Through the recent drought they have lost a large percentage of their cattle; through their ignorance of dry-farming and using methods unsuitable for their small holding their last year's crops failed. Many homes in our district are without food. The Native hospital in our locality, being over full, is daily turning away scurvy-stricken patients due to underfeeding.

Should you think it wise, Sir, we would be glad to meet a representative from your department for a frank round-table discussion of the above suggestion.

With all humility, we remain,  
Your loyal servants,  
Native Farmers' Association.

### NATIVE VILLAGE INDUSTRIES.

An editorial from the Lovedale *Christian Express*,  
April, 1920.

The Governor-General's speech at the opening of Parliament frankly admits that a new stage has been reached in the development of the Native races. The progress achieved demands new opportunities. We invite an expression of opinion from missionaries and others in touch with native life and thought, and from educated Natives who read the *Express*, as to whether the time is ripe and opportune to start, in the areas where the native population has become too dense to live by stock raising and agriculture, industries financed conjointly by whites and natives and worked on a profit-sharing basis.

The colour bar and segregation amply justify such a

departure. Many natives are quite capable of doing skilled labour; were they allowed to do it, their earnings would be increased. If the white man denies to them the right to do the skilled labour they are capable of doing on the mines, he cannot have the face to say that they shall not do it at their homes. To give the natives in their own parts of the country suitable and remunerative employment would result in a large measure of *voluntary* segregation, which should help to obviate the clash between white and coloured labour and greatly benefit the native by keeping him away from the degrading influences of town life, as well as by making it unnecessary for him to break into his family life by long absences.

The spirit of the age is calling for profit sharing—that the man who by his hard toil wins the wealth should receive a fair share of that wealth. This has been in large measure conceded to the white man. Is it righteous to deny it to the Native? If we sit still and allow this injustice to be perpetuated without making a determined effort to put it right, are we not culpable? Cain's world-old question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" is but a sorry subterfuge.

Our suggestion is that a limited liability company be floated to establish suitable industries for natives in areas where the population and other conditions warrant. That a capital sufficient to see the venture well through its initial stages to successful production be subscribed and called up as required. That interest on shares be limited to 7½%, any profits beyond that figure being divided into two equal parts, one to be distributed among the native employees who have worked steadily throughout the year, the other being placed to an extensions fund for new developments. Provision should be made in the articles of association to prevent any capitalist buying up a controlling interest in the company when

it has reached a paying stage, by limiting the holding and voting power of any individual to, say, one tenth of the subscribed capital or in any more effectual way that can be devised.

One great advantage in making a start at the present time is the high cost and scarcity of manufactured articles, and the apparently remote prospect of production overtaking demand, or of prices falling. Various industries suggest themselves with which to make a beginning. Perhaps that of spinning and weaving might be tried first. Wool from native owned sheep might be purchased throughout the Eastern Province and Territories and made into blankets for which there is a big market among the native people. Later on tweed might be manufactured and a clothing factory established also to meet the native demand for decent and suitable clothing.

By manufacturing the wool locally a whole series of profits and commissions and freights, as well as import duty, would be saved to the natives, from the time their wool clip leaves them until it comes back in the shape of blankets and clothes; moreover the wages for manufacture would be retained in the country instead of being paid and spent overseas. It is probable too that the article turned out locally would be more free from shoddy or cotton than that usually supplied for the native trade; and we might hope to be delivered from that abomination so much in evidence—the cast off clothes of Europe patched up for native wear.

That spinning and weaving can be carried on successfully in South Africa has no longer to be proved. It is being done already and at a good profit; but on a scale which can only meet a fraction of the demand for European requirements, leaving the greater demand for the requirement of the Native untouched.

What results might be looked for from such a venture?

If our vision comes true, regular and good wages with a share in any profits will have a marked effect on the progress of the native employee. We may look for a rapid growth in self-respect, for better houses and a better home life, better food and clothing, better education, better support of the Church and of missions to other parts of this continent.

No doubt short-sighted farmers and other employers of native labour will be inclined to oppose any development of this kind because of its tendency to raise native wages. But they will come to see that cheap labour is, in the long run, the dearest, because it is inefficient: that it is true economy to employ fewer, but more intelligent and capable, men at a higher wage: and that after all it is a pretty low down ideal for a white man to set himself, that of growing rich on the labour of the native, for whose social, intellectual and spiritual advancement he not only makes little or no provision, but whom he selfishly wishes to keep down as a helot.

