

Notes of meeting held at Schoonoord,
Lydenburg District, on the 24th August, 1906.

Present :-

Sir Godfrey Lagden, Commissioner for Native
Affairs.

Colonel F. H. Danant, Resident Magistrate,
Lydenburg.

C. L. Harries, Sub Native Commissioner,
Schoonoord.

T. C. Isted, Sub Native Commissioner,
Pekwani.

J. H. Nicholson, Clerk to C. N. A.

B. P. Dodd, Clerk to S.N.C. Schoonoord

W. D. Wheelwright, Collector of Crown Rents.

H. M. Webb, Dist. Vet. Surgeon, Lydenburg.

A List of Chiefs present is attached.

*About four or five thousand natives
were present.*

Sir Godfrey Lagden said :-

Chiefs, Headmen, and people, I greet you. I
am very glad to see so good a meeting. Three years
ago I came to this place to meet you all, and I see
before me this morning many faces which I saw three
years ago. I am very sorry that since that time I
have not been able to visit you. Many things have
prevented me. First of all I have been detained a
great deal by the big Councils of the nation, and
then for the greater part of two years I was travel-
ling round South Africa as head of the Commission
which was investigating matters relating to natives
in

in South Africa. It was a large Commission appointed by the High Commissioner with the approval of His Majesty's Government. The object of that Commission was to ascertain the true state of Native affairs throughout South Africa. We went to all the Colonies in South Africa and to all the Native ~~Land~~ Territories, Cape Colony, Natal, Orange River Colony, Rhodesia, Basutoland, Zululand, Bechuanaland, and we had before us all the leading white people and most of the leading natives. The great purpose was to learn as much as we could about the natives, the condition they were in, and what their wants were. Our report and all the evidence we took is now printed and laid before the world, so that it is open to all to get the volumes and to read them. I hope they will understand what a large job that was.

Last year when I hoped to have come round I went to England because I was tired. However, I am here this morning to see ^{you} ~~me~~. I have been through this District of Lydenburg, and this is the 5th place which I have held. I have heard from Colonel Darnant what has been going on in the District.

There have been no great changes in the laws. ~~What~~ You know the laws under which you live, and know the laws made by the late Government. These laws have not been changed in any serious manner. Natives are like children and do not like changes. You get used to laws and you get used to officers, and you do not like to change them. What I mean is that you like your own laws and your own officers just as you like a cow/or a horse. So that I have

no great changes to tell you. You may think there have been changes, but what you may have seen is perhaps that what laws we have are carried out thoroughly. The British Government is one that says if we have laws let us carry those laws out, and that is perhaps the difference between this Government and the late Government.

Now there are one or two changes which I will explain to ^{you.} ~~them.~~ I have from time to time in travelling through the country received representations from many of the natives that the Pass Law presses rather hardly upon them in one respect, and that respect was that where natives lived on farms and they did not require to go to the Office to get an official pass, they could get a small letter or permit which would enable them to go for three days. That was to visit in their own Districts. Well, many of the natives said to me: we find that time a little short, the three days is gone before we can finish our little business: and they appealed to me to lengthen that period. Well, we considered the matter, and we altered the law, that is to say, the period of three days has been extended to ten ~~days, so that a~~ ~~native~~ can now get a small pass from his employer or the farmer or owner of the farm on which he lives for ten days. You must not think that you are not obliged to get an official pass if you leave your District. This little alteration has been made in your favour, and, wherever the Government finds that anything pinches you, they are always ready to listen to you.

Now I come on to another law, and that is the Tax Law. Now upon this subject I have also been

been spoken to on all sides of the country, and some of ~~you~~ present here will remember speaking to me on the subject at Pretoria when you came to see the Duke of Connaught.

Now I should like first of all to remind you what the Tax Law of the late Government was. According to the law which was made in 1895 every man was liable to pay a tax first of all of 10/-, that is to say a Hut Tax, and then for each wife after the first wife he had to pay a further 10/-, so that if a man had four wives he paid 10/- for his first wife and then 10/- for each of his other three,; in that way a man with four wives would pay a hut tax of £2. Then according to the law each man was liable to a Poll-tax of £2, and also a Road-tax of 2/6. So that a man with one wife was liable to a total tax of £2. 12. 6.

When the present Government took over the country they altered the law, and they said, we will put all this tax together and the tax will be £2. for each man and £2 for each wife beyond the first wife. Now we have been considering these matters during the last five years, and we have been listening to what the people said and what they felt, and we have altered the law, and in this way.

