

# BLACK AND WHITE

IN

## SOUTH EAST AFRICA

A STUDY IN SOCIOLOGY

BY

MAURICE S. EVANS, C.M.G.

WITH A PREFACE BY

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LATE GOVERNOR OF NATAL

*WITH A MAP*

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**TO**

**MY WIFE**

**ELIZABETH F. EVANS**

## PREFACE.

MR. MAURICE EVANS claims as his qualification for dealing in this book with the relations between Black and White in South Africa his keen interest in the subject. Those who, like myself, have had the opportunity of talking over with him some of the difficult problems involved, will certainly allow him this qualification. His readers will also soon attribute to him that sympathy with the natives, both Christian and under tribal law, as well as with his fellow colonials, which is essential to any real understanding of the relations between the two peoples, and they will at the same time appreciate the value of his knowledge so evidently derived from much careful study and from considerable personal experience.

I should like to think that among those readers will be a large proportion of the thoughtful men of South Africa on whose action in Parliament and on Provincial and Municipal Councils or on whose influence on their fellow citizens, exerted through the press or the lecture room, the treatment of the native question in the future mainly depends. The book should be read also by that important section of earnest people in this country and their representatives in the House of Commons who claim to sympathize with all natives on the grounds of a broad humanity of feeling which the perusal will help them to believe is shared by many of their fellow countrymen in South Africa. For those concerned in the government of natives elsewhere in the great black continent and in the countries to which Africans have been transplanted the volume contains much that is usefully suggestive.

The black races of Africa have in the last few hundred years had opportunities of development on various lines.

In the central parts it is only comparatively recently that this has been affected from outside. To the north they have been subjected to the Mohammedan influence of the Arabs. The descendants of the negroes who crossed the Atlantic as slaves have now behind them many generations of life in contact with a Christian civilization. Those who to-day rule in Hayti and Liberia, after receiving the impulse of that civilization, have been largely left to themselves in their subsequent development. The governments of the European West African colonies have through the greater period of their existence been endeavouring to train the natives on European lines—to make them competent in agriculture and trade, in crafts and professions—with no fear of their competition with the ruling race which in the tropics can administer but cannot colonize. In Africa south of the tropics where the European thrives the effect of the development of the native on his social and other relations with the white man has constantly been kept in view by the governments concerned and has led, at any rate in some cases, to that development being checked rather than encouraged.

The directions in which under these varying conditions the native has advanced most satisfactorily from the point of view both of his own happiness and of the welfare of the white man with whom he has been associated and the means to adopt further to impel him in these directions are subjects of study requiring the closest attention of the white races interested and of the countries responsible—of the United States, of Great Britain, Germany, France, and Portugal. To secure that the experience of each governing nation should become available to the others in the form most convenient for comparison and most likely to lead to definite conclusions I at one time suggested that the relations between the races should be studied by an international commission and I still believe that an investigation of this nature

should be undertaken. In the meantime the publication by individual students of monographs on special aspects of the subject help greatly its general consideration by the ideas they suggest and the discussions to which they give rise.

The underlying idea of the present work is that there are essential mental and spiritual, as there are obvious physical, differences between the Abantu and the European, and that it will be more advantageous to both races if the natives are consciously developed on lines indicated by a study of their characteristics than on the assumption that their intelligences and natures are those of white men. To this idea there will probably be general assent. Most people will also agree that while the white man must decide the broad principles on which the native is to be ruled, the latter must be protected against being governed in the interests of the constituents of a white Parliament. Few will dissent from the view that the native should be trained up to a generous measure of local self-government. Mr. Evans makes it clear that his opinion that this self government should never include participation in the government of the white man is not held by the majority in the Cape Colony province. He knows also that it is not acceptable to the more advanced supporters in this country of native rights. On the other hand, the permanent allotment to the natives of the areas now reserved for them and the addition to those areas of the land their expansion will require in the near future, involved by Mr. Evans' great principles of race separation, are contrary to the general land policy of Natal and the provinces north of the Orange and Vaal rivers. In formulating his scheme he has therefore not hesitated to diverge from the paths of those who look upon the problem either from the too close standpoint of a much-affected colonist or from the too remote one of a distant sympathizer with native aspirations. As to the future govern-