To whom may we look to launch such a venture as we have outlined? Letters received on the subject from laymen in Britain show that, in their opinion, it is up to the Christian business men of South Africa to shoulder it and carry it through. There are in the Eastern Province, and especially in the Border towns, business men of high character and ability, whose family traditions link them to the Missionary enterprise and the advancement of the Native. Might not they pick up the mantle of their fathers and grandfathers and wearing it adapted to this modern Missionary call, take the responsible lead, inviting the Christian laymen of South Africa to back them?

“Lord, give me courage—strength to do the deed  
From which flesh shrinks, nor choose the easier way  
Of dalliance and self-sparing—Lord, I need  
Thy spirit to sustain me day by day,  
And give me courage, both to see and do  
The rightful thing, whatever else I rue.”

REPLY TO THE FOREGOING.

To the Editor, *The Christian Express*.

Sir,—The article on "Bantu Industries" appearing in your issue of April 1, deserves thanks of all the better educated natives, both for its practical business insight and for its generosity towards natives. I for one have reason to believe that the time is now ripe for the starting of industries in the thickly populated rural native locations, specially in the areas of Fort Beaufort, Victoria East, Middledrift, Keiskamahoe, Debe valley, and elsewhere all around King William's Town, the Transkeian Territories and Pondoland. During the last six years I have observed several attempts, in the above named districts, by natives in the line of trading, carpentry, boot-repairing, launching of newspapers, basket weaving, broom-making, the making of earthenware vessels, sale of ironwood sticks, and so forth, ending in most cases in failure, loss of invested money, or at best yielding insignificant profit.

Nevertheless the great lesson of these is that natives are willing to be led into the routes of successful business and industry, if they only obtain intelligent and sympathetic guidance from honest experts, plus financial aid for the necessary start. Many white people utilise the constitution-given colour bar not only to degrade the black people politically and socially but to protect themselves in their own trades and professions against the competition of natives whom they are pleased to term their inferiors; hence the exclusion or suppression of natives in skilled trades and in the better positions in the civil service and in the teaching profession (e.g. tacit colour bar against natives teaching in the Normal classes in Native Institutions in cases where they possess the required qualifications, these classes being reserved for a white trades union).

The fact that this scheme will tend to keep natives away from town life will certainly make it obnoxious to the mining magnates, as their profits from labour supply are built upon the poverty of the natives who are thereby driven to the Rand. Against this I may say, as I said at Johannesburg last Christmas, the insufficiency of the native labour supply, its unreliable character, and the bad workmanship of the available labour, are explained by the prevailing system of native elementary education which is too bookish and provides no systematic and sensible training in the habit of regular manual work where at all it is attempted, and none in domestic science and agriculture, the most important occupations in native economic existence. In this connection, Mr. Editor, I wish to support your appeal to the Department of Education in the question of teaching the methods of proper housing to native school teachers, for the Report of the Housing Committee 1920 reveals ghastly facts on the appalling death rate among natives traceable to bad housing. But I wish you had added cookery and housekeeping for girls and agriculture for boys—these to be substituted for sewing, woodwork and drawing, which in my opinion are of secondary importance, a waste of valuable time and really worthless in after life under our present educational system. I hope this will catch the eye of the Department.

To return to the Industries, one would say that your scheme is excellent and deserves publicity throughout the native press (Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, Basutoland, Natal and King Williams' Town), whose editors might invite their readers to discuss the question and possibly call meetings with a view to giving practical effect to it, for there are many of them who do not see the *Express*, while you, Mr. Editor, might be good enough to draft tentative articles of association for a liability company on the lines of your suggestion, inviting

white and black to join. For spinning and weaving and the making of blankets St. Cuthberts, Tsolo, in the Transkei, would seem a favourable centre, as this industry appears to be a success there. An experiment might in the course of time be made in the Keiskama valley.

Such an undertaking would materially benefit not only the natives but the country as a whole, for it is the poverty of the native that is a drag on its economic progress; were he more skilful in trade, intelligent in organisation, inured to the habit of regular work as the American Negro, and more economically independent, he could render South Africa not only richer and more productive, but would act as a stimulus to the white man himself to move on in developing the yet unfathomed wealth of this land.

I am, etc.,

D. D. T. J.

April 1920.

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## Part 4.

### NATIVE WOMANHOOD.

Address to the Winter School for Native Teachers,  
Amanzimtoti, Natal, July, 1920.

When I was asked to give you an address there came to my mind the interesting debate that took place last night on the "Lobola" custom when I observed that all the lady speakers were in favour of the retention of the custom while all the men seemed to be against it. My aim now is not to take sides on this question but to try to show you certain aspects of the subject.