First of all I will take the matter of the wives. What we found was that years ago, when cattle were very plentiful, when land was easy to be had, and living was easier, that men took many wives, and we found also that men with many wives found it sometimes very hard to pay £2 for each wife. There are some of course who are wealthy, who have plenty

plenty of cattle and land and crops, who can afford to pay, but there are some who have found great difficulty in doing so, and when we have satisfied ourselves that men in such positions were unable to pay £2 for each of their wives we have exempted them. Now we have changed the law, and in this way. Every man will continue to pay his tax of £2 for himself and his first wife. But if a man has many wives, instead of paying £2 for each of these wives the law now provides that he shall pay £2 for the second or any more wives. So that if a man has two wives he pays £2 extra, and if he has four wives he still pays £2 extra, making a total of £4. He no longer pays £2 for each wife. In this way we are relieving those who are feeling very pinched in the matter.

I do not say that in doing this we wish to encourage polygamy. Although we do not prevent polygamy by law we still hope that it will disappear, because it is one of the first footsteps in civilisation that you should give up polygamy. There are many natives in this country who are becoming civilised, who are becoming Christians, who are voluntarily giving up these practices. Every year men are doing so. As time goes on no doubt polygamy will die out as a custom. But it is not a custom which the Government is interfering with at present. The Government, as ^{you} ~~we~~ know, has been very tolerant and generous in allowing the use and practice of ^{your} ~~their~~ old customs and habits so long as they were not barbarous, and Government will continue to be tolerant towards you and not disturb your way of living so long as that way is not repugnant

repugnant to civilised thought and to civilised law. So that you must feel that the Government looks upon you with a friendly and a good eye is not wishing to hurry you. Yet the Government at the same time wishes to see you advance and improve, and I am glad to say that in many parts of the country signs of progress are to be seen. There are some who have advanced rapidly, but I cannot say that I think that is a very sound thing. I have now been a great years associated with natives, and I have almost invariably found that when you have advanced too rapidly you have not advanced well. Whilst sympathetic towards such persons, I am sorry for them. They remind me somewhat of a crop that grows under the influence of very heavy rain and a bright sun, and you will know what I mean. They grow too rapidly and then when you come to reap them you find they are all sticks. They have grown too fast and there is no fruit. That is why the Government and all people interested in the native races hesitate to push you on too fast, or to give you chances ^{and} facilities ^{rapid} for growth which may in the end do you more harm than good.

I have been talking about this in connection with the plurality of wives, polygamy. I have not done with the tax yet. We have made another change in the tax law. Again we found that many natives in this Colony were pinched, being those who lived and worked on farms. I do not mean those who live on farms as farmers, who are squatting there and live there like owners, but I mean those who are at work, regular work. What we found about them was that if such men worked continuously and well they

they could not get away to earn high wages. Many of the natives living on farms get wages but these wages are small and are paid to them in the form of land for ploughing purposes. Well, these natives have been to me to say they find it a little hard to pay £2 because their wages are too small. We have heard their prayers: we have responded. And this law which I tell you about has been altered in this respect, that such natives who are working, who are in regular employ, will now pay £1 instead of £2. In this way we are relieving a great number of men in this country who are working on farms, and we feel that it is a great concession to these natives. As for natives who are living on locations they will still pay £2. If any man says it is too high I say 'nonsense'! The Government preserves your locations, the white people are not allowed to come and turn you out, you are not deprived of your gardens, you can go out and work and earn high wages, the Government gives you officers to look after you, and magistrates, and makes your roads and gives you post and telegraph and railways, and there are doctors all over the country you can go to, and there are schools which I will talk about bye-and-bye. I say your tax is a little one.

Now I have told you we have helped in the matter of the taxes upon wives, and we have helped you in the taxes upon natives living on farms. We have also helped those who are living in locations in towns. It will not affect you people probably, but I will tell you how it is changed. Those men who are living in town locations are to be treated the same as those working on farms and they are to be relieved and to pay £1 instead of £2. We found that

that

that they were paying for rents and for sanitary service in the locations and that they were pinched also. They *also* pay a good deal in *these locations* ~~this Colony~~ *interest* in the way of taxation.

There is another law which has been slightly altered during the year, but I do not think it may affect many who are before us today. It referred to those who have become Christians. Under the law of the late Government if natives wished to be married according to Christian custom they had to pay of £3. Well no doubt that was heavy. We have recognised that, and the law has been altered so that the fee shall no longer be £3 but 5/-. That is the same fee that is paid by the white people.

