

MR. BARNET HARRY HARRIS. examined

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN: What is your occupation Mr. Harris?- I am a Dairyman and Chairman of the Association.

MR. LUCAS: We are told that in Cape Town that the native has ousted the coloured man in dairying work, is that so?- Yes, that is correct.

What are the reasons?- Because the milking has to be done in the early morning between 1-30 and 2 o'clock and the coloured people won't work at that hour; and they will not turn up on Sunday mornings. They will not work consistently.

I was working with coloured people as my assistants from 1903 to 1914 and it was absolute misery. They would work for you for perhaps three weeks or a month, but invariably on a Sunday morning there would be two or three boys short. They would come along at 8 or 9 o'clock and usually drunk. You could depend on some boys of course but not on the majority. We were very glad to go over to the native. We paid the coloured boys 30/- to £2 a month with keep and we were glad to get natives at £4 or £5 a month.

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN: With food and quarters?-- No, we provide quarters. They have to be up first thing in the morning. They start at 2 o'clock. The carts get away at 4 o'clock and they have finished at 7 o'clock. Coloured boys would not stick it long. The native sticks it 15 months at the outside and then he goes home for nine months or so, and when he comes back of course he knows his work. I have had boys for 15 years on and off.

(At this stage the Chairman returned and took the Chair)

MR. LUCAS: How did the dairymen come to substitute the natives for the coloured?-- You could not get the coloured.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Where did you get the natives from?- They

They came from the territories. If you have a staff of five or six there are others waiting for their jobs when they go away. A native will say that he wants to go away the following month but he has a boy who will take his place. I employ personally about twelve boys at Claremont but on the staff there are actually 24 or 25 because there is always half of them away.

MR. LUCAS: How did the change come about?-- Well, we could not get coloured. And the War made a big difference. After 1914 the coloured could get better employment and when the War came you could not get coloured assistance. There were better openings and the natives came in to fill the gaps. They started coming steadily before the War but more quickly during 1914 and 1915.

Take your own case, how did you first come to employ natives?-- In that way. I got one boy first and he proved to be very satisfactory. Then I got another and so on.

MAJOR ANDERSON: Did you get your first one down from the territories?-- No, he just came round casually.

MR. LUCAS: Was it long then before you changed to all natives?-- No.

Were you about the first to have natives?-- I think we were all about the same. The War made a big difference. Six months after the War started we simply could not get coloured.

I am told that one of the reasons why the native succeeded in ousting the coloured was because he was better at handling cattle?-- Yes, before 1914 there was a class of coloured who could work with cattle but they died off. They have been ousted by the native who is absolutely a cattle man, but for horses they are almost useless.

When you say useless do you mean the native or the coloured man?-- The native is useless with a horse.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: How do you manage with your milk carts; I sometimes see them driving wildly?— It does not take the native long. We have two boys on our carts and if one is going away there is another in charge; there is always one who knows the ropes.

MR. BOSTERT: Don't the dairymen use motor traction?— Yes, some do. My lorry costs me as much as four carts. I am close to my customers at Claremont, but at Tigerberg I have got a lorry with a white man driving. There are 16 acres there. I have put in milking machines at Claremont and if I had them at Tigerberg I could save eight natives. At Claremont I must have eight boys with the carts.

MR. LUCAS: You use them both for milking and for the carts?— I use them to attend to the machines; it is much more pleasant for them and they can start ^{milking} later in the morning.

Do they still work at 2 o'clock in the morning; yes, if things are made more pleasant the natives will not be inclined to go away so often. They become known to the customers and every time there is a change the new one has to go round with the other boy to learn.

Do you mean that they tired and go away because of the hours?— Yes.

And by the substitution of machinery a good deal of that would be avoided?— Yes, but I think the natives would go home in any case.

I understood you to say that they stayed longer?— Yes, I was talking to them last week and they said they liked the machinery better. It is a bit rough getting up at 1-30 every morning.

MAJOR ANDERSON: What is the day's work?— They milk at 1-30 and the carts get away at 4 o'clock. The boys get back

back at 7-50. They go on at 11 and finish at 3. They work in shifts. I do not expect a boy to get up and work throughout the day.