The subject of the womanhood of our people is so important that one would like to awaken your noblest instincts in the consideration of it. Reference is made to it, in a brief way, in "The Native Teacher out of School." Mr. Sigamony, the earnest and patriotic Indian teacher of Durban, told us two days ago that "no nation can rise higher than its womanhood;" this agrees closely with a sentence, in an article by Mrs. Hertslet in the "South African Quarterly" current number, which says "The Bantu can only rise as high as their womenfolk." Is this a plagiarism or a case of two great minds thinking alike? Then again in the latest issue of the "Native Teachers' Journal," Father Bryant contributes an illuminating article on Bantu social life and shows himself to be a protagonist of the Lobola custom. A Bloemfontein paper called "The Homestead" has been opening its columns of late to correspondence upon the evils of the system of employing Native girls as nurses for children. Also, an impartial view of this question is to be found in the new housing Report compiled for Government. Thus you see that Native women are being discussed in all

sorts of circles just now. That signifies that we are living in a time of crisis in the evolution of the black races of Africa. Let us look at the subjects from three standpoints.

- (a) The significance of the Lobola custom;
- (b) The life of Native women in towns;
- (c) What our attitude towards our women generally should be.

*Lobola.*

(a) At the Cape, while there are still many who cling to the Lobola custom, there are many Christianised people who have discarded it. Perhaps we may not settle the question here and now, but we can at any rate agree upon our general attitude, if we once grasp the arguments for and against. Let us take the pros. first and then the cons. Those who favour the Lobola tell us that:—

- i. Women do not find it a hardship; and this was testified to by the female debaters of last night;
- ii. It guarantees the careful upbringing of girls by their fathers as girls cannot marry without the consent and choice of parents; hence this is the only way to ensure their welfare during their youth;
- iii. The system endows the wife with esteem in the eyes of her husband, inasmuch as he secures her only after an outlay of much trouble;
- iv. It affords a wife moral protection, because under heathen conditions there is no signed contract against personal abuse;
- v. It acts as a restraining check against the reckless abandonment of the husband by wife as compared with the divorce system among school Natives;
- vi. It places brides at a premium and this conduces to respect, for then they cannot be picked up anywhere and everywhere, as they otherwise can, merely for the asking;

vii. It compels suitors to work where no other inducement can make them get into the healthy habit of labour. On the contrary these are some of the arguments against:—

- i. Under this system women are worked mercilessly, specially if childless;
- ii. Woman becomes a commodity that is purchased by the highest bidder, and since this is a purely business negotiation as between parents, there is no element of esteem; contempt for woman is the consequence;
- iii. To procure the requisite cattle, a young man is obliged to go to the Johannesburg mines often for two or three recruitments and when he returns to get married he develops a feeling of vindictiveness which leads him to ill-treat his new spouse;
- iv. Woman is looked upon as a mere servant whose duty is to cook and build houses for her lord;
- v. As a return for the cattle she must populate the home with as many children as possible without regard as to whether she can properly train them; hence if she is barren she is a cursed creature;
- vi. The sentiment of love is never considered by the parents who decide to arrange the marriage; hence the contract being devoid of any noble idealism is calculated to destroy conjugal bliss;
- vii. Polygamy therefore becomes not only possible, since this is a matter of cattle, but natural, desirable, and even idealised; with certain tribes when a man died his wives were logically killed and buried with him to serve him in the next world.

That is a brief summary of the position. Observe that on the whole the system fits in with people in primitive social conditions where contracts are not executed by written documents but by the tangible form of barter; and that, whatever present opinion be, the custom is sure

to grow out of use amongst civilised and Christianised people on account of its accompanying cruelty and the economic handicap it places upon couples starting in matrimonial life. The European or educated view is that all the parents concerned should contribute to the wedding of their daughter or son, because married life is notoriously a difficult adventure in civilised life, if one starts it with no capital, nor property, nor furniture.

In our Native life the task of providing the ten head of cattle is so heavy nowadays that there are cases of youths who, having gone to the mines for two occasions and raised about seven cattle in all, have been driven into despair and have returned home to elope with their fiancée; others who manage to complete the number incur such heavy debts over the wedding ceremonies and carnivals that the husband has once again to go to Johannesburg to work and pay off these debts, leaving his new bride alone at home; others do not recover from these initial liabilities for many years. What a contrast this is to a white friend of mine for whom I acted as best man in his wedding: he had all the furniture, crockery, house, piano, garden and all, given as presents by the parents of his young lady and his own, long before the day of marriage. The argument that the Lobola develops esteem for the wife, in the eyes of her husband, may be discarded, for the usual effect is actually the opposite: "I have laboured hard to get the cattle with which I obtained you; your job now is to kindle the fire, cook, and rear children for me." "You must go and plough with the oxen," said the husband of a barren woman in my district, "for you are a bullock too because you do not bear children," and the miserable wife had to perform some of the roughest manual tasks possible under the threatening rod of her inexorable master.