ment of native areas he appears to accept the broad principles embodied in the schedule to the South Africa Act of Union which provides for the ultimate inclusion in the Union of Swaziland, Basutoland and Bechuana-land, while as to details he has naturally a strong leaning towards the recommendations of the Natal Native Affairs Commission of 1907 of which he was so useful a member and towards the Act of the Natal Parliament framed on those recommendations. He would further educate the natives freely and give missionary effort full scope, always provided that the mass of the Abantu are kept in separate areas from the bulk of the Europeans so that the advancement of the former may not operate towards their closer association with the latter. As regards this plan of segregation, carried as far as practical conditions of life will allow and constantly more completely applied, the opinions of readers will doubtless differ. For my part, I find it difficult to get away from the author's fears that contact between the races at an increasing number of points would lead not only to miscegenation which between persons widely differing in origin produces a weak progeny, but also to degeneration in the white community due to the putting aside of all physical labour, and bitterness in the Abantu who by restriction to that labour would be permanently maintained in a semi-servile position.

Towards the unfortunate results of miscegenation the author would be wholly generous, and, while he would rigorously prevent the Indian population of South East Africa being added to from outside, he would recognize the rights of that population to enjoy the full fruits of their industry directed into channels most beneficial to the whole community.

The book attempts to come to grips with the difficulties of a vastly important subject. It has a high purpose and I wish it a great effect.

MATTHEW NATHAN.

## INTRODUCTION.

SOME four years ago, just after the native rebellion in Natal of 1906, I took my courage in both hands and ventured to write a pamphlet dealing with the native problem in Natal, for the consideration of my fellow colonists.

At that time the people of the colony were roused to a consideration of the native question by the unfortunate happenings of the time, and this interest resulted in the appointment by Government of the Natal Native Commission of 1906-7, of which Commission I had the honour to be a member. It was presided over by the Hon. H. C. Campbell, then Judge President of the Native High Court, and the members included representatives of both the European races of South Africa, colonists born in South Africa, intimately acquainted with the natives, and speaking their language; and one at least of whom, Colonel H. E. Rawson, R.E., C.B., might be regarded as representing the Imperial view of the question.

The Commission travelled all over Natal and Zululand, even to the inner recesses of the land, and took the evidence of 301 Europeans and 906 natives, either personally or by delegation. So highly did the natives appreciate the opportunities afforded them of expressing their views, that at least 5500, including chiefs and headmen, Christian natives, some of whom were exempted from native law, attended, and, on the whole, spoke, as they were invited to do, with remarkable freedom. It is believed that no similar local inquiry has collected such

a mass of carefully prepared evidence, all of which was noted and abridged by a highly qualified officer, and thereafter returned to many of the witnesses for revision and signature.

The Report, which was signed by all the members of the Commission, was of the most outspoken character, neither evading nor condoning the actions of the past, made a considerable impression on the people of the colony, and attracted a good deal of attention in other parts of South Africa, and even in Britain.

The attention thus directed to the question led the Government of the day to introduce into Parliament the Native Administration Act of 1909, under the provisions of which, as recommended in the Report of the Commission, a Permanent Secretary of Native Affairs was appointed, together with four District Native Commissioners subordinate to him, and the establishment of a Native Council consisting of the four District Commissioners and four non-official members. The duties of the District Commissioners were to act as fathers and advisers to the people, accessible to them at all times, to guide and encourage them in effort likely to be for their true advancement; the functions of the Native Council were to revise all existing legislation and regulations affecting the natives, to consider the existing taxation measures, to advise Government in all matters calculated to lead to their betterment, and especially to consider and report upon all proposed legislation, such report to be laid on the table of the House before it was considered by Parliament.

The freedom and fearlessness with which the Commission criticized the past action and inaction of the Government, the open manner in which they admitted the grievances of the natives and allocated blame, have been freely used by many who were no friends of the colonists to formulate and support charges of harshness against the Europeans of Natal, and maladministration



and lack of consideration on the part of the Government, and this has caused pain to many of us who know both sides of the question.

One such occasion was the visit of Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., to Natal, when in the presence of the writer and others he made such accusations against the colonists, based upon the conclusions of the Report, as made it necessary to point out how little he knew of the inwardness of the question with its complexities and difficulties, and whilst those who were faced with it in their daily lives did not resent, nay welcomed, fair criticism, some measure of sympathy was due to them from those of our own race who were free from the immediate stress and strain of the burden.