MR. LUCAS: Did you say that you could save eight natives if you had machines at Tigerberg?- Yes.

How would the cost compare with the machines on the one hand and the boys on the other?-- I think the machines would pay for themselves in 15 to 18 months. I would save about £400 to £500 a year.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: How many cows are you milking with a machine?- At Claremont from 80 to 90.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it satisfactory in all respects?- Yes, but I have only recently had it installed. I am milking five cows at a time. I have sent for another which will milk three. With the boys there is this difficulty; some are good milkers but not very satisfactory in their relations with the customers, on the other hand some may be bad milkers but get on very well otherwise and are not cheeky.

The machine does not suffer from that disadvantage?- No. I would like to mention something on the part of the native. The native goes home, he saves roughly £45 to £50 a year. This money he invests but then comes a time of drought and in three or four years his money is gone. He comes back to work and can hardly lift a spade, he is so weak. He has lost his money and has to start all over again. I got one of them to put his money on fixed deposit, telling him how he would get interest. He is delighted at the result. If he had put his money into stock it would all have gone. He realises that. But that is how they go on from year to year. After working 15 or 20 years they are no better off than when they started. Otherwise they should be able to retire after a number of years.

MR. LUCAS: Do you have difficulty in persuading these boys

boys? I only persuaded one, but I will try it on the others.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: What about his family?— He gets a lot of perquisites. A Native woman and two children can live out there on 15/- a month, and on his rounds the native gets a suit of clothes and so on. It is remarkable how cheaply they can live provided they have got quarters.

But under the system you are suggesting will not that estrange him from his tribal life?— It is better to do that than let him be ruined. They come back absolutely weak and broken.

Does the native who saves money sent it home?— Yes, if he has a wife and children, but not all the money.

THE CHAIRMAN: But you assume that he can save £45 to £50 a year, is not that an over-estimate?— It seems that they do.

On what wage?— £5-10-0 a month, and most of his food.

DR. ROBERTS: And does he get tips from the customers?— Yes, that is worth something.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Does not that mean that he is pinching your milk?— No, he is as honest as the day. I have only had one native since 1914 who has stolen from me.

MR. MOSTERT: Are these raw or educated natives?— They can nearly all read and write. They keep their own books about the customers.

THE CHAIRMAN: You estimate that he spends about £15 to £20 of his earnings in addition to what he gets, on himself?— Yes, I do not know the exact figures, but not to within a few shillings.

If you could get us that information it would be useful?— Yes, I will let you have it.

There is another grievance I should like to mention. When

a native goes to look for a job he has not got a permit and has to go to Langa for it, with the result that when he gets back he has lost his chance of the job. When a native comes to me I have to send him away to be registered and by the time he gets back it has cost either him or me 6/-. Why cannot he go to a police station at any time of the day and get his pass? The present position does seem wrong.

DR. ROBERTS: Supposing you were allowed to give him one yourself?— Well, we are only allowed one boy to six cows. They only allow you to have so many boys, it does not matter what the accommodation is. If you have more boys than you are allowed they will summons you.

What power has the Council to insist upon that?— We went before General Kemp and thrashed the matter out. They were going to oust us altogether. General Kemp asked: "What will you do if the natives are segregated?" and Mr. Jagger said there was time enough when it came to talk about that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it in the regulations of the City Council that there should be this limitation of the number of boys you may employ?— Yes. It is the same with the race-horse owners I believe that they have a concession too; a few years ago they were going to eliminate the natives altogether.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: It probably falls under the Act which requires that every native employed must be housed at Langa?— Yes.

They make an exception in your case and allow you one boy for every six cows?— Yes, we have to get permission unless he is a registered voter. I find that a number of natives have got on the register; as soon as he is a registered voter there is no restriction.

(Proceedings suspended until 2-30 p.m.)

(The Commission resumed at 2-30 p.m.)

REV. CHARLES NORTON JOSEPH SAVAGE, examined

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you engaged in missionary work?— Yes, St. John the Evangelist.

Among the natives here?— Yes in the Western Province and Cape Town. Before that I was in Glen Grey.

