

THE NEW BOER WAR

By the same Author

CALIBAN IN AFRICA

THE NEW BOER WAR

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE - - - - -	ix

PART I. THE UNION

CHAPTER

I. MR. GREATHEART OF BRITAIN - - -	I
II. THE TACTICAL SITUATION - - -	12
III. THE NEED OF ORGANISATION - - -	19
IV. THE NEED OF IDEAS - - -	33

PART II. THE HIGH COMMISSION

V. BASUTOLAND - - - - -	53
§ 1. General Economic Conditions. § 2. The Chiefs. § 3. Tribal Land Tenure. § 4. Employment. § 5. The African Setting	
VI. SWAZILAND - - - - -	86
§ 1. Export Trade. § 2. Taxation. § 3. Migrant Labour. § 4. Native Production. § 5. The Trans- port Question. § 6. Future Progress.	
VII. BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE - - -	128
§ 1. The Waste of Man Power. § 2. Poverty. § 3. The White Farmer. § 4. The Powers of Chiefs. § 5. Tribal Rule. § 6. The Slave Tribes. § 7. Ad- ministrative Failure.	

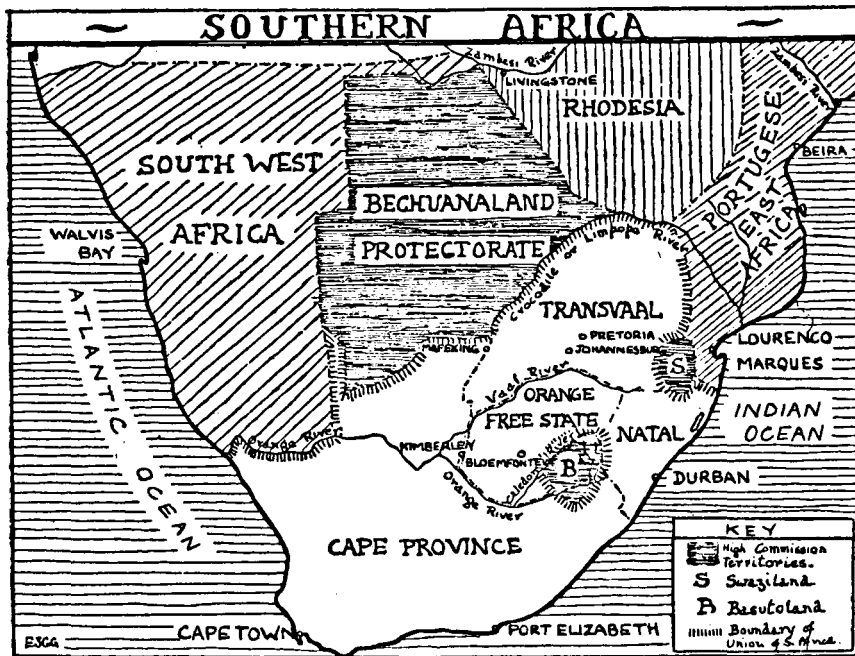
CONTENTS

PART III. CONCLUSION

CHAPTER	PAGE
VIII. THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA	- 202
§ 1. The Historical Background. § 2. Native Authorities. § 3. The Treasuries and Courts. § 4. Some Economic Results.	
IX. THE HANDS-UPPERS	- - - - 226

MAPS

SOUTHERN AFRICA	- - -	<i>page</i> viii
BASUTOLAND	- - - - -	„ 55
SWAZILAND	- - - - -	„ 87
BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE	-	„ 129



PREFACE

WHENEVER the wretched condition of vassalage to which White South Africa has reduced the native people of the South African Union is described to English audiences, the usual reply is, Yes, it is all very dreadful; but what can *we* do about it? This book is primarily a rejoinder to that question, and an attempt to show that the *non possumus* attitude is, within the strictest limits of constitutional propriety, unjustified.

As to the title, it is perhaps desirable to explain that the term "Boer," which strictly means "farmer" and no more, is not used with any special connotation of race; nor is the term "Afrikaner" so used in the text. The enemy of British native policy in Africa, as I emphasise in many places, is not merely the Dutch-speaking South African, but the Dutch-speaking South African reinforced by the bulk of the European settler class, of whatever race, throughout British Africa. The "war" of which I speak is thus in no sense a racial one. Indeed, many men of British stock are among the most determined votaries of the spirit I have called Afrikanerism. Nevertheless, as it is a matter of historical fact that the South

PREFACE

African Dutch, by reason of their solidarity as a group and the inflexibility of their prejudices in native affairs, have succeeded in setting the standard of thought and feeling now generally accepted wherever European settlement exists, the title seems to me to have its suitability.

Doubtless Afrikanerism does not arise from any special endowment of original sin conferred upon the Boers; with the possible exception of New Zealand, something very like it has cropped up wherever Europeans have been brought into close economic and social contact with people of different colour and less complicated material civilisation, e.g. in the Southern States of America, and possibly, as has been suggested by one critic, in Spain after the fall of Granada and before the expulsion of the Moors. I have even been told that Afrikanerism would be just as rank a growth in South Africa as it is to-day, if the white population were purely British. The hypothesis is perfectly plausible. But we are dealing with facts, not guesses. And, chronologically speaking, it is the case that Afrikanerism first manifested itself in the South African Dutch. Later European immigrants to the sub-continent have on the whole absorbed its spirit. Whether they would have evolved it themselves if it had not been there to absorb I cannot think it very fruitful to speculate. On the other hand, it is certain that General Hertzog, his colleagues, and the body of opinion they represent

PREFACE

are, as it were, the peculiarly sacred geese who, by their cackling, hope to save the capitol of Afrikanerism from negrophilist attack. For their attitude, however, they draw support from every party and every (European) race in the King's African dominions—not least from the British settler.

The central theme of the book is, in a word, that the present exuberant aggressiveness of Afrikanerism is due partly to Britain's neglect of her special responsibilities and opportunities in Southern Africa, and that Britain's native policy has little prospect of success in any part of the continent closely affected by white settlement, unless it is championed with something of the warmth, the heart, and the conviction which the champions of Afrikanerism display. The Afrikaner may have the worse position, but, unfortunately for British policy, he mans it with better soldiers.

In dealing with the High Commission I have felt it preferable to describe the situation in each territory separately. The method has its drawbacks, and in particular it makes some measure of repetition inevitable. But on the whole it seems less clumsy, and I hope its results are more readable, than an attempt to group the facts of all three territories together under generic headings. I should add that the account here given owes much to many invaluable discussions with Miss Margaret Hodgson, of the Witwatersrand Uni-

PREFACE

versity, and Mr. W. G. Ballinger, with both of whom I toured the territories.

Acknowledgments are due to the *Johannesburg Star*, for the section on the High Commission closely follows some articles which I wrote for that paper during the last year.

The sketch-maps have been prepared by my friend Mr. Eric Gibb, for whose patient co-operation I tender grateful thanks.

L. B.

PART I

THE UNION

CHAPTER I

MR. GREATHEART OF BRITAIN

WHEN the Liberal Government that came into power in Britain in 1906 decided to hand South Africa back to the Boers, the first feeling of moderate British opinion was that the whole cause for which the war had been fought, so few and so brief years before, had been betrayed in a fit of maudlin quixotry. But the Liberal Party's advocacy of its policy was skilful, and liberal-minded people, whether they belonged to the party or not, gradually came round to the view that here was a real piece of generous and constructive statesmanship. "Out of the strong shall come forth sweetness." Without any laborious hunting for precedents they began to claim it as a typically British act. Let the world see how a nation of sportsmen treat a plucky foe when they have thrashed him. Has not the ancient kindness of England, nursling of the fresh green lap of fair

THE NEW BOER WAR

King Richard's land, always known that the power and the glory are not to the bully? It is well to show that we are too big to bother about booty, and too confident in our essential righteousness to shrink from taking a chance on the future. Large-hearted forbearance in time may bind the vanquished to us in willing friendship; but if we try to drill them into loyalty we may only succeed in perpetuating their implacability. How noble to leave the choice to them.

By such arguments did the conciliation policy secure the endorsement of national pride; and by such a compromise did the uneasy liberal conscience come to terms with the spirit of imperialism.

In due season, or perhaps sooner, this seed bore fruit in the form of the Union of South Africa. Had the South African population consisted exclusively of Boers and Britons, seed and fruit might both have been much admired. But as it happened, there was also a native population which at the time of Union was three times as large as Boers and Britons put together. The treatment by the Boers of non-European elements within their borders had been one of the counts in the British case against the Transvaal before the war, and it was obvious that the numerical preponderance of non-Europeans, combined with the Boer sentiment against them to which Britain had taken such forcible exception, was destined to

make them an extremely awkward problem for any final post-war settlement. By its gesture of magnanimity towards the Boers, the Liberal Government virtually washed its hands of this difficulty. At the National Convention the representatives of the four South African States had in practice full power to settle the terms of Union among themselves. Thus the non-European cause was actually left, not to Britain, but to the Cape delegates to uphold. The Cape delegates fought gallantly enough, and as a result of their efforts various safeguards of non-European interests were included in the South Africa Act. But the only safeguard that has proved of material, though none the less transient, value is the "entrenchment" of the Cape native franchise.¹ Everything else, including what little had been done for non-Europeans under the post-war Milner régime, was at the mercy of the anti-colour majority which Union immediately gave to the three northern provinces.