Now I have referred to changes in laws. I have now to refer to another change which may appear to ~~you~~ *you* to be a great change, but it is a change that you will scarcely notice. I refer to the change in Government. You are all familiar with the fact that a few years ago the two white races were at war. It was an unhappy war, but it is ended and there is peace between the two white races and they are living and working well together. The first result of that war was that the British Government established itself here in the place of the late Government. British officers were appointed and a Governor was sent by the King, and the great Council of the nation was one appointed by the King. But when the King did this he said 'bye-and-bye when all is quiet I shall give this Colony, the Colony of the Transvaal, a Parliament.' For the last five years things have been working quietly and the time has arrived when the King is to honour his word, and shortly there is to be elected a Parliament to represent the people of this Colony. That is like it used to be under the late Government, when they had their Volkeraad. But in this case the Governor, who is sent by the King, will remain as Governor. The officers appointed

by the King as officers in this Colony will remain as now. The laws in this Colony now prevailing will continue to prevail, and as I said when beginning this subject there will be a change of Government without anybody noticing it. I repeat there will be no change of officers and no change of laws. You will continue to see Colonel Dament as Magistrate and as my representative, as Native Commissioner for the Districts, you will still continue to see Mr. Harries or some officer like him here. You will still continue to see the police selected from amongst yourselves, and above all, all you people, as the white people, will remain the subjects of the King. Under the present law the Governor of this Colony, Lord Selborne, is the Supreme Chief of the natives. He takes the place of the paramount chief in all native territories. He has power to remove people, to punish them. That power he exercises through the officers who are responsible for native affairs. He knows all about the natives: he hears about you. When I go back I shall tell him what you have said. If any laws affecting natives are ^{proposed} ~~made~~ the Governor will be the first to be informed, so that his consent may be given before they are made, and then beyond that the King himself reserves the power to give his assent. I repeat that although a Parliament is to be granted to this country it does not mean a change of laws or a change of officers. Your officers will remain with you and will continue to hold small councils with you as they have done in the past. These councils are good. It is well that the District Officers should meet the people and hear what you have got to say, so that they may write and inform the Government, so that they ^{also} may hear ~~also~~ if there are any grievances and remedy them.

Perhaps in the future we may go a step further and

have

have a large council, a general council, which shall be a council not of one District but of all the Districts of the Transvaal. I am not making such a council today. I am telling you that I hope that such a council ~~will~~ ^{will} come to pass, a council which shall be composed of the chiefs and leading headmen and natives in this Colony, not a council which can make laws, but a council which can be allowed to speak and utter its thoughts, to lay its thoughts before the Government, and if they are pinched and pressed about something to ask the Government to lay their matters before the Parliament of the country. This is a nice word to leave with you. It is a nice thing for you to hope for, and it is a nice thing for you to work for, and it is a thing I believe you will get if you justify it by your good behaviour, and in that way you will be able to feel that your ideas and thoughts will be laid before Government.

I may say that the Government is thinking very kindly of ~~you~~ ^{you}, and when I say kindly I do not mean so kindly as to spoil ~~you~~ ^{you} because you know that if you are too kind to your children these children become spoiled, and if the child is not corrected at the proper time it becomes a scourge. So you may depend upon it that if you misbehave yourselves you will be whipped. When I say whipped it is a word you understand, I mean that you will be punished. That is what will be good for you because a father who does not punish his children is not a good father.

I say the Government desires that you should be happy and contented, that you should improve and prosper, and the only way you can improve is to do as the white people do, that is to be diligent in labour. Wherever I go I am met with the same expression that the natives are lazy and will not work. Well I know in some cases it

is true. I know in other cases it is not quite true, because a great many of you do go out to work at the mines and other places; but there can never be any true progression until each man gets up in the morning resolved to do a day's work. A man who is content to sit down or lie down all day is a mere animal. By this diligence which I am preaching to you you can do a great deal for your own development and for the development of the country, and the Government expects you to do something for the development of the country you live in. Man

You may say to me, what does Government do to help us. Well I will tell you. The first thing is that the Government has freed you from the tyranny in which all the old men were brought up, a tyranny which enabled you to carry on your tribal animosities and to kill and rob each other. You are not allowed to carry about guns any more to shoot each other, or to go about the country armed with assegais. Your tribal wars have come to an end. You are protected not only against your enemies but against yourselves, and you are living under laws which admit of your progress. As I said before, you are now all the King's subjects, and if anybody threatens you they threaten the King. You know quite well if you are harmed you can fly to your officer and to the Magistrate and get redress. I say you know this quite well, and that is doing a great deal for you. If anybody threatens even the poorest man among you, you know he can have protection. Sometimes I hear that a tribe or a small kraal is afraid of another. I say that if one kraal rises against another and hurts it, the kraal that does that will suffer. When I say kraal, I mean a chief or tribe. In this colony no man need fear. If you obey the laws and obey your officers you will be secure. Now I said another thing was that the Government did not interfere with

with

your
with ~~your~~ old habits and customs which were not repugnant, and I say that is helping *you* very much, because if we force you on at an unnatural rate we should be doing you harm, we should be killing you, but we are doing this to preserve you.