Will you give us your views on any points in our list of subjects?— There were three points in the list of subjects in regard to which, if you question me, I might be able to help. There is the question of the education of boys in urban areas, the question of native employment in the towns; ~~and~~ the general question of the racial difficulties between white and native, and also perhaps the question of the native life on coloured life in Cape Town. I don't know whether they are all in order.

Yes?— I have had experience in Queenstown and Cape Town and one feels in the towns that our system of native education whereby a boy normally goes up to Standard VI - there is no school in Cape Town where he can go beyond that - leaves him at the age he leaves school to go wrong. I have reckoned out in connection with my own boys in Cape Town, that about 90 per cent of them go wrong. Our own Society here in Cape Town endeavours to send a certain number of boys and girls who have passed Standard VI to Lovedale or St. Matthews, and so on.

DR. ROBERTS: Have you not got Zonnebleem here?— That is not for native, it is for coloured.

Altogether?— Yes. We find that these children whom we send away practically all turn out good. We have not got any wasters, but the ordinary boy who has passed Standard VI goes to the locations; he is too young to do the rough work that natives are generally employed to do, and he becomes a hooligan. At Langa there is a real problem in connection

with boys who have left school and for whom there is nothing to do.

With regard to higher education, they used to accept natives at Zonnebloem and until last year at Wesley College Salt River but I believe that the Education Department has received definite orders that natives have not to be received in these colleges.

DR. ROBERTS: Why is that?— I think because native education and coloured education go through two different departments of finance and it is not fair that native education should come out of the coloured pocket.

And the other way?— I do not know that. Here in Cape Town we are in the position that if we have a boy who has passed Standard VI and he has to go further in order to be trained as a carpenter or tailor, ^{or} to be a teacher, then he has to go to one of these far-away colleges. I think it is about six years ago that some of us ~~asked~~ through the Chief Inspector of Native Education approached the Government to ask whether in view of the fact that there were no native colleges in the Western Province, they would not give us some grant-in-aid in the way of railway fares, something that would enable us to put our boys in the same position as these others who leave school. That was favourable received by the Education Department but nothing was done.

The future of boys who leave school in the towns is a great problem. The number of them who go to waste is simply appalling. I am not here to suggest remedies, but the hooligan element is a growing menace in our native locations; stealing and dagga are on the increase undoubtedly here. In fact it is so bad that it is difficult to recommend location boys for work in town. The employer usually asks if we cannot give him a boy from Kafirland. Big firms will not employ local natives young boys, if they can get them from up-country. It is a sad business.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: Is that immediately they have passed Standard VI?— While they are in school they seem to be under strict control. It is immediately they leave school and there is no work open for them. In the location they get spoiled, it is a sad thing.

DR. ROBERTS: You mean that it does not take long for them to deteriorate and degenerate?— That has been my experience of these boys. The only boys who do well among us are those who go away for a few years, not those who come straight from school to the location.

SENATOR VAN NIEKERK: We cannot give every boy a higher education?— No. Pathfinders, that is, native boy scouts, have been started and it is doing a great work.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why is there difficulty in placing native boys of that age?— Well, it seems impossible to get them work.

Does the same apply to coloured boys?— I do not know much about that but I should think, quite likely. I see them sitting about the streets at that age where I live.

MR. LUCAS: Is it not largely due to the fact that the native is looked upon as an unskilled labourer and that is work which requires considerable physique which these growing boys have not got?— Yes, I think so.

And the skilled trades which they might wish to enter are practically closed to them?— Yes, that is so. They cannot go up to Standard 7 to be eligible for them. There is also the houseboy question. I know hundreds of houseboys in Cape Town but I do not know a single one who was born in Cape Town. All the work which is done in Johannesburg and Durban by picannins these boys in the locations will not touch. The work is open to them but they will not do it. That is an element I think which ought to be considered. Where the native is in touch with the coloured he thinks that this house work is beneath

beneath him.

DR. ROBERTS: It is not that the head of the house is afraid of disease?-- They are open to take them, but these native boys won't go.

MR. MOSTERT: At what age do they generally pass their Standard VI?-- About 16.