It is instructive to recall the actual expectations entertained as to the future of the native question

¹ The South Africa Act provided that the native franchise in the Cape Province, which was then exercised in virtue of the same qualifications of property and education as applied to non-natives, might not be altered except by a two-thirds majority of both Houses of Parliament sitting together. Since 1930 the cunning of General Hertzog and his associates has found means to outflank the constitution, and to rob the native electorate of the small political influence it previously possessed.

THE NEW BOER WAR

by public opinion in the Cape at the time of Union. As it turns out, their disappointment has been complete. Forgetfulness of this fact can only serve to encourage a similarly unwarranted optimism in the situation of to-day.

The procedure by which Union was brought about was, it will be remembered, as follows. The National Convention drew up a draft Act of Union, which was laid before the legislatures of the four colonies for discussion and revision. The Convention then met again to seek agreement upon the amendments proposed by the colonial parliaments, and the revised draft was resubmitted to those parliaments for final approval. When the colonies had thus agreed among themselves, the draft was to go to London and pass into law as an Act of the Imperial Parliament.

The frame of mind in which the Cape addressed itself to the far-reaching changes involved in Union is perhaps best disclosed by the debate in the Cape House when the draft was first submitted to it. The Cape delegates, headed by Merriman, then Prime Minister, had managed to preserve, so far as their Province was concerned, the natives' voting rights, and even to safeguard them in the proposed Union constitution by the two-thirds majority provision. But they had surrendered certain other rights previously enjoyed by natives in the Cape, notably the right to sit in Parliament. In representing the draft to the

MR. GREATHEART OF BRITAIN

House, they announced this surrender apologetically, but argued that the delegates from the northern colonies had virtually made it a condition of Union. They professed, as good Kaapenaars, to dislike the " blot on the constitution " requiring members of the Union Parliament to be of pure European descent, but they impressed upon the House that the choice before it was perfectly clear-cut—either Union with the blot, or isolation without it. For themselves the ideal of a United South Africa was so precious as to outweigh a few unpalatable concessions to the weakness of their compatriots-to-be. Besides, if Cape notions about the way to treat natives were sound, they could be relied upon, after Union, to melt and to transmute the compound mass of northern ignorance and prejudice into something harmonious with themselves. This opportunity for conversion would be lost if the Cape were to make an ex-communication matter of native rights, and so stand out of Union in an unbending preference for its private traditions. An Opposition speaker remarked a little bluntly that the delegates' counsel then amounted to advising the commission of an admitted wrong in the hope that it might issue in a remote and problematic right. This characterisation certainly exposed a weak spot in the delegates' case. Yet, it must be allowed, the plea that the Cape would do better service to the natives of South Africa as a whole by carrying its com-

THE NEW BOER WAR

parative liberalism into Union than by insulating it outside had a genuine plausibility, and there is little reason to suppose that it was not perfectly sincerely put forward. Once that plea was admitted, it did follow logically that the achievement of Union became more important than a die-hard insistence on the full preservation of the status quo in the Cape.

Two short passages from Sauer's speeches epitomise the delegates' position, and show that it was held with an honest conviction.

I hope, said Sauer, graceful and humane in act as Belial,—I hope that when we get Closer Union we shall approach nearer eventually to the aim of equality. I hope that under Union we will not retrograde (*sic*), but that we will proceed further towards granting the privileges and rights and liberties of all His Majesty's subjects in South Africa. . . . I believe, if we are right in the policy we pursue, by putting it forward with a just cause, you will do much that otherwise I see little chance of achieving, namely, you will be able to introduce your policy into the other parts of South Africa. . . . I can conceive an agitation which will stir this country from one end to the other if it is attempted to do what I consider, and what most fair-minded men consider, an injustice (i.e. to diminish existing native rights).

And again, elsewhere:

I differ entirely from the view that we must look only to the interests of the natives of the Cape Colony. We must look to the interests of all natives that come into the Union. In this way we may lay the foundation and beginning of a more liberal native policy all over South Africa. . . . I believe that in the long run the best course will prevail and that in the Union Parliament the native will have more friends. It is a great mistake to suppose that the only friends he will have will be from the Cape Colony. He will have friends from other quarters, and the time will come, I am convinced, when the whole Union will embrace the Cape's policy in regard to the natives.

In the eyes of Schreiner, who had the root of the matter in him, the very speciousness and apparent breadth of Sauer's argument stood out as objects of suspicion. He rose and delivered a speech which, as one supporter soon erroneously predicted, "will live for ever in this House." With deliberation and public care deep on his front engraven, he affirmed that the Cape was in the position of trustee, and had a duty not to barter away the rights of the native people for any benefit that Europeans might gain. Union with honour before all things. He saw the pathos of this, that the natives' very trustee should adopt a proposal

THE NEW BOER WAR

to diminish native rights and use it as a weapon for bargaining, saying Let them go, or there shall be no Union. For his part, so stern seemed the promise of the future, he would stand out of Union rather than give up his trust. Federation, unification, and such things—they were questions of detail. But the native question obtruded itself as an absolutely essential one, “because I feel that it is a trust which rests upon us, and not only that, but also upon the broad shoulders of John Bull. We do not want the Act to come back from the Imperial Parliament with amendments introduced which we should have introduced ourselves.”

Later in the debate, when the House went into Committee on the details of the draft, Schreiner moved an amendment that membership of the Senate should not be confined to persons of European descent in the case of Cape senators. His speech again showed that, if his amendment failed (as in fact it did), then he expected the Imperial Government or Parliament to deny ratification to provisions in the draft taking away native rights, and that he was anxious for South Africa to avoid the indignity of such correction. He might well have spared himself such heart-searchings, for the versatile John Bull at once betrayed his faith.

This fragment of historical reminiscence is justified by its proof that responsible opinion at the Cape was encouraged to approve of Union by

MR. GREATHEART OF BRITAIN

two hopes which event has wholly duped. It was seriously supposed both that the Cape's entry into Union would mitigate the harshness of the Afrikaner outlook, and that the Imperial authority would not allow the Cape's struggling liberalism, which after all was the sole local embodiment of the policy it had itself been fighting for, to be submerged beneath the mere numerical superiority of reaction. The double frustration teaches two lessons. First, the futility of supposing that right opinions on native affairs will ever prevail in South Africa simply because they are right. Second, that Britain has certain undischarged obligations to the natives of South Africa which it is even now her duty to fulfil by every constitutional means remaining open to her.

In doing a good turn to the Boers, then, the Liberal Government did a very bad one to the much more numerous but defenceless natives. That Government seems to have been little impressed by the Bambata rebellion in Natal and Zululand in 1906, nor to have reflected that if the British colonists when left to themselves could stir native antagonism so quickly and surely, the Boers in a like case would probably not be less effective for the same purpose. At least, if such reflections presented themselves, they were firmly dismissed. And on the whole it is not surprising that the Liberal policy eventually came to be interpreted as embodying a desire not so much to spare the

THE NEW BOER WAR

conquered as to follow the line of least resistance and get quit of the trouble in which this perplexing Africa promised to display an unattractive fertility. Few applications of the *laissez-faire* principle led to graver consequences.

Britain has had no voice in Union native policy for twenty-two years, and the conception of Dominion status has so developed meanwhile as to make it improbable that, *qua* Britain, she will ever have any such voice again. At the time of this renunciation, the ideas of tolerance and liberality in native affairs had taken root nowhere in South African soil, except in some scattered patches of opinion in the Cape Colony. These tender shoots stood in dire need of direct and sustained British support, if they were to reach mature growth. When British support was suddenly withdrawn, it at once became evident that, in spite of the sanguine hopes with which the Cape delegates had put their hand to the Act of Union, they were doomed at the best to a long period of political eclipse, throughout which they could hope to count for very little in the life of the new South African "nation." And behind the certainty of at least temporary material defeat, there loomed the more fatal danger that the prickly-pear of northern anti-native animus would spread southward to choke them utterly. In the event, two decades have sufficed for the process of moral strangulation to complete itself. To-day the

MR. GREATHEART OF BRITAIN

prickly-pear is to all appearances evenly spread over the whole Union, and repressionism meets with a welcome uniformly enthusiastic in all areas of European occupation from Walvis Bay to Durban and from Cape Town to the Limpopo.

In America the South lost the Civil War in 1865; but by 1900, in the battle waged on the Negro front, it had turned the tables on its victors. By a parallel, but even quicker, process in South Africa, the British tradition of friendly concern for primitive races has been ignominiously routed, notwithstanding the material victory of 1902.

CHAPTER II

THE TACTICAL SITUATION

THE position which has arisen since Union, as a result of Britain's selling the pass of the native question to the Afrikaner, has lately been described in some detail.¹ It is obviously wholly intolerable.