Under this system the tender emotions of conjugal love and family affection are purely accidental and secondary, if not entirely absent. Man is everything, woman nothing. Therefore without wishing to constrain you towards one view or the other I leave the facts to you for consideration; study the problem more minutely and decide for yourselves whether the advantages of Lobola are not outweighed by the disadvantages.

*Native Girls in Towns.*

(b) Some months ago a European lady in the Rand created a sensation in the press by making serious charges against Native nurses and women generally employed in towns, saying that these were responsible for contaminating white children and other white people with certain diseases and influences. We need not go into the details of this unsavoury topic but can take the situation in a general way.

When I ventured to challenge the accuracy of this sweeping defamation of our people which was being reflected in scurrilous attacks in a Bloemfontein paper, the reply showed that the authoress had out of her local experience of Durban and Johannesburg made libellous generalisations incriminating black people everywhere in the Union. Such statements, so far as my acquaintance with the whole of the Union goes, do not hold good for all other towns, certainly not for the Eastern Province and the Native territories. Those who claim to be benefactors to our people would do much good if they humbly limited themselves in speech and writing, especially in calumnious matters, strictly to what they know and avoid damaging generalisations until they have mastered their facts and figures.

Now, there are two questions here that face us:—One is, Why do our Native people allow their girls, in very

tender years even, to swarm to towns for work? The other is, Why is it that European employers are so careless about the proper housing and the moral welfare of their nursemaids and kitchen servants? Let us begin with the latter question. The white people, who employ Native girls in towns, assume no parental responsibility for the moral welfare of these girls. Specially is this the case at the Rand which is proverbially the cesspool that swallows up all the worst characters of the Union. It is a notorious fact in Native circles that whenever a young man or woman has fallen into mischief and has disappeared, in nine cases out of ten they have fled by train to Johannesburg; hence it is unsafe to presume that Johannesburg conditions hold good for other towns. It is the London or New York of South Africa, the refuge of criminals. European employers however are satisfied so long as these girls discharge their duties regularly. They do not concern themselves with the way they spend their leisure time and evenings, nor with the rascals who introduce themselves to them at their backyard quarters and develop an acquaintance which often leads to their ruin. This is an enormous danger which has been realised by few Native people. Fortunately of late certain European employers in Johannesburg and Durban under the organisation of Mrs. L. Hertslet are beginning to pay serious attention to this problem and it is to be hoped that some tangible result will follow.

As to the other question: do you as teachers ever study the reasons that have led to the exodus of so many of your women from their homes? Is it a good thing? Is it a healthy sign? Can you not do something by advising their fathers and mothers against sending girls to towns without an undertaking from their employers that the demoralising conditions are altered? It is your duty to know of these dangers that are a

menace to our people in this critical stage of their social evolution. Remember that these girls, having left the raw state of naked heathenism desire to be dressed in nice looking blouses, skirts and shoes, while the stings of poverty and hunger at their homes, due to the droughts and failures of crops have rendered it impossible for their parents to supply them with the money necessary for these things. Our country girls have developed a great craze for the flashy clothes that they see worn by town girls. This seems to be the allurements of the towns, quite apart from the evolutionary disintegration of the tribal life as it used to be. Black people now have far less control over their children than they used to possess. This is where your help as teachers is required. Ponder over the following words which I quote from the article by Mrs. L. E. Hertslet in the June number of the "S. A. Quarterly":

"The plight of Native women in Johannesburg is a burning question which affects everyone of us and the Bantu races in that the demoralising influences of the towns are threatening to spoil a large number of their Native women, who in their turn will harmfully influence their country cousins. Would that the Bantu might realise the evil for themselves, and stem the tide that sets townwards! Before they have gone but a short distance in their upward march towards a virile national life, the very foundations of their strength are threatened by the danger to their women."

*Possible Ideals for our Womenfolk*

(c) An experience of over ten years in Europe and the United States of America has taught me something of the place of women in civilised society—society that can give points to many white people of this land. It was my privilege when in England to make extensive visits to homes that could really be called beautiful.

One such home in Somersetshire, where I used to spend some of my college vacations, was equipped with such perfect appointments externally and internally that I oftentimes exclaimed to myself "If heaven is as nice and comfortable as this home then it must be a fine place indeed!" This was due to womenfolk who by their home training were endowed with a taste for the superfine; women who had entered matrimony on terms of social equality with their husbands, not as chattels. The British principle in times of danger "Women and children first" was gallantly observed when fire broke out or when there was threat of a shipwreck. Compare us when we board trains: "Men first, women last." In society it was "Ladies first," an expression that would be regarded as outrageous in one of the Bantu languages. In those countries the luggage of ladies is borne by men, with us it is the opposite. In society woman is reckoned and treated like a jewel, a pearl, a treasure of priceless value, idolised and idyllised in songs.