Do they get bad just after they leave school, during say the first three or four months?-- I should think so, yes.

Is it not possible before they leave school to get them work so that immediately they go from school they can go to work?-- In those cases where a boy gets work he keeps straight.

It would be a good thing then if each native boy when he leaves school could go straight to work; it would keep him from getting bad habits; he is generally a handsome boy with these youngsters of 16 or 17?-- Mr Cook and I have tried hard to get them work but employers won't take them, and the native boy in Cape Town won't touch domestic service.

MR. LUCAS: Is not the main objection the lack of freedom?-- Yes, the Kafir boys from the territories will do it, there are hundreds of them, but I do not know of a single one of our local boys who is doing this work.

MR. MOSTERT: That is most extraordinary because up-country that is the way we use them. Is it not possible to get these boys on farms?-- I do not know, I have not been in touch with the farmers but when they write for native labour they want hefty native boys from the territories.

DR. ROBERTS: Don't you think it would be possible by means of a joint school/^{from all the churches} to lead the boys up to Standard VI or even Standard VIII?-- Yes, I remember that offer.

They came to an agreement but certain churches stood outside; don't you think it would be a good thing to have a joint school, an undenominational school?-- It is still decided that it should be so.

But certain churches stood outside?-- I don't know what the arrangement at Langa is. There is one school at Langa at present and there will be another one to follow as soon as Ndabeni is removed but then these schools will only be up to Standard III, and then as high above Standard III as we can go. The Education Department has decided that we shall have another undenominational school, a combined school and we are all agreed upon that. We are only waiting for the Education Department. I am speaking of the new location. I think it is only the position at Langa which is holding it up.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do you mean the distance from Ndabeni?-- No, the question of whether Langa is going to continue to exist or not. The native people do not go to Langa and the South African Education Department would not put up a school until they saw their way. There are only 90 children at present in Langa altogether, including babies.

MR. MOSTERT: Are all the houses occupied?-- The married quarters.

THE CHAIRMAN: Why won't the natives move there?-- I think the chief reason is that in a town like this they come into contact with coloured life and the native is beginning to resent administration. I think he feels that although Langa might be well administered is not sufficiently attractive. He has no freedom or independence there. That is why the natives are building their own places outside Cape Town at Belville, where I have been this morning, and so on. They do not like strict control.

Is that associated in any way with the question of drink?-- I think so. I think a great number of the natives, especially women, have to indulge in the drink traffic in order to live.

And it is easier outside where there is no control?-- Yes.

MR LUCAS: Do you think the earning power of the native

native is a big factor in the drink question?-- I do not think I should say that the earning power in Cape Town is; I think the economic pressure up-country where they come from has driven the least desirable of them to Cape Town.

I understood you to say that the women are driven to the liquor traffic in order to enable them to live?-- Yes.

I thought you meant by that that the wages were not high enough and they had to supplement them?-- I was thinking more of the widows and unattached women who could not earn much in other ways.

But is it only widows and unattached women who go to these outside places?-- They form a considerable portion of the population.

But why should the views of widows and unattached women affect the ordinary native with a family adversely so as to prevent him going to Langa?-- I think the other reason is perhaps that there, the ordinary native, the decent-living native, with a family is a little bit restive under the idea of control and confinement.

He wants the same freedom of movement and generally live as the coloured man?-- I think that is it.

MR. MOSTERT: But at Ndabeni he appears to be happy?-- He would much prefer to stay where he is than go to Langa, though I must say that the Langa people themselves seem to be very happy. I mean the people living there. There are many reasons why the native is more happy at Ndabeni. He is nearer town and can get into the streets of Cape Town and the night life easily. And he has not got to spend money on railway fares.

Such a little thing as being in the proximity of the abbatoir where he can purchase cheap meat is another thing. All these are factors.

Is nearness to the abattoir a factor?-- Yes.

DR. ROBERTS: There are more amenities for those living at Ndabeni?— Yes, for instance a native woman at Ndabeni can slip across to the cheap shops at Salt River and so on and spend her time bargaining, but the native woman at Langa is very isolated and has to deal with the native trader, who is not the best person to trade with. That is one idea of the women that they cannot shop so easily.

