

THE SECRETARY FOR NATIVE AFFAIRS,

Memorandum on (1) Agricultural Clubs)
 (2) Land Service Clubs) for Natives
 (3) Vocational Training)

The Division of Soil Conservation and Extension of the Department of Agriculture, together with the various Education Departments, have for many years been organising agricultural and land service clubs for young children and adolescents. The reason for this is briefly because in the past the Extension Service has experienced difficulty in getting adult farmers to accept improved agricultural methods because of their conservatism and the need for training the youth was soon realised.

The Club Movement of the Department is organised as follows:-

(1) Agricultural Clubs.

These are primarily for children under 18. The Department, at the instigation of its officers, and in collaboration with the Education Departments, would interest some local person, say a teacher, religious leader, professional man or farmer. He should be altruistic, tolerant, patient, sympathetic, and have faith in the movement. A club is then formed among the children and practically all the organisation work is done by the children themselves. They choose a president, a treasurer, a secretary, a reporter and a song leader and adopt a model constitution framed by the Department of Agriculture. They then apply for recognition by the Department and as soon as this is granted they gain the right to apply for funds and equipment in the shape of tents, tools and utensils, etc., and to compete for the prizes issued for various projects. The club also gets a certificate in recognition of its status as a model club, and it can get a flag and badges. The children are taught parliamentary procedure and meetings are conducted along parliamentary lines. The leader takes no part. He just acts as guide.

There are many projects for which members of a club can enter, e.g. calf-rearing project, skin-drying project, tanning project, preserving project, ox-fattening project, making of soft toys project, fruit growing project, poultry project, pig project, lucerne project, compost-making project, mealie project and a number of others.

Commerce has become interested and a number of firms have given prizes for the best projects, e.g. Firestone has given a bursary of £200 per year to enable the winner of a contouring project to attend University for four years, and Mangold Bros. have given prizes and bursaries for lucerne projects. The Department of Agriculture also gives prizes.

The Agricultural Club Movement in its present form started in 1935, with a membership of 418. Today it has 33,000 members belonging to 365 clubs. The clubs are administered by the Department's Regional Officers and Extension Service.

I quote the objects of the Agricultural Clubs from one of its pamphlets:-

(1) to teach better methods of farming and housekeeping;

(2) by/.....

- (2) by the production and marketing of products, breeding, feeding and marketing of animals, conservation of water, preparation of miscellaneous foods, improvement and beautifying of homes, and other desirable activities and undertakings, to illustrate to the community and nature of improved methods of farming and housekeeping;
- (3) by means of demonstrations held locally or elsewhere, club meetings, club exhibits, tours, team demonstrations, judging competitions, camps, social gatherings and other activities, to assist in promoting the economic, physical, educational, spiritual and social welfare of its members.

The clubs have apparently done wonderful work. The record for maize yield in South Africa is held by young boys under 16 years of age. The highest record is 35½ bags per acre. Yields of 32, 28 and 27 bags to the acre have been attained. Compare with this the average production of the highest yield in the Transvaal viz: 12 bags to the acre! At Kokstad in 1943 the Club provided all the vegetables for the 70 boarders of the school. In the Orange Free State a girl of 13 hand-reared a young bull calf which she sold for £105 which enabled her to buy her own piano. Adults, (mostly parents) have been taught through their children and examples of real upliftment work of people who had lost the courage to struggle, are numerous.

(2) Land Service Clubs.

Land Service Clubs run by the Department are formed along similar lines as Agricultural Clubs but they are for adolescents over the age of 18 years. Notable work has also been done in this field by the Voortrekker Movement and the Oxford Group. The work takes the form of voluntary service in the field.

The Department of Agriculture summarises the aims of these clubs as follows:-

- (1) The permanent improvement and enhancement of all agricultural practices and potentialities, especially by intensive efforts towards the conservation and promotion of the soil fertility of our country.
- (2) By means of inspiring examples to re-awaken and foster a love for the soil in the hearts of those who have grown estranged.
- (3) Showing by means of our example and by demonstrations and camps in our own area and elsewhere, how the soil can be improved and conserved and how the general interests of the community as a whole may so be furthered.
- (4) Serving and furthering the general interests of our own area and those of the community as a whole, by undertaking such important tasks as -
 - (a) the control of soil-erosion, planting of trees, collection of bones, control of pests, combatting indiscriminate veld fires, making and using compost, stopping piracy cropping etc.
 - (b) the practising and propagation of health rules, beautification of the country, establishment of libraries, scholarships, etc.

These clubs also have done valuable work.

One feels that the time has come to turn to the Native Youth in Agricultural matters. For two decades the Department has struggled with the women and the "grey beards" with their conservatism, superstition, laziness and pig-headedness and its successes among the people in the field of improved Agricultural methods and real upliftment, have been meagre in comparison with the need. Few Native Commissioners and Agricultural Officers have escaped the cry of hunger in their areas.

One wonders whether the Club Movement could not be introduced into our Native schools and colleges throughout the country. That educated Natives can and will do voluntary manual labour has been demonstrated at Fort Hare where a club has been started at the instigation of Agricultural Officer Grobler and where three camps have been held during the last two years with very beneficial results. That Native youngsters can be formed into a club has been demonstrated in the Ginsberg urban location at Kingwilliamstown where Mr. Baker the Senior Assistant Director of Native Agriculture has given such a wonderful lead.

A feature of the camps at Fort Hare was a "peace making" between European officials and educated Natives and a changed attitude, towards this Department's efforts, by the latter. Before the camp they openly referred to the Department as "Public enemy No.1", but they had changed their tune by the time the first camp was under way.

Could not this Department start an organisation along similar lines as the Agricultural Department? I feel sure that you have officers in the Agricultural Section of each Chief Native Commissioner who would possess the necessary enthusiasm and altruism. The machinery is there but some extra staff is sure to be required and the scheme will have to be adapted to our needs. The Division of Soil Conservation and Extension has been most helpful so far, and I feel sure they will assist us with technical advice. I would recommend an interview, if possible, with Mr. J.D. de Wet who gave valuable information to a meeting at the Chief Native Commissioner's office in the Ciskei recently. A perusal of some of their pamphlets especially the "Leaders Handbook" and the "Handbook for Land Service Leaders" is also recommended. Copies of these have been handed to Mr. van Wyk.

3. Vocational Training.

The Club Movement is well-known in other countries. It is a new approach to Educational and soul-rehabilitating difficulties and has only been in existence for about 30 years. In America it is known as 4 H Clubs and C.C.C. (Civilian Conservation Corps). It is well known in England and in France we have the "E'colé Nouvelle" and, of course, the "Kraft durch Freude", in Germany.

In other countries the movement goes much further than in South Africa, and it embraces practically the whole field of vocational training. It also bridges the gap between school-leaving and employment for adolescents.

I understand that the Technical and Vocational Education Commission has just completed its report, and that it has been submitted to the Minister of Education. The report has a

special/.....

special chapter dealing with the care of the adolescent non-European and makes recommendations in regard to clubs and camps. I suggest a copy be obtained for this Department as it contains valuable information.

There is, of course, a great need for a training centre for workers in rural areas - vide Dr. Philips' letter dated 24th November, 1946 (folio 51) which I hope the Department will be able to rectify in the near future.

It is trusted that the foregoing matters will receive your consideration.

PRETORIA,

24th July, 1948.

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