She is taught how to make herself deserving of the honour and respect ascribed to her. She must do this by cultivating the qualities of grace and beauty, beauty not of face but of soul and character, sweetness of manner, gentleness of speech, kindness to people, specially to those in suffering and trouble—doing this without pride or conceit but in the proper and natural order of things.

Men follow certain definite codes of manners and etiquette such as taking off their hats when greeting ladies; they remove pipes and refrain from spitting in their presence, offer them front seats in gatherings, give them the safer side in walking on pavements, offer them seats in the house, trams and trains, always protecting them and using refined language in their

presence—doing this not pedantically nor effusively but naturally in accordance with the code of chivalry.

Lofty are the heights which woman has reached to-day in cultured countries. She has indeed reached absolute equality of opportunity educationally, religiously, economically and even politically.

For instance in the Negro schools and colleges of America there are many more women than men receiving higher education. In a Summer School for teachers that I attended at Tuskegee, Alabama, U. S. A., where there were 400 teachers, there were 350 female teachers and only 50 men. That is why the American Negroes are making wonderful strides in education and civilisation. There is no field of university studies where women have not displayed mental capacity equal to and often excelling that of men. In my own graduating class in London the best student was a woman, one of our lecturers being a lady Doctor of Literature. Many a happy musical "at-home" have I enjoyed at the residence of a London lady who was a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. In Church work they have gone beyond the limits prescribed by St. Paul, for the pulpit of a famous Holborn chapel is to-day occupied by a female minister, whilst there exists a sect whose ministry is composed of women preachers and ministers. In professions they have invaded even the legal field, there being female attorneys and barristers including the distinguished Advocate Christabel Pankhurst, LL.B. (Lond.); whilst there are many women doctors qualified from Edinburgh and other Universities.

And finally in politics not only have they secured the franchise in many countries but there is actually a member of the fair sex in the British Imperial Parliament itself, Lady Astor, M.P., who from all reports is giving a good account of herself as an orator and politician.

Those are the exploits of which womenkind are capable. They show that the time has come for us to take up a new attitude and grant some respect towards our women. The privileges enumerated above have been obtained only recently, some of them since the war. They did not come through the flourish of a magic wand. Much work, organisation, agitation, imprisonment, hungerstriking and suffering had to be endured by the pioneer women in order to overcome the ancient sex-prejudice. Therefore as teachers we should work to influence public opinion, in our villages and reserves, for better treatment and nobler regard towards our womanhood. This can be done even from a humble beginning. For instance the Native Farmers' Association in the Eastern Cape Province is tackling three vital problems which if overcome should go a long way to release Native women from the unreasonable heavy work which degrades them physically: these are the three tasks of (i.) scuffling in fields; (ii) carrying fuel from great distances on the heads, and (iii.) fetching water from remote streams.

To combat these difficulties we enjoin members to sow their mealies in rows and use cultivators drawn by two oxen instead of manual scuffling; we instruct them to make plantations around their homes and locations so that wood may be to hand; and to build dams or reservoirs with Government help or to construct tanks or windmills or furrows to lead water by gravitation where practicable. Once the women are liberated from these enslaving tasks they will be free to practise better cooking, to beautify their homes, to bring up their children under their personal attention, to improve their own health and that of the race in general and to have the opportunity to work out life's ideals.

European women and those of other civilised nations have been long ago relieved by their men from these

tasks which unduly hamper domestic progress and that is why they have been able to raise their nations and empires; for it is woman that governs the pace of progress. Therefore if we mean to rise in this world and to command the respect of other nations we must begin by raising up our women. We can do it by educating them as highly as we educate our boys, laying emphasis on domestic training and hygiene where the boys learn agriculture and house-construction, learning and imitating the methods of the more civilised races. We can inculcate the virtues of chivalry upon young girls and boys in our day schools in connection with our moral lessons, not by word of mouth only but by our actual life and practice.

" Earth's insufficiency  
Here grows to event;  
The indescribable  
Here it is done;  
The woman-soul leadeth us  
Upward and on."

## SOCIAL REFORM.

This is an address given at King Williamstown, on Friday, 14th May, 1920, to a Native audience. The Chairman of the meeting in question recommended that "in view of the educative, helpful and hortative character of the address it should receive wide publication."