Then Government assists you in the matter of education, I do not say that we force education upon you. I am sure that it would be a bad thing if we did so. Many of you are not fit for it, many of you are not in the frame of mind to like it. That will all come in time. Meanwhile there are some in this country who appreciate the value of education and who are enjoying it. It is true that under the late Government there were missions and mission schools all over the country. By these *you* were generally taught civilisation and other things, and *you* had schools to which *your* little children could go and learn their A,B,C. When I say A.B.C. I mean the mere elements of education, such elementary education as is useful to you in the way in which you are situated in life. To give you an education beyond your real wants is, as I said before, to give you what is harmful to you. There are some who are capable of being educated to higher standards. To them opportunities are open. But they are few, and they do not represent the mass. Under the present Government assistance has been given to these schools, and at the present time close on 200 schools with 10,000 scholars are receiving Government help. By giving this help Government is able to regulate your schools, and to satisfy itself that the education given is appropriate to your requirements. And if amongst you people in this District there are those who have no mission schools, and there are those who wish that their children should receive the elements ^{of education} and who have a sufficient number of children and are
further

further prepared to assist themselves by putting up schools and so on, they should approach their officer and lay their petitions before him, and the Government will meet them. But clearly understand me, I do not say that Government is going to help where there are mission schools already. We are not going to encourage opposition in this matter. I say that in this matter Government is doing much for you because it is being careful to see that you are not being pushed on too fast.

But in all these matters in which the kind eye of Government is looking upon you, I want to let you understand that the kindness of Government is going to be measured by the good behaviour of the people. As a rule, I am given to understand by your officers here, Colonel Dumas and Mr. Harries, you have behaved well, obeyed the law, and listened to orders. I say as a rule because there are some exceptions to which I shall refer later. I am glad to hear this. I hear that you have paid your taxes fairly well, though there remain some who are absent who are still to be brought up. I hear that those who live on open farms have paid their rents well except those who are absent. I hear that those who were called upon to pay the fence money to meet the expense of putting up this nice fence round your location are paying up their money.

This is very good news to receive when I come here, but I know of course there has been a little unrest during the last few months. There has been some serious unrest in another Colony which I will tell you about directly, and the reflection of that has been felt here. You have, I am glad to say, been wiser than the people in another Colony. I am referring of course to Natal and Zululand. I must say a few words to you about that. You probably knew all about it, but you may have gained

false

false impressions or heard false news. The story of it is this. There were a certain number of people in Natal and Zululand who were little people and they thought themselves big and they blew themselves out, and they were unwise enough and stupid enough, they were mad enough, to take up arms against the Government. The result has been that they were destroyed. All those who went out into the field were driven away like buck and all the leaders have been either killed or captured. I think you know this. This has been the madness of stupid people and the blindness of ignorance. I am sorry to say that in punishing these people they have suffered heavily and many hundreds of them have been killed. There is one regret that is in my mind from this, and that is that during the course of this rebellion in Natal messengers came from that part of the world on a mischievous errand. We knew about these messengers. We informed our officers in every part of the country. The well disposed natives in all parts of the country came forward and informed us about it, and probably we know the names and the purport and the mission of every man who came to the Transvaal, and we know further that there were some people in the Transvaal, some chiefs, who entertained these messengers. I have caused these chiefs to be informed that we do know. I have given them the opportunity of denying that they did so. In this denying I know they were lying. I know it today. But what we felt was that the people of this colony were sensible enough to have nothing to do with the trouble of another colony. The people of this colony have justified my confidence. They have justified my confidence by listening to the officers put over them, and I am thankful to say that not one wrong act has been committed in the Transvaal, so that our hands are clean.

But

But one thing is quite certain. Had any persons in this Colony been so stupid as to raise their hands against the Government they would have been scattered as those unfortunate men in Natal and Zululand have been scattered.

Now I wish to say to you that perhaps this is the last time I shall address you because under the change of Government another may take my place, but I say to you, remember my words. Whatever you think, raise not your hands against Government. Let this go into your heads through both ears. Remember that what will make you prosper will be that you should be law-abiding.