Yet the great majority of white South Africans live their lives in the midst of it, not with acquiescence merely but with positive relish. Their attitude may arise from indifference to the black man's known sufferings, or from indolence so complete that they will not bother to acquaint themselves with the actual conditions of his life. The one cause would be evidence of their insensibility, the other of their triviality. Either is evidence of their unfitness for racial domination.

It is no longer constitutionally possible for Great Britain to make direct or official amends for her defection of 1910. Although representative natives in the Transkei and in Zululand have requested that those territories should be detached from the

¹ E.g. in the works of Professor W. M. Macmillan, and in my own sketch, *Caliban in Africa*.

THE TACTICAL SITUATION

Union and restored to the same British rule enjoyed under the South African High Commission, by their brothers in Basutoland, Swaziland, and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, radical changes of that kind are quite visionary. For practical purposes it must be accepted that, in the absence of warlike upheavals, the native population of the Union is destined to remain within the Union.

The question, then, is, What forms can British intervention in the native situation of South Africa properly take? There is a threefold answer.

First, there is the assistance that private individuals and organisations can lend to those minority movements inside the Union itself which are fighting for native development on rational lines. Since 1910 the traditional British case in native affairs has been allowed to go by default. The British Government, as it was bound to do once the compact implicit in the South Africa Act was entered into, abandoned it in deference to the new Union "sovereignty" vested in the local whites. But, whatever may be the proper attitude of the British Government as a Government, the fact remains that the "autonomy" of the Union is not autonomy in any genuine sense, since the "self" which governs does not include the vast majority of the population, namely the non-European peoples. As long as this continues true, as long as the bulk of the people of South Africa are forcibly excluded from citizenship in their

THE NEW BOER WAR

own country by a narrow, privileged oligarchy, so long does every well-disposed person outside South Africa, whether of British or any other nationality, retain a general *jus auxilii ferendi* to the oppressed. Only when the black man enjoys full citizenship will South Africa's rulers be able to call that right in question by an appeal to the principle of South Africa's "self"-determination.

Of the people of British stock living in the Union, many had never offered any resistance to the prevailing anti-native complex; and those who might have been better disposed fell gradually into an attitude of drift, partly because of a contempt for native sufferings such as familiarity seems unhappily to breed, and partly from an honest anxiety to do nothing to spoil the chances of Anglo-Dutch co-operation. The result is that English-speaking South Africans, as such, have never drawn together in a common effort to enshrine and perpetuate the best traditions of British dealing with subject races. Support has, of course, been forthcoming from Britons in most quarters of the globe, including even South Africa, for missionary effort. But the political and, what is much more important, the economic fields have until the last year or two been almost completely neglected.

For twenty years before Union the tactical position was, to generalise very broadly, British

THE TACTICAL SITUATION

and native versus Dutch: during the twenty years since Union it has tended more and more to become Dutch and British versus native. Of the two evils the former is unquestionably the less. To-day the two opposed forces into which local European sentiment is divided are mustering in their respective camps and mobilising their resources for a critical conflict. The anti-native group is not only numerically and politically much stronger; its preparations are in every way much further advanced. It can boast a high degree of compactness, cohesion, and solidarity. The pro-native elements, on the other hand (they hardly yet form a group) are scattered among the missions, the churches, the Joint Council movement, and the Universities. They are coming, however, to see the need of drawing their ranks closer together, of co-ordinating their efforts, and perhaps of achieving some measure of unification. They need, and are in a position to make use of, the moral and material assistance both of South Africans who still attach some value to British tradition and of people in Britain who realise the deep significance to the whole civilised world of the African colour problem. We shall consider later in what specific ways such assistance might effectively be given.

In the second place, there is the pressure which the British Government is still able to exert, with perfect constitutional propriety, through the High-

THE NEW BOER WAR

Commission territories. In them the Secretary of State for the Dominions is the supreme arbiter of policy, and he has less a liberty than a duty to carry out the will of the British people in respect of them. At present, as we shall discover in the sequel, this is hardly being done—at least if the official declarations of Britain's native policy in Africa correspond at all closely with that will. If it were done, if the difference in well-being between the Protectorate and the Union natives actually matched the ostensible difference in goodwill between the British and the Afrikaner régimes, the success to British "arms" would have important repercussions inside the Union. The relations of the Protectorates with the Union are so close geographically and economically that any strong upward tendency in the standards of native life in the former could not fail to transmit itself in some degree to the latter; and the converse is, naturally, even truer. Britain's proper task, then, is so to order policy in the Protectorates as to raise the economic status of Protectorate natives, and thus, by a reciprocal motion, impart an upward tendency to native economic life in South Africa generally. In the second section of this book we shall inquire how such a plan can be carried out.

The third possibility may seem rather more remote. It lies in the example which Britain is able to set in the more northerly parts of Africa which come under her control. To pretend, at this late

THE TACTICAL SITUATION

hour, that Afrikanerism is not the chief opponent of the humanitarian principles to which Britain and the League of Nations are committed, is merely to give an untimely imitation of the ostrich. No doubt it is awkward that the main stronghold of Afrikanerism should happen to be a Dominion nominally British and a member of the League; but the awkwardness is a poor reason for declining to recognise the facts. Probably few civilised people to-day would question that the declarations of Britain and the League represent on paper a more reasonable and a more promising approach to native problems than that desperate gamble to which we give the name of Afrikanerism. But the issue between the two will in the end be judged by practical results. If Britain in her own territories can point to a level of native well-being beyond question higher than the Union's, she will both strip Afrikanerism of its last shred of outer prestige and drain it of its inner energy. If she fails to do so, she will sink into a stalemate of unresolved conflict with European settlers throughout British Africa and leave them with a virtually free hand to settle the native issue in terms of their own unexpurgated convenience and by means of their favourite opportunist repressionism. That way lies one thing, and one thing only—inter-racial war.

There can be no permanent success for British policy in Central and Eastern Africa, while

THE NEW BOER WAR

Southern Africa nurtures a flourishing Afrikanerism. Even to-day the unity of the continent is too real for that; and it becomes more real with every year. If Britain hopes to consolidate her own position, she must undermine the Afrikaner's.

CHAPTER III

THE NEED OF ORGANISATION

§ I

WE may begin by trying to indicate at what points private individuals and unofficial organisations might lend assistance in the internal situation of the Union.

If the native is to escape a moral rot correlative to that which already affects so large a class of Europeans, if he is not to expend his spirit in a waste of frustrate disaffection, as they expend theirs in one of key-turning privilege, there is, quite plainly, one primary essential, namely a Solonian *seisachtheia*, a fairly comprehensive shaking-off of burdens. He needs to be given reasonable rights in property, the right of industrial organisation, a fair run for his money in the labour market, freedom of movement throughout the Union, a proper share in the common public services of the country. In particular he needs to be encouraged to develop a health service adequate to maintain the physique of his race; for no stable progress is possible from a basis of de-

THE NEW BOER WAR

generating physique. These things form the minimum requirements for tolerable living, and nothing could more clearly expose the dreadful dullness of soul of his European rulers than their willingness to live year after year with unimpaired cheerfulness amid a population to which that minimum is denied—willingness to grow fat on beauty's wreck and the wreck of the best powers of millions of defenceless children.

After the *seisachtheia* it will be time enough to talk of solving the native question; but the *seisachtheia* will have to come quickly, if the native question is not to find a blood-solution. Already it is clear that, in principle, progress without conflict must embody a blend of what organised natives demand with what organised white opinion will consent to. The task of reform, therefore, is to educate natives to know what to ask for and whites to know what to yield. It is a duel and an interlocked process. Neither aspect of it can be of much avail in the absence of the other. And in so far as outsiders can help, they will have to make use of insiders, and vice versa. If a moral Jameson Raid is ever to succeed, there must be proper co-ordination between the raiding parties and the Committee of revolutionaries within.

THE NEED OF ORGANISATION

§ 2

Efforts to mitigate the lunacy of the general European attitude have hitherto been directed mainly towards influencing the politicians. This, of course, is putting the cart before the horse. The vital spot to be touched is the opinion of which politicians are but reflections. They themselves are incapable of altering it; indeed they do not try. And if, without altering itself, they seek to distort their reflection of it, they merely commit political suicide and make room for more obedient mirrors. Naturally, they prefer to weld together its strongest and therefore its crudest prejudices in order to make party weapons for themselves. Some sense of honour and justice may slowly percolate to the Union's extremely uncouth system from the general manners of the times, and from less myopic precept and example in other parts of Africa. The enlightened youth of South Africa will admit that it is their country's duty to draw at least level with outside statesmanship. But, whatever may be the case with world opinion, policy in the rest of Africa is at present in a state of internal struggle, wherein Afrikanerism in one disguise or another is one of the contending parties, and it is not yet certain where ultimate victory will lie. It is therefore hardly more safe than it is dignified for such South Africans as

THE NEW BOER WAR

recognise the failure of their country's approach to native problems to wait too trustingly upon influence from without. Certainly, they should enlist its aid, wherever possible; but the initiative lies, or should lie, with themselves. Theirs it is to rise as swiftly and as strenuously as they can to the level of the responsibilities which the rest of their compatriots so pitiably shirk. The hope of leavening the Afrikaner lump is meagre and forlorn enough; but to a stout heart the very magnitude of the task is a challenge to buckle to it with the more vigour. Assuredly no knight-errantry need sigh for work of a more Herculean quality than awaits the social evangelist of vision in South Africa.