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—My first duty is to thank the Committee of the local organisation of the Abambo Anniversary observers who did me the honour to ask me to address this notable gathering on this notable day. Up to this day I have sedulously avoided associating myself with these sectional and racial carnivals on the ground that our people are not sufficiently

educated yet to be capable of performing these celebrations without yielding to the temptation of indulging in undue self-praise, self-complacency, harmful references to other fellow Africans and the positive fomentation of racial animosity already a bane among the European citizens in this same land.

Nevertheless I decided that rather than continue in tacit seclusion and abstinence it might be more manly for me to come and speak candidly to you, and explain what my feelings are on such celebrations, even at the risk of injuring the susceptibilities of some who are keen on these things. I have felt that while much could be done in the Fingo festivals, by prudent speakers exhorting their people to noble life, the occasions could easily produce much mischief when narrow-minded enthusiasts turned them to the disadvantage of the other tribes. This remark of course holds good with reference to the other tribal festivals *mutatis mutandis*. For instance it does not follow that because you celebrate the memory of this day, therefore you should hate those who are not Fingos, or who were once your masters, some your protectors, some your oppressors, some your friends. But this easily happens with people in our stage of civilisation. Another example: many claim that the 14th of May denotes the date of the freedom of the Embo people from bondage or slavery; and yet the Amahlubi, a section of the Abambo, repudiate this as they were never at any time enslaved by the Amaxhosa!

Therefore I wish to preface my speech to-night by pointing out that the only justification I see for the continuance of such celebrations is that they must be used for edifying the whole African race and not a section. We should on these occasions take stock of our present position, study ourselves, plan for the future, study our old customs, and those customs brought to us by white

men, and learn the wisest ways of avoiding social danger in our stage of transition from our communistic life to that of European civilisation.

For our tribal life is going and has gone for ever. We are *nolens volens* learning and adopting the new and foreign civilisation by the very fact of living in towns. This is excellently described in Dr. C. T. Loram's book: "The Education of the South African Native."

To-night, therefore, I propose to take stock of what appears to me to be the chief dangers that threaten socially to destroy us all as Natives (see Daniel 5: 5, 25), and my remarks shall not be limited to the Abambo or Fingoes, but shall be directed to the whole Native race in the Union of South Africa.

Once we realise the dangers and rocks that lie in our course, our Scylla and Charybdis, and their true importance, as well as learn how to steer clear of them, then it will be possible for our posterity to build successfully upon the foundations that we ought to lay to-day in our social life. Among the things we should study is our history, because most of the present generation do not know it. It is a fascinating story that should make our hearts throb and inspire us to lofty actions. That is one of the values of history for all of us—both the proud and the humble: for if you boast of belonging to what was once a great, lordly, powerful and brave tribe, then to-day you must aim to excel in the noble arts of civilisation, progress, culture and prosperity. On the contrary, if you meekly belong to what was a down trodden people then you may take courage and contemplate the pitiful negro slaves of 1850 in the United States who to-day lead all black races in culture—(see their wonderful magazine the "Crisis" of New York)—and behold how extensive your opportunity is to make good! Why not then leave behind us printed records of Native history

written by black hands—Native history that will be the pride of our descendants? A good number of books containing Native history are to be found; but they are written by white authors who naturally must take care of their own interests first, and one cannot blame them, for blood is thicker than water. Some modest efforts have been made by Rev. J. K. Bokwe, Mr. S. E. Mqayi and Rev. T. B. Soga—(please let me know should there be others) but we are still in need of some serious research work on these lines by a black man who will get his sources from the old Natives themselves, who are fast passing away. Such are the things to which your celebrations might profitably devote themselves.

Now that the Great War is over, the Native Question has once more become the bone of contention in newspaper controversy and on the public platform, and the football of politics. If you follow newspapers, and I know that most of you do not, you will find, firstly, that Europeans who take the sane view of things have become more outspoken than formerly and, if anything, more confirmed as friends of the Natives. To give a few instances, take the attitude of the press in many Union towns, notably the Johannesburg "Star"; take the Rand Native Welfare Association, which has done much good for Natives; take that epoch-making paper of Bishop Furse lately of Pretoria; take the excellent letter of the Archbishop of Capetown recently issued to members of his Church; take the eye-opening speech of the Mayor of Stellenbosch, Mr. P. D. Cluver, and the illuminating paper by Dr. Saunders of Grahamstown, given in the Municipal Congress this week, and the "Daily Dispatch" leader thereon, to say nothing of other public speakers and writers who figure frequently in newspapers. Secondly the negrophobists and repressionists too are by no means putting their candle underneath a bushel. They are becoming no less hardened in their venomous

hate of the black man, as witnessed by their treatment of us in various spheres of life and in their writings, as for example in the Bloemfontein "Farmers' Weekly" and the "Homestead," where Native nurses and farm servants are vilified, often in uncultured language.