I now pass on to one or two matters affecting this part of the district. I refer first to this new cattle disease, which has struck the cattle equally of the white people and the natives. What I understand is that this disease was first brought to this location here by the illegal movement of cattle from Sekororo, Zoutpansberg District, and also from the Middelburg District. I am told that there are two infected herds in the enclosure, one at Marissae and the other at the Shelter. Both these areas are enclosed, and the Government have decided to brand the infected cattle, so that any of these branded cattle getting out of the enclosure can be immediately slaughtered. In this way the cattle of the natives who live in clean areas can be protected and the spread of the disease checked. This is a thing you will understand quite well. You all know that when one kraal has got lung sickness the other kraals do not want the cattle to come to them. They say to their friends, keep your cattle back. That is the policy of the Government in regard

-----to these ~~native~~ ^{infected} cattle. In connection with this question of the cattle disease I referred to the fence which has been put up for you and extends for 250 miles. It is your duty to do everything in your power to keep up and maintain this fence, and to see that no cattle go in or go out. There are guards stationed at all the gates. I tell you this is a matter ~~as~~ which you have to be watchful and careful and strong about. I was saying how sorry I was that this cattle disease had struck ~~them~~ ^{you}. In addition to putting up a fence and the putting out of police the Government have been obliged to prohibit the movement of cattle without a permit. Now I know that is hard. When men want to marry the lobebe cattle have to be delivered. When men want to pay their debts they like to be able to send their cattle backwards and forwards. But in order to fight this disease effectively the Government is obliged to prohibit the movement unless it is done under proper permission. I have spoken to the officers who are around me about this and they have told me that wherever the area is clean there is no difficulty in getting a permit. You can apply to your officers and those officers will always do what they can to meet you. I cannot say they will always give you permits, because on some occasions it will happen that cattle are in an infected area and cannot be moved. When I say within infected areas I mean so close to them as to make it dangerous.

Now I come to another matter. In 1902 it was decided by the Government that all the arms and ammunition should be called in. While I must say that as a rule throughout the whole of the country this order was cheerfully and promptly obeyed, it is true that in some cases we found afterwards that some men had wilfully secreted these

things

things and they were punished. The law provides a heavy punishment for not obeying. Lately it has come to the notice of the Government that some discoveries have been made of arms and ammunition which have been secreted, and these matters were brought to my notice through Colonel Damant and Mr. Harries. Colonel Damant informed me that, using his own discretion and believing he was doing right, he gave a pledge to certain people who gave up guns that if they brought in more they would not be punished. Colonel Damant has explained the matter to me today, and I am satisfied that he did right in giving this pledge and I concur with what he has done. I say I confirm it, and I understand that he gave a period of six weeks in which those who had any more secreted had to give them up, after which, if any were found, the law would be put in motion and those with whom they were found would be punished severely. Well, that period which he gave you is ending just now, and what I think is that as I have called the people together during these few days it may prevent you from doing what he advised you to do, and thus you would be punished through no fault of your own. Therefore I have suggested to Colonel Damant that I should now announce that a further month is given, and therefore I say that a month is given, and that by the end of September let everything be brought in which by the law is ordered to be brought in.

I am sorry as I ride along to see the destruction by the locusts. They are a great scourge and Government has determined to fight them. Government have taken off their coats and rolled up their sleeves to do this. Officers have been appointed and will go round the country to try and kill the young locusts. It is no use your saying that you cannot do anything because there

are so many. What is being done is to discover and to give information as to where the locusts have laid their eggs, and then when the young have come out to make a combined attack upon them before they can fly. I say to you people, be strong in this matter. Give your information to the Government. Ask the Government to help you in attacking these enemies and when the Government sends you its help let your arms be lusty.

I received some time ago a communication from the location here in the matter of a request for a medical officer in consequence of the fever being so bad amongst you. I know that you require medicine: fever is no new thing, and I want to tell you what we are doing. At the present time there is a conference just going on between medical men representing the Governments of the whole of South Africa. They are considering matters of this character as to the public health of all the people, white and black, and one of the things which will engage their attention is the disease from which so many natives suffer, that is syphilis. Well, I do hope that ^{the} outcome of this conference will be that measures will be taken in this Colony to establish dispensaries in different parts to which the natives can go for treatment, and I believe you will see one in this direction before long. The Government is not deaf to your prayers in this respect, it is only considering how it can best carry out these things.