The natives themselves feel that they should have better educational facilities for their children. Teachers are doing heroic work at minimum wages and the present position is that we cannot get any more help from the State than we are getting now.

MR. LUCAS: Were you going to make any suggestion for remedying the position for boys who have passed Standard VI?— I do not see how it can be done but if it could be possible to persuade employers in the big towns to try their local labour supply before going outside, it would be a great thing. That is what one feels. Mr. Cook tells me he has had exactly the same experience. The big firms do not employ the local boys and young men; they always want to get what they call, the "raw natives".

MR. MOSTERT: What is the reason?— Because the raw native is more honest and is more amenable to discipline; and he comes down here to save money and not to spend it on undesirable things. We have got 120 natives ~~from~~ in the Transkei living under our own roof. We have never had a police court case yet so far as I know. But we could not have the same number of local boys there.

DR. ROBERTS: If you ~~take~~ the education of these boys you mention and compare it with the education of the boys at Ndabeni would you find that the boys who come down are the better educated; numbers of boys from the High schools come

down to get education?- Yes. I should say that the 120 we have got, who are not the best class of natives, not more than 30 per cent have passed Standard IV.

THE CHAIRMAN: Do the local boys go up to Standard VI in the majority of cases?- Yes, we have very few indeed who leave our native schools before they have completed the course. There is a difficulty of finding work afterwards for the boys who are trained in carpentry but I think during the past few years that position has improved and some of our boys find their way into employment after having been trained.

MR. LUCAS: Where?- Here in Cape Town. Carpenters for instance find work with other natives; it is what we encourage. I do not mean at Ndabeni, but people who are putting up places at such places as the Welcome Estate; I was surprised to find that our boys were working well.

Do many of your boys go in for carpentry training?- We have five doing their training at St. Cuthbert's and one at St. Matthew's. We have six at present.

You have to send them away?- Yes.

DR. ROBERTS: You have none at Lovedale then?- We have one learning printing.

If I might say something on the question of the influx of natives into our towns for employment, I would say that it has been a great anxiety for many of us. Long before I came here 12 years ago I thought it was a hopeless business to try to prevent natives going to the big cities. I think the present permit system here is inadequate. From my own experience here I have come to the conclusion that practically every man who comes from the territories is bankrupt. I worked in the Glen Grey area for seven years and since I have been here I have been in touch with the territories.

I think the root cause of the economic distress is extravagance on their part and the laxity of the usury laws on the

the part of whoever is responsible. I have questioned many native young men and every one is in debt to every trader who would give him credit. My own place in Cape Town is besieged by young men coming to borrow money to send home to prevent their cattle being taken and so on. I had one boy during the week who came at 11 o'clock at night and told me he could not sleep because he had not got a job and therefore could not pay off his debts as he hoped to. The boy was almost frantic. He must get work so as to pay off his debts. It is not now a question of coming down to get money for marriage but to pay off his debts. Supt. Cook and I are very strong about this. It is a most important point.

How would you deal with that; these are debts acquired in the native territories?-- Yes, I should think that a debt above a certain amount should be irrecoverable from a native domiciled in the Transkei.

And yet the native regards it as a debt of honour?-- Yes, if I may speak personally I have been recently to a school where a young native teacher has been working since January and I asked him to show me his room. He did not want to do so at first but I made him and I found in two little rooms furniture which he had paid £45 for. He had got it on the hire purchase system. He is paying £2 a month for the next two years for stuff which is absolutely unsuitable and no good at all to him. What will happen is that he will get ill, or his father will demand his money or something, he won't be able to pay and all the stuff will have to be taken back.

Do you find that there is much in the way of agents going about selling sewing machines and then taking them in again at the end of four or five months because the natives cannot pay?-- I do not know cases where agents have taken them back, but agents do go about with gramophones and sewing machines and all sorts of things which they sell on the hire

hire purchase system, even correspondence courses in education. To we missionaries it is a point we are most anxious about, that all our people are in debt.