Chinks in the Afrikaner armour are few and far between. More than one-tenth of the whole white population is composed of "poor whites," pitied but degenerate outcasts of the rural economic system, sodden with a pride of race the more insensate because it comprises just intelligence enough to know that pigmentation is its only pretext, held helplessly in thrall by

The soul of Africa, the grey
Hushed emanation of her hills,
The drowsy poison of her day,
The hand that fondles while it kills,

THE NEED OF ORGANISATION

The subtle anaesthetic breath,
The vengeful sting that gives no pain
But deals around it worse than death
The palsied soul, the mildewed brain.

At a scarcely higher level of responsible citizenship subsist the urban "stiffs," superannuated and unemployable flotsam of old wars, mining camps, and diamond fields, with no visible means of support but gambling and illicit liquor-selling. Next come the permanent workers on the alluvial diamond diggings. They lead the toughest and most precarious of lives in conditions of considerable squalor and hardship, and sensitiveness to the interests of other classes than their own cannot be expected of them. Next, the European labour on the gold mines—rude types, for the most part, whose rudeness is partially brutalised by the traditional standards followed in their exercise of authority over the black miners. And last, the cosmopolitan element, chiefly hucksters from the south and east of Europe, unwilling emigrants from their own countries, having no experience and no interest in colour questions, and pre-occupied with establishing their own position in a strange and none too friendly land.

These groups taken together, and added to the certified lunatics and mental defectives, comprise some 25 per cent. of the white population, a proportion probably three times as large as that which

THE NEW BOER WAR

has any title to the opprobrious name of negrophile. From the standpoint of the reformer, they all represent one solid *inutile lignum*, to which there can be no point in looking either for liberal ideas or for acquiescence in liberalism. Assuming, then, that a further 10 per cent. already stand for inter-racial justice (the figure is probably an over-estimate), it is clear that the lump to which the leaven has to be applied is the remaining 65 per cent. of "good class citizen." Racially, this lump is made up of Dutch and British in the rough ratio of 3 to 2. Spiritually, it is made up of three main classes, the diseased, the sleeping, and the dead. The first are those whom the infection of the colour-complex has rotted into confirmed negrophobes. The second belong to the type indicated by Shelley when he said:

Many are strong and rich and would be just,
But live among their suffering fellow-men
As if none felt.

The third class are the trimmers, who see the struggle but have no heart for it, and who forgo the chance of praise in the hope of escaping blame. "They are mixed with that caitiff choir of the angels, who were not rebellious, nor were faithful to God; but were for themselves. Heaven chased them forth to keep its beauty from impair; and the deep Hell receives them not, for the wicked

THE NEED OF ORGANISATION

would have some glory over them." Such are the wages of neutrality in this battle.

To the newcomer to South Africa the inability of the victims of the colour-complex to like and to admire a fellow-creature so obviously admirable and likeable as the average native is perplexing. It seems to argue a blind spot in ordinary human sensibility. This defect and the consequent insolence of the Afrikaner's normal bearing towards every class of native are, of course, due ultimately to defects of culture and spiritual insight in the widest sense. But allied to the negative aspect of deficiency and reinforcing it, is a positive psychological morbidity. Anyone who is familiar with the principles of Freudian psychology (and who in these unreticent days is not?) will see at a glance how readily they can account for the anti-native psychosis. One of the main aspects of that psychosis is, indeed, in the technical jargon, simply a mass sex-perversion. Such a view of the matter is strikingly supported by the fact that colour-madness, in the grotesque form which it assumes in Afrikanerism, is apparently confined to Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon peoples, among whom all sexual feeling is apt to be closely associated with the sense of guilt. For the same reason it is apt to be at its strongest in those who, like members of the Dutch Reformed Church and certain British dissenting churches, are dominated by a tradition of Calvinistic puritanism. The Latin

THE NEW BOER WAR

peoples, whose attitude to sex is on the whole one of pagan naturalism, are still comparatively resistant to morbid reactions where "colour" is concerned.

Sometimes the Afrikaner's religion, basing itself upon a childish misapplication of Old Testament texts, unblushingly presents the native races as divinely doomed in perpetuity to be servants of a superior order of beings, which it equally childishly identifies with Europeans.¹ At other times it emphasises, and by implication applies to the natives, a notion alleged to belong to Christianity, the notion of the heathen as a creature outside the true family of God, differing in kind from the faithful and redeemed, devoid of intrinsic value except what is common to every sinner, to be respected not for its own sake, but, if at all, as a focus for the pity of its betters and as possible material for conversion. The power of such unscientific and irrational ideas as these in the mature, or rather the adult, life of generation after generation of white South Africans it would be difficult to over-estimate.

Similar results are, from a different angle, reached by the formal education of the schools.

¹ Thus, on October 20th, 1931, Mr. E. A. Conroy, M.P., speaking at a public meeting in the Orange Free State, observed that "he was totally opposed to the principle of educating natives, for God had placed the blacks in South Africa to serve the whites." This and kindred blasphemies are common among the "civilised" inhabitants of the great self-governing Dominion.

THE NEED OF ORGANISATION

It is amusing to recall that Sanderson of Oundle said years ago of the English public school: "Our present system is candidly based on training a dominant master class. But the uprising of the workers and modern conditions are rapidly making the dominant method unworkable." That is true, word for word, of South Africa to-day, and its significance is increasing year by year. The education system is of course designed to buttress up "white prestige" in every possible way, and to give white youth such an exclusive training as will put it beyond the reach of competition for political and economic power. What the ordinary scholar learns about natives is that they are habitual stock thieves who once showed a spirit dastardly enough to fight his ancestors, and who, therefore, though for the moment tamed, can only be regarded as enemies of the white race in Africa, richly deserving of the servitude that has been imposed upon them. Whether consciously or not, the schools endorse and ratify the contempt for black men, as black, which every European boy and girl continuously inhales from the social atmosphere. Mr. J. H. Harris, President of the Transvaal Teachers' Association, publicly declared on March 29th, 1932, that "history taught in South African schools had done as much to prevent a sympathetic understanding between the two white races and between the white and native races as all the hot air expended by purblind poli-

THE NEW BOER WAR

ticians deliberately designed for racial ends. The native question was prejudiced right from the beginning because of the manner of approach in schools." In the universities the faculties of Bantu studies, which have recently been set up in Cape Town, on the Witwatersrand, and elsewhere, have already done something to foster among students the growth of an outlook saner and less wildly unscientific than that of the European community as a whole. It is too soon to estimate what ultimate results may be looked for from this source. Only a small fraction of each generation ever reaches the universities, whose direct influence in a matter of this kind, although it may be deep, can thus scarcely be wide. But the universities have already achieved enough to suggest that a corresponding effort in the secondary schools might be of real importance in the national life.

Closely bound up with the defects of general education is the simple question of manners. Bad manners in South Africa, as in India or Kenya, probably do more than any other single influence to make race intolerable to race. This is clearly recognised where the relations of Dutch and British are involved, and nowadays some effort is made from each side to behave with ordinary decency towards the other. At the same time the normal behaviour of most Europeans towards natives of every class remains boorish to a degree, and when a native fails to respond to a European's

THE NEED OF ORGANISATION

suggestion or instruction in precisely the manner which the latter happens to have visualised to himself as correct, immediate recourse is had, as a general rule, to a mode of bullying abuse, the more unspeakably offensive since the object of it, child though he may be, is as often as not a prince in his own country—that is to say, one having authority in the tribe to which he belongs. This kind of bad manners is in Africa a genuine moral crime. It is the spark which sooner or later will touch off the powder of even the most patiently endured oppression. Yet it is not only condoned but freely indulged in by most orders of European from Cabinet Ministers upward. No more useful task lies to the hand of young South Africans of the better-baked variety than to propagandize and organise a sentiment of common civility in this matter.

§ 3

Another highly important field for educational effort to work in is the economic. For it is a simple matter to demonstrate that South African impolicy in native affairs is no less lethal to the economic interests of white than of black. And ears which remain obstinately deaf to moral and religious exhortation, and even to the claims of common decency, sometimes listen attentively to the economic appeal. As to the educational

THE NEW BOER WAR

machinery to be employed for the purpose, it would need to be specially devised, for none at present exists. The work of the "Shock Brigades" which the Russians have invented to popularise the Five-Year Plan and stimulate its operation, is capable of furnishing useful hints. And another model from which the young South African of public spirit might learn many a lesson is the small dedicated society of the type of Gokhale's Servants of India. Perhaps the most pressing call is for a propagandist organisation on a national scale, as inclusive as possible of all elements that may be loosely termed pro-native—an organisation which should boldly stand out for radical alterations in the country's course in inter-racial policy, should not be afraid of being "political," and should ruthlessly proselytise, in season and out. One weakness of existing negro-ophile movements is their anxiety not to tread on the corns of authority, and not to harden opposition against their work. But their prime need is to harden themselves. And, after all, has not an all-wise providence afflicted those in authority with corns expressly that they may be trodden on?