I ought now to warn you, as I have done on previous occasions, of the law which prohibits the destruction of game in the protected season and also prohibits trapping. As I said when I came here before this country seems now bereft of game when it used to be full. I do not say that when the duikers get into your gardens that you cannot kill them or the wild pigs. I say they must be
destroyed

destroyed because the crops are our life. But that is quite a different thing to setting traps in other places. So I want to tell you what the law says in this matter.

Now I have said all I wish to say. I shall have a few words after you have spoken. I shall give you a short time to just break up and talk together, and then I will call you together again. When you come together I am ready to listen to you and to hear what is in your hearts. I will only say that I think that it is better as far as possible for representative men to speak in your name so that the same subject is not spoken over and over and over again. Though saying that, I do not wish to stop any man from speaking what is in his mind.

The meeting then broke up for a short time.

On resumption the natives were invited to speak.

Marisane. We have not quite followed what was said about the tax to be paid by people living on Government locations in regard to those who have more than one wife. C.N.A. What I have said about the tax payable on extra wives applies to the whole country. Throughout the whole country if a man has one wife he pays £2, and if he has two wives or any number more he pays £2 extra.

Sekukuni. I greet you. We are thankful that you have safely arrived here to come and see us, and we see that what we said to you in Pretoria on this matter you have listened to. May God be with you.

Assof Warotanö. I thank you for the words you have said to the people. Thank you for the remission of the tax which the Government has done. I ask whether this reduction in tax begins with this present year, or whether this will take place in some years to come. Those
of us

of us who have many wives may be coming here tomorrow morning to pay only £4, saying that that is the amount which we have been told we have to pay. We shall be glad to hear from you whether the reduction takes place this year or at any other time. Again I say that these people do not understand how this reduction will be effected. It will appear to them that the £4 refers to every additional wife, that is that the sum of £4 is to be paid for every additional wife. I tell the people now that a man who has as many wives as he likes only pays £4. I thank you for the reduction.

Matsibi. We thank you for having listened to our petitions. We thank you heartily.

Maserumu. I thank you for having listened to our cries. We now feel that we have a father. We hope you will always listen to our cries so that we shall know that we have a father. When we leave this place we shall go mentioning the good we have heard, also mentioning what we think is not good. When we get home we shall tell our children what we have heard.

Tshilo. What is to be done where our children are supposed to work for the farmer without pay and yet we (the parents) have to pay rent?

Mutespani. We thank you for having come to see us. Some of us were sitting at a distance and could not catch what was said. We thought it was said that a man had to pay £1 for himself and £1 for his wife. We thought it was said that for every additional wife the sum of £1 was to be paid. The first time we heard of taxation was when the white men took over the country. During the days when old Sekukuni was here we had to pay no taxes at all. The first tax imposed by the British was 10/-. When the
British

British took over the country again after the late war we thought that the old scale of taxation would be taken up, and we are now pleased that some attempt has been made to reduce the taxation.

Motsipe. We thank you very much that you have seen our poverty. I think you have seen yourself that the country is poor and that all that we have we receive from the white people.

Sinaudi Masinarule. I have got three wives, and my Chief here, Sekukuni, knows that, and he knows that I pay £6 in taxes. The question is since I have been paying £6 a year how much have I to pay today. We natives are very ignorant, we are a fighting people, we like to fight. We thank you and the British Government for preserving us from one another. We expect that whenever you see us doing anything wrong you will not hurry on to punish us, but will first warn us because we are slow of understanding. Do not expect that once you have given an order it will be understood.

Khobishe. I thank you for having come to see us. What I wish to say is that we understand our Chiefs, but in many cases we do not understand what is said by white people. If we are ruled by our chiefs we will be able to understand what is said to us. We are very pleased that you have held a pitso here to hear our troubles.

Sedibe. I thank ~~thank~~ you for having come to see us; also for the reduction in taxation. I know that the tax X has been reduced for those who have many wives, but I ask whether there has been any reduction of taxation for bachelors.

Mapogo. We are glad that you have called us together here and that we have come to see you. The most important thing

thing that you have said is of the reduction which has been made in taxation. The old men feel the tax very much, and we are glad you have heard their prayers. You should look after these people and carry them on your shoulders.

Ngobe. We are glad that a reduction has been made in taxation, and we thank you for that. We natives find the tax of £2 very heavy. When you had a pitso here we complained that the taxes were heavy and today we are glad to hear that a reduction has been made. Some of us have twenty wives, and today we thank you for this reduction.

Mutodi (representing Masasurule). We are glad that the Government has come and has seen its child Sekukuni. Sekukuni, who is our Chief, stated what was our complaint. ~~was~~. The complaint was that the tax was heavy. I thank you for the promise that the Government will assist in the opening of schools for children.