Now what have we to say to all this? Are these two parties to remain our only advocates? No! I hope not. The time has come for us to work out our own salvation with our own instrumentality. To do so, we too must become more and more articulate, wisely articulate, specially in the press, and take all that is good in the white man's civilization, eschewing the bad. The dangers that we should avoid are numerous, but I have selected a few and shall now take them *seriatim*.

#### 1. RELIGIOUS LAXITY.

1. The first one is Religious Laxity. By this I mean the growing slackness and deterioration in our hold on the religion bequeathed unto us by our parents and forefathers. From what we learn, the primitive Natives, though not religious in the modern sense of the word, were at least superstitious enough to have their moral life restrained by certain crude but nevertheless moral scruples. This was at any rate something of merit and credit to them, when one considers their little knowledge of natural phenomena and the tendencies that made for moral depravity in those days. In the course of time Christianity was introduced and those of four generations ago received it truly and sincerely. The names of our earliest Native Missionaries still make us feel a glow of joy and pride in their excellent record of work in uplifting their people. Much work was done by their successors until missions are in many cases so large now that most of our Missionaries—white and black—can find time to carry out only pastoral but no

evangelising work. Considerable spiritual stagnation is apparent in the general church membership in municipal areas where the religion of many Natives consists only in church going and the observances of the outward forms of Christianity, having no practical check to their moral actions. We are fast becoming Christians without religion! What a paradoxical position! Some plead that the white man too has no regard for his religion, for in Pretoria and elsewhere he goes in hundreds to the tennis courts, swimming baths, fishing and hunting expeditions on Sundays. But this is irrelevant, because two wrongs do not make a right. Let his white minister take care of the white man. We must not drift from the religion of our forbears for that is the cause of the prevalent dishonesty, untruthfulness and ruined characters among our people to-day. Therefore I say get back your religion from the Bible, not from the white man nor any other man; go back to the Church, back to God; or else there is the handwriting "Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin." for we shall gain the world and lose our souls.

## 2. RACIALISM.

2. The second danger that I wish to deal with is that of racialism. By this I mean the feeling of hatred and contempt for other people for no other reason than that they belong to another tribe. Unfortunately we are being led in this despicable course by certain white men of standing in this land—doctors, clergymen and generals who are strong and influential racialists, so strong that they are contributing not a little to the general economic and political unsettlement of the Union. They have their prototypes amongst us too, who are so strong in it that one would think they made a living out of it. So far as we are concerned

racialism long ago was in certain senses a profitable thing, for our powerful chiefs used to favour men of their own clan at their courts, frequently presenting them with cattle and land in recognition for their obeisance ("ukubusa"). Conditions have changed since and racialism is now antiquated, mischievous and detrimental:—antiquated because our tribal communistic life is practically gone, having been supplanted by the magisterial system; mischievous because it breeds jealousy and odium; detrimental because it renders us mutually destructive in many a good thing we attempt. And this is just where the rise of evil lies in these celebrations; these are liable to attach undue importance to harmless tribal differences in people of our stage of development. Therefore I exhort you to eliminate this motive of racial antipathy from your proceedings and let your whole attitude to people of other tribes and colours be one of generosity and love; or else we shall be heading for certain disaster.

## 3. IGNORANCE.

3. I next take the danger of ignorance. You all know the saying that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Many of our people imagine that ignorance means only illiteracy and that once you have learnt to read and write you are no more ignorant but "educated." A greater mistake was never made. This is the very misconception that underlies most of the arguments used by some white people when they write to the press about Native servants, nurses and farm labour. The only ignorant Native with them is the one in the red blanket, otherwise they call educated any Native "in evidence on Sunday afternoons, when he swaggers up the street in his squeaky boots, jostling passers-by, and carrying on a conversation with friends

n broken English" (Loram). That is not education. You may remain densely ignorant even when you can read and pass some examinations. I am not going to speak about illiteracy for multitudes of you have passed beyond that stage. But we all need commonsense to enable us to create opportunities for ourselves. For example in one town I visited I met a black man who was a successful shoemaker. I asked him how he began life. He told me that at first he worked a long while for a European cobbler who paid him one pound a week, whereas when he counted up the shoes he actually repaired these were up to the value of four pounds and more. Disgusted with this state of things he left that shop, borrowed money from his uncle, opened his own business place, paid back the money within the very first week and was now earning five or six pounds a week for himself. This is the kind of knowledge you must develop: the knowledge of knowing what you can do with your strength and physical stamina with which the Creator has abundantly endowed the black people.