The development, after these or other fashions, of some corporate endeavour within South African society in the direction of self-redemption would be an encouraging sign. Such endeavour, in many forms, could profit greatly by voluntary, unofficial

THE NEED OF ORGANISATION

support from sympathisers overseas.¹ But it would be visionary to expect from it any very striking outward results. Its pressure could only be puny in comparison with the mass-sentiment of that 65 per cent. of the electorate against which it would be mainly applied, and it would be unlikely to alter materially the electorate's party groupings. Its utmost achievement would be to make all parties a little less hide-bound by self-discrepant convictions belonging to an outworn tradition, and to bring together a genuinely South African nucleus somewhat accessible to ideas more in harmony with the economic and social realities of the day. There would be no mass-conversions, no widespread revulsion of feeling. That is the less important, because in any case the work of reform cannot wait for such things. Britain would never have abolished slavery if she had stayed to convince the slave-owners of the wisdom of abolition.

World opinion may do much. Even twenty years ago world opinion was directly responsible for a thoroughgoing reconstruction in the Belgian Congo. In the interval its organisation has developed and its power has increased; and though its effects in South Africa may be neither so swift, nor so sure, nor so spectacular, it will perhaps in

¹ The formation of a society in Britain with a view to delivering such support to approved causes in South Africa ought to be considered.

THE NEW BOER WAR

the long run prove equally condemnatory and equally hard to resist. People in Britain who grasp the importance of the problem and their country's responsibility can give useful aid in stimulating that opinion and carrying it to effective utterance.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEED OF IDEAS

“ However numerous a downtrodden class may be, and however extreme its miseries, it will never be able to make an effective protest until it achieves solidarity by the development of some common general idea. Educated men and men of ideas are more necessary to a popular movement than to any other political process.”—H. G. WELLS.

§ I

WE have discussed in outline the task of teaching the white population what to yield; and we have seen it to be not very hopeful. Is the task of assisting the native to give first shape and then effect to his legitimate aspirations any more so? How can he make the “ effective protest ” of our Wellsian chapter-heading?

A revolution, as Mr. Wells has also reminded us, can only be constructive in so far as it has been discussed, planned, and explained beforehand; otherwise it is a merely excretory process, evacuating from the system of national life certain politi-

THE NEW BOER WAR

cal or social waste-products, and leaving chaos or indeterminate void in their place. In other words, effective revolution must be a gradual operation that creates both a common political idea and a new moral unity—"an idea of the state as the personal possession of each individual and as the backbone of fact in his scheme of duties." The material basis for these things is universal education of a reasonably humanist type, supplemented by prompt and adequate information as to what is taking place in the State, and by frank, unfettered, critical discussion of contemporary issues. And this basis, in turn, implies a co-ordinated system of scholastic institutions, and responsible press, publicists, and politicians.

To bring such a crop to harvest in the field of native mentality is clearly a huge undertaking, not to be completed in a single generation. The South African native cannot be expected to carry it through without a good deal of outside help. Education, in spite of all that the missionaries and other devoted souls have done for it, still cries out for enormous expansion; and systematic dissemination of printed matter among native readers has hardly been begun. In both directions large opportunities await the favourably disposed European, whether resident in South Africa or elsewhere. He can supply the first stimulus and can offer guidance in the early stages of development. But the real job, if it is done at all, will have to be

THE NEED OF IDEAS

done by natives themselves. It is not merely that human nature values what it has to pay for above what it receives as a gift; natives also owe it to their manhood not to accept too much. Once native effort is set upon its feet, the white man's chief contribution will consist in not obstructing it, and in keeping his mind free from the assumption that he always knows what is best for the black man. For many years South African natives will have to reconcile themselves to the fact that the bulk of the white population in their midst will merely blink dishonestly at their tribulations. But the few on their side, the few who can at least see afar the tower of the true City, will steadily increase and be steadily reinforced by civilised opinion and civilised effort.

Especially on first principles the hard, constructive thinking should come from natives. What do the natives want for themselves? Which way do their hopes, their aspirations, point? Is the white man to hammer out his own idea of a policy, and then impose it on their silence or their hopelessness? No clear reply is, I think, yet possible. But it is to such fundamental questions that educated native opinion throughout Bantu Africa ought to be giving its attention on a basis of systematic co-operation. One possibility might be a native Board of Intellectual Co-operation to survey not merely the political aspect, but the entire cultural field affected by European-Bantu

THE NEW BOER WAR

contact. Perhaps a joint lead in this direction could be given to Bantu Africa by educated natives of the Union and Uganda. The whole matter is one for whose clarification years of hard intellectual effort will be needed. But a distinctive Bantu contribution is most desirable, and a great step forward will have been taken when the Bantu peoples address themselves to it seriously and with an adequate sense of the ultimate unity of all African problems.

§ 2

All this, however, is only for what we may call the upper ten among Africans. A point of equal importance is by what means Bantu ideas, whenever and however they find expression, are to be carried out. They may be shaped on the upper intellectual levels and percolate downwards, as it were, into the consciousness of the mass; or they may surge upwards from mass sentiment to find a focus on the upper levels; or, as with Marxism in Europe, they may combine both processes. In any case they need an orderly and coherent vehicle if they are to be made effective in the world of practical affairs. If the main impulse turns out to be an upward surge, it is to be hoped that the intellectual forces may still retain a measure of formative influence and control, so as to

THE NEED OF IDEAS

play, for example, the same kind of part as Fabianism played in relation to the "class-war" in Britain. There can be small doubt that the Labour movement in Britain has achieved the success it now enjoys, and has achieved it without the worst forms of violence, largely because it has been companioned most of the way by a fairly systematic political philosophy. If the native movement has to make its march without some similar guidance, it will have little option but to base itself on the purely destructive race-hatred into which European policy in the Union and some other parts of Africa has long been doing everything possible to drive it. In that event, its stream will dissipate itself in a sandy delta of conflict, which, while possibly fatal to European prosperity and prestige, will be hardly less damaging to the best prospects of the native cause. This result, as we have seen, is the most probable, at least so far as concerns the Union.

Nevertheless, unless we are to throw our hands in and give up all attempt to direct events, Europeans of some political sense must struggle to prevent the native from using race-feeling as his main driving power. Some kind of Bantu solidarity is, no doubt, not only desirable, but indispensable to native advancement. At present it hardly exists, because of the gulf between the "raw" and the detribalised natives, and because of the tribal divisions which have long existed among the one

THE NEW BOER WAR

and the class divisions now springing up among the other. It will have to be developed. The one force now working towards it is a vague sense of being herded into a single camp by the white man. Unless that sense is deliberately displaced by some clearer, more positive, and more attractive idea, it must obviously grow into a settled anti-European animus. Indeed, in the minds of many individual Union natives it has already done so. If things hold to their present course, it is only a question of time when a race-cry will be made out of it.

On the other hand, if the Bantu are asked to renounce race-animus as a means of self-expression and a mutual bond, they must be offered a focus for their aspirations in either the political or the economic field. Of the alternatives, the latter seems the preferable. For one thing, it is, on the whole, more readily dissociated from race-animus, and therefore less likely in itself to lead to conflict with Europeans as such. It is a sphere in which statesmanship has a better chance of demonstrating the compatibility of white and black interests, or at least of showing that, if they diverge, they do so not on lines of race, but as the interests of capital and of labour diverge. For another thing, political rights, even when gained, do not in practice count for very much, unless backed by some measure of real economic power. Moreover, in South Africa (and apparently also in Kenya, if the policy now officially contemplated is carried out) political

THE NEED OF IDEAS

power for natives depends on economic power even more directly than this, since it is safe to predict that natives in the mixed societies of Africa will never share political rights with white men, except by qualifying for them on a civilisation test, and that in turn is really a test of economic resources, for civilisation is only had through education, and, by natives, education has to be bought.

If the above considerations are just, a threefold suggestion takes shape as appropriate to the present tactical situation. It is (*a*) that native thought should give the best of its attention to economic ideas, (*b*) that attempts at native advancement should concentrate on the economic field, and (*c*) that the driving power for such economic advancement should, to begin with, be sought among the urban (i.e. the industrialised and semi-industrialised) natives.