These people do not realize the arduous and intricate problem which lies before the people of South Africa in dealing with the native races of the sub-continent; they will not understand, and it almost, at times, seems as if they did not want to understand, that though there have been faults both of omission and commission in the past, there has also been, on the part of many South African colonists, a full realization of their heavy responsibilities to the natives, and a willing desire, if they could only get a clear lead, to shoulder those responsibilities however onerous; to earnestly take up the white man's burden.

And in particular, they do not know the kindly relations existing in all parts of the colony between hundreds, nay thousands, of Europeans and their native neighbours or dependants, relations fully recognized by the native, and shown by his readiness to come to his European friend for help and guidance in his difficulties.

Surely it should count to the colony for righteousness that seven men should sign a document, telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, hiding nothing, extenuating nothing, even though it meant a striking and forcible indictment of their methods in the past.

And it should be remembered that the people of Natal, instead of denying the allegations of the Commission, or trying to refute their conclusions, unpalatable as they must have been, accepted them, perhaps with some humiliation, but set themselves to put things right and make a fresh start. Let our critics remember also these things, and give us credit for our attempts to work out, in the interests of both races, the difficult—perhaps insoluble—problem we are called upon to face. They reserve all their sympathy for the black man. We, too, have sympathy for him, but a sympathy we are striving to fit in with reason by acquiring knowledge, and by hard and close thinking, while theirs, too often, is sympathy lacking reason and without knowledge—pure sentimentalism.

Now again I take my courage in my hands, and at this time, the beginning of the Union of South Africa, endeavour to put this, our problem, as it appears to me, and try to speak to a wider audience than before, for though of more immediate concern to us who dwell in this land amongst an overwhelming mass of black men, the question is of Imperial, nay world-wide importance and significance.

For this reason it is that I have entered into details which may seem almost puerile to my fellow colonists, such as a description of the country and the natural surroundings of the Abantu. But I wished, if possible, to bring a picture of our environment and that of the native before the mind's eye of those who had never been in the country; to make the picture complete.

Life and the conditions surrounding it are ever changing, and we so easily forget what was once so obvious and apparent a decade, a quarter of a century ago. What would not we give now for a contemporary picture, consciously drawn, giving an observant man's idea of the life of black and white forty years ago, their inter-relations at that time, and his views of the future?

I hope so to set down my observations and the deductions therefrom that they may serve for comparison in years to come as a picture of the actual position of affairs in this the first year of South African Union.

And I want to remember that the problem is not only how we are to govern and meet all our obligations to the black man, but how, in the face of our tangled environment, we are to do justice to those of our own race, especially those who are to take up the burden when we are gone. I want to try and find out what effect the contact of black and white is going to have, not only on the black man, but on those of our own race in South East Africa, to forecast, if it be possible, the dangers of such contact, and forecasting, endeavour so to rule our lives as to prevent or minimize the dangers which undoubtedly lie before us.

Some seven years ago I had the privilege of visiting New Zealand, and travelled through the length and breadth of the land. I was much impressed with what I saw there. The beauty and the fertility of the land, its freedom from the pests so common here, the universal economic well-being of the people, the ease with which they could make social and legislative experiments as practically one people, with common aims and ideals, all struck me forcibly.

For some time after landing I could not help contrasting their lot with that of their fellow-countrymen in this land, in that they were free from this our great problem, and could set themselves to the development of the country, to the economic, social, and moral improvement of their own people. I saw that the Maori was still in some portions of the land, though the South Island was free from his presence, but even so, he is only as one in thirty to the whites, he does not constitute a problem as the black man does here. Rather the New Zealanders of European descent regard him as a curious appendage, one of the picturesque assets of the country, to be

pointed out to visitors, and view him and his peculiarities with the greatest tolerance. Were the proportions of white to Maori the same as in South East Africa between Abantu and European, this good-natured tolerance would not be the lasting attitude.

But the frame of mind with which I first viewed the people and their country did not last, and before I left the shores of that beautiful island, the Britain of the South Seas, I felt that though our more difficult and involved environment here at times made one almost despair, and long for a land problem-free, yet it had its compensations, and that in manfully facing our troubles we might derive a virtue impossible under easier conditions—that our responsibilities were also our privilege.

MAURICE S. EVANS.

HILLCREST, BEREA,  
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### MAP.

South Africa . . . . . *At the end of the Volume*

"I think that a right use of life and the true secret of life is to pave the way for the firmer footing of those who succeed us."—GEORGE MEREDITH.

"For God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."