We must also resolve to be well-informed as to what is going on in this country and in the world. To remain in ignorance of the multifarious history-making events in the wide world and in this Union is to court disaster as well as to lose many blessings. As a proof of this let me say that the famous local Grey Hospital in which many of your lives have been saved, and which was bountifully granted to Native Africans by that memorable governor, Sir George Grey, was first cut in half for Europeans and a few weeks ago the Administrator decided to take it over in its entirety and convert it into a school for Europeans!!! Many of you do not know of this sinister dispossession adumbrated by our chief, Sir Frederic de Waal, at the instigation of your local authorities who often pride themselves on their sense of

justice towards their proteges, the Natives. Now as a result of your ignorance you have done nothing in the way of an organised protest. The Bechuana have a proverb that the child that does not cry dies on its mother's back. Why do you not cry out to your father the Government about this? Is it right? Is it British?

The papers also say that the Prime Minister is about to evolve local Advisory Councils for you or Bungas like that of the Transkei. Probably it will be a good thing. But how many of you know about it? What suggestions have you to make? Again the Administrator has foreshadowed a scheme of Free Education for us. Have you thanked him for it? Perhaps you do not know about that either. All these things fall upon you "like a bolt from a blue sky," and as a result of your ignorance you take no anticipative remedial measures. I recommend that you do less meat-eating in these celebrations and tackle these vital problems and thus save these people from impending ruin due to ignorance and lack of information.

My fourth point is the Petty Spirit or Narrowness. It is invariably associated with a smattering of education. It is sad to notice this spirit among our people in meetings connected with the church, or teachers, or location affairs. So-called leaders and many ministers are frequently to be found not taking the large and generous view of things to promote progress; but engaged in petty disputes with their sub-officers week after week, wasting valuable energy and eloquence in so doing. Hence schisms abound to-day in our churches, associations, political gatherings and in every sphere of life where black people are left to guide one another. Many spend much time in discussing and abusing the white man; in fact this has become the chief topic of our hot bloods around their firehearths of an evening.

Time is money, as the saying goes, and the day has come for us to use it more profitably than we have done heretofore, to do less negative criticism and more construction and to learn the white man's commercial methods that have given him his historical success. We should now look out for the good things of life and grasp them instead of inactively bemoaning our hapless lot in this land of our birth. Look at the celebrations in Grahamstown and the lofty educational aims and tangible objects aimed at by the descendants of those immigrants. In such celebrations as the Ntsikana and Abambo we should copy the deeds of those who are observing the Settlers' Centenary and emulate their practical objects. Watch the example of the Jews among us, how loyal they are to one another in everything they undertake. Learn from the achievements of the American Negroes whose labourers earn from fifteen to twenty shillings a day, for the same kind of unskilled work that you get two or three shillings a day for in this country. There is no difference between your physical strength and that of the Negroes, but they are organised while you are not, on account of your petty spirit. I pass on to the next point.

5. *The bad training of the young of our days.*—Most of us here were born in the hard old days when our parents strongly believed in the proverb "Spare the rod, spoil the child." Do you ever ask yourselves the pertinent questions: Why is it that there is so much insubordination and insolence in the young boys and girls of to-day as compared with our times? So much unreliability in the labour of our youth whether in town, in shops, in kitchens, in the farm, and in the training institutions? Can we entirely dispose of these questions in the easy way of blaming the white man?

Well, I put these questions straight to you because they were put to me last Christmas by white people of

serious purpose, in round-table conferences in Johannesburg and East London, and I had to explain it all on the spur of the moment.

It is agreed, wherever I ask the question, that the boys and girls of the present generation are far less amenable to discipline than those of ten years ago, and so on back to the date of our first contact with white men. Natives used to rely upon their tribal laws for maintaining discipline. The white man has compelled us to abandon our tribal system, and is now himself surprised at finding urban location boys, kitchen girls and farm labourers more difficult to manage. Unfortunately this is true for Native parents and Native employers too. Some parents have actually confessed to me that they are glad to get rid of their boys and despatch them to the training school or town as they are so unruly and such "hopeless cases" at home! These produce what is called the "spoilt Native" because they prove to be indolent and pig-headed in labour centres. One Native woman explained it by saying that the modern Native women greatly object to seeing their husbands whip the children; and so they fly at their husband's throats whenever he attempts to castigate his boy for misconduct, the result of this parental wrangle producing in the boy contempt for elders, disrespect for authority and impudence towards employers. This question is a serious one for the whole of this country and such celebrations as these ought to ponder over these difficulties, using as a basis of discussion a book like "Umzi Ontsundu" (the Native People) by Brownlee Ross, who lucidly examines the effects of the process of Native detribalisation.

6. *Educational Needs.*—As the report of the Native Education Commission is not yet published one cannot tell how far our needs have been met, nevertheless, I wish to draw your attention to the fact that our present