This means that, in the conditions now obtaining in the Union, the plough which is to prepare the field of native life for the crop of civilisation should be fashioned out of native industrial organisation in some form or other. And industrial organisation must begin among those classes which have become permanently urbanised. The various attempts which have been made at unspecialised forms of native organisation prove conclusively the immense difficulty of mobilising the rural native for sustained and co-ordinated endeavour, whether in the economic

THE NEW BOER WAR

or the political field. The people of the reserves, even though they send out the bulk of their males to work in European employment for many months in each year, are still as a class too detached from the general economic system the Europeans have imposed to be able to intervene effectively in it. The other large class of rural natives, namely those who live and work on European-owned farms, are too scattered, too dependent for their livelihood on the caprice of an individual "master," too securely trussed up by pass-laws and Masters and Servants laws, and often too little developed educationally to offer very promising material for the organiser yet. The mine natives seem at first glance the likeliest material, but the appearance is deceptive, partly because their numbers are made up of migrant labourers on six months' or nine-months' contracts, many of whom come from outside the Union, and partly because of the compound system under which they are controlled throughout their service, and which has many dragons for their "protection" against the machinations of the "agitator." British influence might perhaps assist in breaking down this undue insulation of mine-workers from the movements of thought and feeling in the native population as a whole, by facilitating their organisation at the Protectorates' end. As we shall see later, the three High Commission territories supply about one-sixth of

THE NEED OF IDEAS

the native labour on the mines; and if even this fraction of native opinion were vocal and coherent, it could appreciably affect for good the position of natives in South African industry generally. No doubt the right policy for the Protectorates is to keep down the migration of their man-power well below its present injurious limits. But reduction is bound to be a very gradual process, and, while migration lasts, there is good reason for taking any steps likely to improve the conditions under which it takes place. From this standpoint it would be worth while to bring out from England some trade unionist of intelligent vision to tour the territories, and advise on the possibility of organising labour migrants on suitable industrial lines.

§ 3

But the pivotal factor in the situation is the permanent town-dwelling native, and the main work is to organise him. His numbers are probably more than half a million, and though this is not a very large proportion of the native population, it is being and will be continuously added to by the overflow from the congested reserves. It provides ample material for a beginning, and if it were vitally active and organised, it could well function as a kind of ductless gland in the body politic,

THE NEW BOER WAR

profoundly influencing the brain and modifying the temperament of the State with its invisible hormones. At present there is no native industrial organisation worthy of the name. The I.C.U.,¹ which at one time seemed likely to become a serious force, has pretty completely disintegrated, and nothing has yet arisen to take its place.

The first step is to amend the Industrial Conciliation Act so as to make it applicable to natives on the same terms as Europeans. As things now stand, natives outside the Cape Province are in effect excluded from the operation of the Act, except that agreements between European employers as to wages and other conditions of work are sometimes regarded, when convenient from the European point of view, as being of force where non-European employees are concerned. The repeal of certain provisions in other Acts, whose effect is to illegalise the industrial organisation of natives, would also be needed.

Legal changes are a necessary preliminary, but it would still leave many problems for practical common sense to worry out. One of the most prominent of these concerns the relation between native and European industrial organisations. The Union Government's policy has been to register only one trade union for each trade, provided it is representative of the whole trade. The

¹ For an account of the vicissitudes of this body see *Caliban in Africa*, Chapter III.

THE NEED OF IDEAS

registration of a second union is only permitted when the first limits its membership to specified members of the trade. Many European unions have an open constitution which does not expressly stipulate for any such limitation; but in practice they nevertheless close their doors to non-Europeans. The latter, though they may comprise the majority of workers in the trade, cannot in these cases register separate unions. This practice has led to curious anomalies, where questions of colour arise. For instance, in one particular trade, that of hotel employees, Indians in Durban, who were said to form some 97 per cent. of the local employees in the trade, anticipated the Europeans and registered a union. The union had an open constitution, and its members were ready to admit Europeans. But the European employees, being too proud to join an Indian organisation, sought to register a separate union of their own. This, as I say, was contrary to precedent. However, the ironical upshot was that the Government, feeling itself cornered, urged the union formally to restrict its membership to Indians, in order to facilitate the formation of a parallel organisation consisting of the European 3 per cent. minority. As an Indian writer temperately put it, the union was "required to forswear its open constitution and take the retrograde step of confining itself to Indians—a course contrary to the right policy cherished by Indians and pro-

THE NEW BOER WAR

fessed by the Government itself—just for the purpose of humouring the racial prejudices of a small minority of Europeans in the trade.”

Obviously, the proper way out of difficulties of this kind is by a single union for Europeans and non-Europeans, in which no distinctions of race are made. Some leaders of the European trade union movement have, as a matter of theory, come to accept this self-evident proposition, and the South African Trades' Union Congress has even passed resolutions to the effect that the most satisfactory method of organisation is to include all workers in a given industry or trade in one union. Unfortunately opinion among the body of European workers runs on quite different lines, and the establishment of non-racial unions is for that reason not a solution for the immediate present. It is palpably true that any attempt to form common unions to-day would only result in a large drop in the European membership of trade unions, and consequently in a large decrease in the bargaining strength of workers generally. The Trades Union Congress has suggested as an alternative that each union should open special branches for non-Europeans otherwise eligible to join. In the abstract, the suggestion has its attractions, if only as a means of training non-Europeans in trade union methods. But it is doubtful if either European employers or European employees would very generally agree

THE NEED OF IDEAS

to native representation on the various bodies set up under the Industrial Conciliation and Apprenticeship Acts—unless, of course, natives were represented there by Europeans. And that, from the native standpoint, would rob the scheme of all its value.

The remaining possibility is separate, but “parallel,” unions for natives. Clearly, they could only be a *pis aller*. They would mean opposition to the white unions more often than cooperation with them; and for a long time they would split the workers’ movement on racial lines. That is of the less importance, since the white worker has already done it pretty thoroughly. They would have the advantage of leaving the native free to fight his own battle according to the manhood in him. And they alone seem immediately practicable.

Even supposing that the problem of organisation could be satisfactorily settled, a further difficulty would remain. There is at present a wide gap between European and non-European wages. For what wage are the organisations of Europeans and non-Europeans, however they may be constituted and whatever may be their mutual relations, to negotiate with employers? Differential wages for the same work are repugnant to economic principle and, indeed, seem indefensible on any ground. Moreover, if two workers are of equal efficiency, the cheaper will drive the dearer out.

THE NEW BOER WAR

If, therefore, wages are fixed at or near the European level, employers will only be able to pay them to the most efficient; and the educational facilities by which efficiency can most readily be gained are not open to non-Europeans. Their fixation at or near the non-European level would be so bitterly resented by European labour that no Government would face the music. In short, wherever wages are fixed, either European or non-European will be plagued with the fear of elimination from his trade. Yet nothing is plainer than that of the principle of equal pay for equal work must be actualised if South Africa is to enjoy decent economic health.

§ 4

Such are some of the problems which native industrial leadership will be called upon to face in the near future. But the immediate need is to evoke that leadership. As yet it hardly exists. And there are obstacles in the way of its emergence.

First is the shock-complex (if I may use the term) from which the native mind in general is for the moment suffering. The sharp collision between the native and European cultures which is the history of the last fifty years, has not only rudely disorganised the traditional modes of native life; it has thrown its whole philosophy

THE NEED OF IDEAS

into confusion. Native mentality is consequently in a state of numb bewilderment where ultimate issues are concerned. It is the pedestrian victim of the hit-and-run motorist which is European civilisation. European civilisation has knocked it down, run over it, and driven straight on without stopping after the accident. The victim needs a respite to recover his senses and collect his wits before he can become fit to lead a forlorn hope in search of redress. Recovery will come as he begins to realise South Africa's complete economic dependence upon his person, and to see that the white enemy is not solid against him.

Second is the difficulty of keeping leaders in touch with led. Some measure of education is indispensable in a leader, since without it the complex South African situation cannot be appreciated, still less can appropriate lines of action be selected. But in native life education sets up a troublesome divorce between those who have it and those who have it not. In some aspects, of course, the trouble is common to all popular movements. Yet it is gravely accentuated for the South African native, because in his case education does not simply mean a more or less privileged acquaintance with certain specific fields of knowledge; it means a radical rearrangement of his whole scheme of values. Thus the educated man tends to be regarded by the uneducated as one who has forsaken native ways and passed over

THE NEW BOER WAR

into the European scheme of things; while he himself tends to regard unsophisticated native society as a kind of social cave from whose gloom he has contrived to ascend into clear upper air, and to which it would be a kind of surrender to return. He ceases both to be representative and to be thought of as representative; and, in practice, as professional man, as budding capitalist, as budding employer, he begins to develop class interests distinct from, and perhaps in appearance opposed to, those of the native community, as such. Involuntary isolation of this kind will possibly disappear as education reaches downward to permeate the mass. In the meantime, its effect is to obstruct the emergence of organic popular leadership. It forms an important argument for intensive effort in the educational field.

A third restrictive factor is the more inexperience of natives in the conduct of public affairs on European lines. Nothing in the tribal system gives much guidance in organising for economic or political purposes in a society of the Western type. On the side of financial management, in particular, native attempts at such organisation have a way of being extremely brittle. This is not because Africans are by nature more given to malversation than Europeans, nor because they are lacking in a sense of responsibility; though it is likely enough that the native's present position in South African society exposes him unduly to risk

THE NEED OF IDEAS

of exploitation by such plausible rogues as may appear. But most natives who have hitherto tried to organise their fellows have been insufficiently grounded in the grammar of book-keeping and accountancy; and they inevitably find difficulty in mastering in a year or two the not very simple, and to them quite alien, principles of public finance which European civilisation now regards as orthodox, but which it has spent some two and a half millennia in evolving. Facilities for systematic instruction in these matters need to be made available to natives, before their organisations can be expected to show a proper stability and a capacity for sustained growth.