Nkine . We are glad that you have come to this part of the country, and that this time you have not called us to Pretoria. We are also glad that we have come to listen to what you have to say and we hope that God will keep you on the way home. We are children and you, being our father, should know that we are weak, and when we do anything that is wrong should put us right, and when we are poor we should receive something from your hands. We thank you for the words you have spoken to us.

Phadi. We thank you for having come to us and having told us that the weight which was heavy on us has been reduced. We are glad to hear that when we want to drive cattle we can come to this office and apply for a permit. Some people have been telling us that they have cattle to label our daughters with, and that their reason for not

not bringing them is that they cannot get permits to drive them.

Samuel Marisane. We are glad that you have come to see us. We are glad that you have said some good things before us, and that having seen how poor we are you have reduced what was a great weight on rich and poor alike. We are glad that you have made some reference to education, because it is by education that we will advance and in that way be able to understand what is said by the Government. It will be difficult for us men without education, but we hope our children will be able to get it. We have heard all that you have said, and I cannot refer to it all, but I wish to refer to what you have said in regard to locusts when the Government will help us in destroying them. I wish to know whether you mean that we will be called out to help destroy locusts or whether the Government will bring in some other outside help, in which case we are afraid we will be called upon to pay the expense.

Manok. We are glad for what we have heard, and although we thank you some of the things we do not quite understand. We know that you have lived many years among natives and you know that natives are very slow to understand, and when we ask questions from you we hope that you will not consider that we are troubling you, but it is because we do not understand. In connection with the poll tax we understand that a man who has four wives pays £4. My question is should one of those wives die will that tax remain stationary or will it be reduced? If a man is married does he pay £1 for himself and £1 for his wife? Has a single man still to pay £2?, as we did not hear what has to be paid by unmarried men. These questions we are putting to you are intended so that we should understand everything clearly before we leave here.

We also understand that men living on farms and those living on municipal locations are expected to pay £1. I ask whether a man who is living on either of these two places has to pay £1 only still. I wish to state to you that we are thankful that this reduction has been made in taxation, especially in regard to women. If this was a beast we should say it was a fat beast.

Tabuge. We thank you for the words you have said to us. We have nothing to complain about. We are glad that you have listened to our cries and that you have reduced our taxation. I would like also to know whether anything has been done in regard to unmarried men.

Khobisi. I would like to know why it is that we have to pay £2 taxes for each of our wives when the officials encourage them to come to the office and make complaints against us.

Michael Dinkwazi. We thank you for what you have said. We are glad that a reduction has been made in taxes, and when we go home and inform our wives they will also be glad. What you have said to us today is what we have often heard from Colonel Damsant and Mr. Harries about the Government wanting all the guns and ammunition collected. When we heard this from our officers we informed men under us and told them that the Government wanted the guns surrendered, and we are glad today that you have also informed us that you will extend the time which we were allowed for another month. I wish to ask from you whether a native chief will be held responsible if one of his men without his knowledge has hidden a gun.

Sir Godfrey Lagden said :-

I invited you to speak and I have listened, and I am now speaking believing you have done. Now before
taking

taking leave of you I will answer your questions. I am very glad to hear all the speakers express their thanks for the changes we have made in the matter of taxation. What we have done we have done because we felt convinced it ought to be done. The policy and the desire of the Government is to be fair and just in all its dealings with the natives and to put right anything that is wrong. If there is anything wrong, although it may take a little time it will be put right, and so long as you continue to be respectful in your behaviour and obedient to the law your cries and your petitions will always be listened to. The Government will, as one of the speakers said, carry you on its shoulders.

Now whilst thanking for the alterations and reductions we have made, of course some of the speakers complained about those taxes which remain. Well that is only natural. We all object to taxes. Nobody likes to pay money out, but we have all got to do it. Some people pay in one form and some in another. The white people pay very heavy taxes, not in the same way that the natives do, but they pay upon the goods which come into this country which they consume. You consume very little goods upon which taxes are paid, so you are taxed in the way we tax you; but as for your cries against all taxation, well I understand that. But rest assured that these taxes are necessary, and pay them cheerfully. I believe that all the natives in this colony, and in other colonies of South Africa, like to pay their taxes, because they have a receipt in their possession which shows they are one of the King's subjects, and in saying this I answer three questions that were addressed to me about bachelors. They were by Sodibe, Tabuge, and another. They said what about bachelors. Well of course the bachelors have to pay if they are men. If a man is grown up and strong and

is able to earn a man's wages he ought to be proud of paying. It is a sign of manhood, it is a sign that he is a subject of the King, it is a sign that he is a man and can have a man's rights. Therefore although he has not got a wife let him be proud of his manhood and proud of his tax.