That taxation is forcing natives to leave their homes to earn money elsewhere is I think quite obvious. I often wonder why the railway department will run cheap trains to Cape Town. Once a week the train arrives in Cape Town packed with unskilled labour who have paid about half the third-class fare. It seems to me so foolish for the State to do that on the one hand, and on the other to encourage station masters to refuse ^{to issue} tickets to Cape Town by ordinary trains.

THE CHAIRMAN: To refuse tickets to Cape Town?— I do not think they can absolutely refuse to issue tickets to Cape Town but the Administration for a long time tried to prevent natives coming here. But a boy would take his sister to the station and when she had got a ticket he would take it and send her home again. It seems foolish that they should issue cheap tickets to Cape Town when there is a superabundance of unskilled labour already.

MR. LUCAS: Is it not to help those who want to go home for a few months?— Yes, but they come back again.

Is not the cheap service for the benefit of those people. Would it not be a hardship upon them if they stopped it?— I think it would be a good thing if it stopped the others coming. The present third-class fare is not so much if they really want to go. There is a whole crowd of natives come, and they want me to find them work.

I think that the permit system is necessary but it is very vexatious and I believe it is being reconsidered in Cape Town.

MR. LUCAS: What do you mean by the permit system?— Every native who comes to Cape Town has to report himself, not in Town, but at Langa. He begins to spend money straight away. At

At Langa he gets a place to sleep and a permit to look for work for 14 days. If he does not stay at Langa he is liable to prosecution. If he does not get a job within 14 days he has to go back to Langa to see if the registration officer will give him a renewal; he gets a renewal for another 14 days or he may be told to leave the area of CapeTown.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did they get a permit for 14 days originally?-

It was 14 days at first, and it has been reduced to 7. At St. Columbus Home, our own place, we allow them 14 days.

During that time they have to live in accommodation provided by the local authorities? - Yes, principally.

Is that being done throughout the country? - Yes, the difficulty here being that the native has to go backwards and forwards and undertake an expensive railway journey, or foot it. And then there is also the question of food as well as having to go back to get a permit renewed. The remedy would be to have a registry officer intown where a native could go to have his permit renewed without having to go to Langa.

DR. ROBERTS: Is there not one in town?-- Yes, for the employer, but not for the boy.

Now with regard to the question of racial difficulties again, my own experience of the last 12 years has been that there has been a very great improvement in the relationship between white and black on the part of the more highly civilised of both races. What is really needed is the proper education of white children on the importance of natural courtesy. From my own experience I should say that most of our troubles between European and black come from discourtesy and very often from superiority complex. I think much agitation would be rendered innocuous if there was ~~in~~ in the railway stations, and that sort of thing, enforcement of courteous treatment to natives and things like that and at the same time the enforcement

enforcement of decent behaviour on the part of the natives, as distinct from mere subservience, to white people. I think the better class of native would appreciate the worst class of native being pulled up. The churches are doing a great deal by encouraging mutual visits of natives and whites. We are doing much of that in Cape Town, and our own English church has been advised by the Lambeth Conference that on certain occasions we should all be together. That is done in Cape Town Johannesburg and Durban periodically.

DR. ROBERTS: But the native is put at the back?— Not always. We try to stop that. Normally it is so. But what I was pointing out was that on certain occasions we try to meet them. I think that is quite right. I think the native prefers to have his own part of the church, normally.

Then immediately you get the opposite, you get the inferiority complex, which is not good for any human being?— We tried to overcome it at our own place for instance. We have had the Governor-General there and we did not have any distinctions. I think it was perhaps overdone slightly. I do not think however you could easily sweep away the idea. I think all denominations have done a great deal during the last ten years to teach natives and Europeans to understand each other. This Wednesday at the Cathedral there is an open service on the part of the whole Peninsula.

I think an enormous lot of harm is done in the way that native news is reported in the Press; scare headlines about "The Black Peril" and that sort of thing and a little paragraph when a corresponding thing takes place when a white man is at fault; and even such minor things as reporting in the case of an accident that so many natives have been killed, but in the case of Europeans the names of killed and injured are given in full. I do not say that particular thing should be remedied, but it counts with the natives.

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