PART II

THE HIGH COMMISSION

NOTE.¹

The office of High Commissioner in and for South Africa was created by Letters Patent in 1878. The High Commissioner to-day represents the Crown in all matters occurring in South Africa beyond the limits of the Union and Southern and Northern Rhodesia. He is Governor of Basutoland, and supervises the affairs of Swaziland and the Bechuanaland Protectorate. These three territories, therefore, are politically and administratively quite distinct from the Union, and ultimate responsibility for them lies with the British people and Parliament.

In 1930 the office of High Commissioner was divorced entirely from that of the Governor-General of the Union, with which it had been linked, though under separate commission, since the establishment of Union in 1910.

The present High Commissioner, however, still holds a dual position, for he is also the Representative of the British Government in the Union. Briefly, he is diplomatic envoy in the Union, but Government

¹ The facts here given are taken from the *Official Year Book of the Union of South Africa*.

THE HIGH COMMISSION

and legislature in Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland Protectorate.

Basutoland became British territory and the Basuto British subjects in 1868. Between 1871 and 1884 the territory was annexed to the Cape Colony. In the latter year a Disannexation Act was passed, since when the administration has been carried on under the direct control of the British Government.

The independence of the Swazi people was guaranteed by Conventions entered into between the British Government and the Government of the late South African Republic in 1881 and 1884. In 1890 a provisional government of Swaziland was established, in which the Swazis, the British Government and the Government of the South African Republic were all represented. In 1894, under a Convention between the two latter Governments, the South African Republic was given powers of protection and administration, without incorporation, and Swaziland was governed under this form of control until the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899. After the conclusion of the War the territory was administered under the Governor of the Transvaal until 1907, when the High Commissioner took control and established the present system of administration.

A British Protectorate was proclaimed over what was then known as Northern Bechuanaland in 1885. In 1891 the High Commissioner was authorised to appoint officers for the administration of justice, the raising of revenue, and generally for the peace, order, and good government of all persons within the limits of the Protectorate. The Protectorate was treated as

THE NEW BOER WAR

a part of the Colony of British Bechuanaland until 1895, when the latter was annexed to the Cape Colony. Arrangements were then made for the transfer of the administration of the Protectorate, with the exception of certain reserves for native chiefs, to the British South Africa Company. But in consequence of the Jameson Raid the administration was re-transferred in 1896 to the British Government, by whom the Protectorate in its entirety has since been governed under the name of the Bechuanaland Protectorate.

The following tables show the areas of the provinces of the Union and the Protectorates, together with their native populations at the last native census :

	Area (square miles)	Native Popul'n (1921 Census)
Cape of Good Hope	276,536	1,640,162
Natal	35,284	1,139,804
Transvaal	110,450	1,495,869
O.F.S.	49,647	421,978
Total (Union of S.A.)	471,917	4,697,813

	Area (square miles)	Native Popul'n (1921 Census)
Basutoland ..	11,716	495,937
Bechuanaland Protectorate ..	275,000	150,185
Swaziland	6,705	112,951
Total (High Commission) ..	293,421	759,073

CHAPTER V

BASUTOLAND

§ I

General Economic Conditions

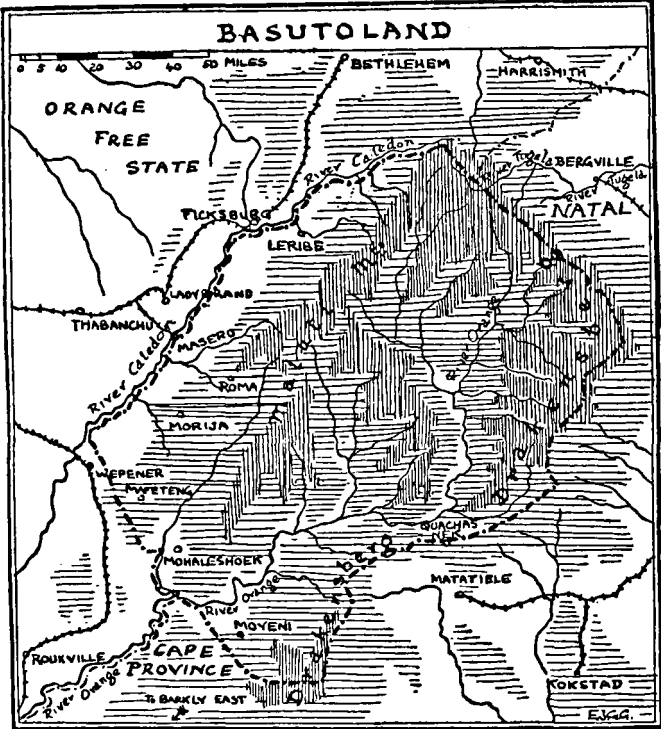
BASUTOLAND has several claims to the much-misused epithet, unique. It is a part of South Africa singularly favoured by nature, both in soil, climate, and scenic beauty. It is, I think, the only enclave within the borders of a self-governing Dominion still directly administered by the British Government. It is certainly the one part of Southern Africa where native interests are not only said to be paramount, but are actually allowed to be treated as such.

Having regard to its social and administrative conditions, it is a disappointment to find that Basutoland presents all the general economic features of the native reserves of the Union. The land, as at present used, is becoming progressively less able to support the whole population, even on a sinking level of subsistence. That native poverty is visibly on the increase is the unanimous im-

THE NEW BOER WAR

pression of the officials, having more than fifteen years' experience of the country, whose opinion has been expressed to me. In consequence, there is taking place a gradual stratification of the once homogeneous native society into prosperous and distressed classes, with a corresponding differentiation of political influence within the tribe. The distressed classes seek relief by sending out their able-bodied men to work for wages on the farms and in the industries of the Union. The extent to which this process has developed may be judged from the following figures. The Basuto nation numbers roughly 550,000 souls, of whom perhaps 140,000 would be adult males capable of work. In 1929, 75,000 passes were issued to natives to enter the Union for labour purposes.

The indications are that the spread of poverty has two main causes. There is no registration of birth and deaths for the Basuto, and so there are no vital statistics. But the opinion of officials in a position to judge is that the population has considerably increased since the last census in 1921, and is probably still increasing, though much more slowly in the last few years. Population pressure has become more noticeable than usual since the beginning of 1930, both because of the temporary glut of labour on the Johannesburg mines and because the general depression has forced employers all over South Africa to a less wasteful use of labour-power. Twenty years ago



Vertical Shading = Over 6,000 Ft.

Horizontal Shading 6,000-8,000 Ft.

THE NEW BOER WAR

the Basuto lived almost exclusively in the belt of comparatively low and flat land along the western and northern borders, and hardly used the mountain districts of the interior, except for cattle posts. But since that time they have been steadily invading the mountains to set up permanent dwellings there. To-day, a large part of the people have no other home, and the chiefs are already beginning to experience difficulty in finding land for allotment to the new generation. The more even spread of the population over the whole territory is in many ways a desirable development. Certainly, there is no call for pity of those whom destiny leads towards the heights. The mountains are magnificent country, rich in fine sheep veld and good soil for wheat. But the extensive exodus to them does show that, on the basis of present economy, numbers are beginning to tax the capacity of the land.

Concurrently, there is taking place a manifest contraction of the land's capacity itself. The old vicious circle, familiar in every native area of South Africa, is in full swing in Basutoland—the circle of overstocking, of continuous cropping year after year in the same fields without either rotation or fertilising, of manure-burning, of soil erosion. The dreadful ravages which erosion is making in the best farm lands of the country shock the traveller the more severely because the actual work of cultivation (ploughing, harrowing,

BASUTOLAND

etc.) is on the whole appreciably better done in Basutoland than in most native areas of the Union—testimony to the invincible keenness of the agricultural department.

The two factors of increasing population and dwindling productivity give, as I say, the usual South African result. More than half the able-bodied men are forced to leave their country for longer or shorter periods every year, and to sell their labour in the Union. The extent of this annual migration varies directly with the success or otherwise of harvests in Basutoland, thus showing clearly that the main controlling factor is the productivity of the tribal land, although fluctuations in the prices of produce no doubt may have a powerful contributory influence. Basutoland's chronic failure in self-sufficiency seems generally to be regarded as an admirable arrangement. In Basutoland the chiefs and the European administrators and traders alike think the country lucky in having Union industry hard by to take the overflow of unemployed and provide them (at a price) with cash to bring back. And to Union eyes it appears fitting that Basutoland should thus make a fat contribution to the supplies of labour unsophisticated and unorganised enough to be ignorant of its proper value.