Now I come next to Johannes Manok. He said, have patience with our questions because we want to understand. Well that is quite right. I have always had patience. You can ask questions if you are in doubt; do not treasure up anything in your minds for the want of asking. It is well that Manok made that remark, in order to give me an opportunity of saying that we are not tired of listening to questions. Johannes said if a man had four wives according to the new law he would pay £4, and he asked if that was right. I say, Yes, and before the law was altered he would pay £8. Well then if one wife dies we cannot make a reduction, it is his bad luck. I can sympathise with him, but I cannot alter what the law says he must do. Then he asks whether those on farms being in regular work who pay £1 will still pay that £1 if they have ten wives. Well I want to make that clear. The man on the farm who is in regular employ pays £1 for himself, and that covers his first wife. Then if he has ten wives he pays £2, which is for those ten wives. He does not pay £2 each as before. At the same time I answer the question of Sinaudi. He says he has three wives and has to pay £6, and he wants to know what he has to pay now. I say in future he will pay £4. He will be reduced by £2.

Now Assof Marotcane asked when the law was coming into operation. The law comes into operation this next year, 1907. Every man has paid I presume, or ought to have paid, his tax for 1906, so that is finished, and
then

when the tax is called for next year that is when the change will take place.

Tebitlo spoke of the men on the farms who pay rent to the farmer, and he asked whether that man's children should be called upon to work without pay. Now he has given me a difficult question to answer, because it is a matter in which Government cannot make a law, that is to say, people are differently situated on these farms, and in some cases a man goes to live on a farm under an agreement that he shall work and get in exchange for his labour land and other privileges. In other cases they have an agreement that they shall get so much money as wages. Now I do not want to interfere with this form of agreement, because if we made a law it might suit some but it might not suit others, and then we should be binding people against their will. Therefore I say we must leave it to be a matter of agreement. I think this agreement ought always to be carefully entered into, and wherever the natives and their masters wish it these agreements can be witnessed by our officers.

Mutampani asked about the payment of tax in regard to the reduction on wives. I thought we had made it clear. If it is not clear I will repeat it. According to the new law every grown-up able-bodied man is called upon to pay £2, which amount covers his wife if he has one. If he has more than one wife then he pays £2 extra for these wives however many there may be. Not £2 for each additional wife, but £2 for all the extra wives, and for the farm servants there is a remission of £1, making it £1 for them.

Khobise spoke about your not understanding orders unless they came through your chiefs. I answer that we do work through your chiefs where there are chiefs. I believe that all through the country the orders of Government are conveyed through the responsible men of the country.

not agree with the women being encouraged to come with little trivial complaints to Government. None of my officers have instructions to interfere with the little family quarrels between a man and his wife, and if women come crying to them about anything I expect they will always be told to go home. As for me, I do not entertain these little things, and if Khobise has any complaints in this matter he had better come and see his officer here and tell him. Now I have answered your questions and am going to close.

On one occasion General Joubert, who was at one time occupying the position which I now occupy, when he came here, gave to two of the chiefs, Kgealane and Sekukuni, two little flags. These flags were an emblem of the late Government. The change of Government means a change of flag. I believe those flags have disappeared, and I have no objection to giving them other flags to take their place, and therefore I propose to present them. (Flag presented to Sekukuni). This is the flag of England. Take care of it, do not disgrace it, be proud of it, be loyal to the Government which gives it to you. (Flag presented to Marisane). I say the same words to you. Cherish that flag. At the same time I have two or three wax handkerchiefs with me as I only came in a small cart. (Rugs presented to following chiefs :- Pasosane, Maserumule, Ntuampi, Matsive, Maserumu, and Daniel Riba.) These little presents that I have given some of your leaders represent the kindly thoughts that I bring to you on behalf of the Government. Now I have only to say to you further that I am glad to have met you and to have heard you and I am leaving these last words with you.

Be obedient to the laws, respect your officers, and respect your masters with whom you live and work, maintain order in your kraals and in your tribes, be loyal

to the Government, never lift a hand against the Government or allow any of your people to lift a hand, preserve the peace which the Government has given you and then all will be well. The Government wishes to promote your welfare and your happiness. If you conduct yourselves well your happiness will be secured to you. I hope you will have good rains and good crops. I hope you will remember my words.

I ask for rain and I give you peace.

The meeting then terminated.

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