But from the Basutoland side, at least, there is evident self-discrepancy in arrangements which, while purporting to perpetuate tribal rule, at the

THE NEW BOER WAR

same time assist its disintegration by means of the enforced association of tribe-members with a wage-system both territorially and racially alien. And, apart from all that, the migrant labour force from Basutoland is, as matters stand at present, in unfair competition with ever-increasing numbers of detribalised Union natives. That competition, which from the urban native's standpoint is precisely the same in kind as the native competition of which the European worker so bitterly complains, is a singularly effective obstacle to the general rise of wage-levels for natives that all authoritative economists now agree to be just as essential in the interest of Europeans as in those of the natives themselves. The consequent weakness of the whole native community as consumers is also one of the reasons for the low prices offered for Basutoland produce.

Practically all the Basuto who go out into the Union to work return again to Basutoland, as soon as they have earned enough cash to meet their immediate requirements. The annual efflux, therefore, does nothing effective to ease the pressure on the land within the territory; its only positive utility is as a means, albeit a clumsy and precarious one, of keeping the territory solvent. This is a necessary function, of course; but the present method of discharging it has disadvantages so serious that only the total absence of

BASUTOLAND

alternatives could justify it. It can hardly be maintained that no alternatives exist.

The nature and the effects of the competition between reserve natives and urban natives in the labour markets of the Union have been exposed by the Economic and Wage Commission of 1925, and are to-day fairly generally understood. They are infinitely damaging to the social and economic well-being of the urban native, and are a direct cause of much of the illicit liquor traffic and other criminal habits which disfigure the Union's large industrial centres. Nor do they really benefit the reserve native. True, they make the spectre of unemployment less formidable for him, but they also make his conditions of employment worse than they would otherwise be. Over its whole range the competition is cut-throat competition in the strictest sense. Naturally it is greatly intensified by the incursions from Basutoland and the other High Commission territories. As long as they continue there can be small prospect of improvement in the economic lot of native workers anywhere in South Africa, whether in the Union or in the territories. If the Union urban native were a European worker in a European country, he would long since have organised to prevent the employment of "scabs" and "black-legs" from the territories until he had secured to himself the proper fruits of his own scarcity value. In so doing, he would probably have proved an

THE NEW BOER WAR

all-round benefactor. The territories, to their own gain and better development, would have been driven to provide employment for their own men within their own borders. And the task would have been less difficult than perhaps it now seems by reason of the mere withdrawal of those men from Union labour markets, with a consequent rise in standards of native employment in the Union, and an enlarged native market for Basutoland produce, such as stock for meat, wheat for bread, and wool for clothing.

In any case, as things are at present, the soil and the population of Basutoland are both being used to subsidise the European employer in the Union by pushing down his native labour costs. A curious result, when it is remembered that Basutoland and its administration ostensibly exist purely for the furtherance of native interests.

§ 2

The Chiefs

The question of the position of the chiefs and their authority is a difficult one. Government policy has consisted rather in a woolly benevolence than in any form of rule, however "indirect." It has sought to advise, not to administer,—in the sense in which, for instance, Uganda or Tanganyika is administered. The Basutoland Govern-

BASUTOLAND

ment is expected to get chiefs out of mischief, and even, looking before as well as after, to steer them clear of it. But if it attempts some positive development unconnected with such work of protection and rescue, it is apt to be charged roundly with interfering.

Undoubtedly this system has its advantages. The chiefs not only deal with practically the whole range of civil litigation; they also discharge a multitude of executive duties in connection with important matters such as land, marriage, and succession. It is true that they are frequently charged with dilatoriness and inefficiency in these things; but it is no less true that if the things were brought to the European official, they would merely overwhelm him. In a more general sense, the maintenance of tribal institutions certainly gives to the Basuto a national cohesion which under another system they might, at least temporarily, lose. And the chiefs, possibly rightly, attach great importance to national cohesion.

Their sense of this necessity expresses itself in hatred of the idea of incorporation in the Union, in delight at the recent separation of the offices of High Commissioner and Governor-General as divorcing their own Government from Union influences, and in a very strong general suspicion of the white man. This last sometimes seems exaggerated to the casual traveller, who is apt to

THE NEW BOER WAR

expect that nearly half a century of unchallenged British protection might have put to sleep all doubt of their security. In point of fact, time appears to accentuate their fears. A little reflection shows that this is not unreasonable. They know that thousands of covetous eyes are continuously turned on Basutoland from every side, and from time to time they witness episodes in other parts of Africa which strongly suggest that natives are never wholly secure in the occupation of their lands. They know that the South Africa Act contemplates the eventual incorporation of their country in the Union as a possibility, if not more; they also know that, even if it did not, political and economic forces are steadily at work against their enisled seclusion. And they believe that such forces can only be combated by a strong national policy within Basutoland, and that a necessary condition of such a policy is a more or less autocratic chieftainship. One may suspect that their attitude is at times given a disingenuous emphasis in order to buttress up their own position against the progressive elements inside the Basuto nation, but one has also to confess that no hypothesis of ulterior motive is needed to make their attitude intelligible.

However intelligible it may be, it leads to a number of results which cannot be regarded as happy. It seems, for example, to drain native institutions of everything dynamic. I have already

BASUTOLAND

suggested that the future well-being of Basutoland depends upon its power of conscious self-adjustment to the general South African economic system of which inevitably it forms a part. At present the chiefs, from impulses which are economically irrelevant, are inhibiting that power. Indirect rule in a country like Tanganyika seems to be discovering fairly readily the secret of harmonising the tribal system with material development, partly perhaps because the necessary self-adjustment there is not nearly so strictly conditioned from the outside. In Basutoland, on the other hand, the secret is proving singularly elusive, and I think that one reason at least is the chiefs' unrelieved pre-occupation with the question of national security. Progress would have a better chance if the Basuto nation were given a formal assurance that transfer from British hands will not take place without their own consent. In the tribal system as at present constituted, there is no place for the advanced and educated Basuto. They automatically and often involuntarily find themselves at loggerheads with the chiefs, whose patriotism, even where narrow self-interest is not a motive, forbids them to contemplate the dilution of their own power. Thus the so-called Progressive Association, an organisation of educated Basuto, which ought to be one of the strongest influences in the country, is only allowed one member on the National Council and may

THE NEW BOER WAR

not hold meetings outside the "camps," i.e. the narrow centres of European administration.

The chiefs, then, salutary as their conservatism may be in some aspects, are almost entirely a static force, which in other aspects is gravely retarding the progress of the country. Two illustrations must suffice. First, there is the question of trees. Not only is Basutoland a splendid tree-growing country,—so much so that systematic afforestation would be economically a valuable policy; more than that, tree-planting is an essential part of the technique for controlling the soil erosion, of whose devastations I have already spoken. But Basutoland is practically treeless, except in the Government camps and at the stations occupied by missionaries and traders, largely because the chiefs do not "hold with" trees. And here the general support which the Government feels bound to give to the chiefs to some extent stultifies its own departmental propaganda, for though the agricultural officer and his staff never tire of preaching the value of trees as a means of arresting the formation of dongas, they can prevail little against chiefly prejudice allied with the natural *laissez-faire* of the Basuto, when to attack the former openly and vehemently is considered politically undesirable.

In tribal theory the title of an individual to the land he is working seems to be limited to the period of growth of his crop. Once a crop is

BASUTOLAND

reaped the land reverts to the tribe, and is again technically at the chief's disposal. Working from these assumptions, a chief naturally dislikes the planting of trees, since the "crop" may not mature for thirty years or more, thus giving the individual a claim to user, and virtual ownership which may outlast the chief's own lifetime. If tree-planting became general among his people, he would feel that his control over the tribal land was vanishing before his eyes. Thus when you ask a native why he does not plant trees to save his land from being eaten up by dongas, the common reply is that the chief would take his land from him if he did. And instances of eviction and confiscation on these grounds have actually occurred, though probably they are rare. Another curious fact is that to more old-fashioned native opinion trees are an invention of the white man, his signature, as it were, declaring that he means in the end to collar the country where they grow. They are classed with railways in this respect—the old suspicion again! It seems fantastic, but, as always with natives, the idea has a connection with fact, however remote. There is, for example, an authentic instance of a certain doctor who was given a grant of land from a chief. He put up a fence round it, and in due course planted a belt of trees outside the fence. When they were well established, he moved the fence outside the trees—and so on *ad infinitum*, or until the chief puts his

THE NEW BOER WAR

foot down. Here again the attitude of the chiefs is not hard to understand; but its net result is that the best parts of Basutoland are fairly rapidly being washed away to sea.

A second example of how the chiefly power wars against the best interests of the country is afforded by the fencing question. The chiefs deprecate the fencing of land by native farmers, just as they deprecate anything which seems to imply a quasi-permanent claim to land by individuals. Consequently, the pasture cannot be camped off so as to give the veld intervals for rest and recovery, and the stock has to be continually attended by herd-boys in order to keep it off the crops. Thus erosion is facilitated, because the veld is in many places grazed down till it becomes too thin to hold the soil together; and there is much wastage of the country's admirable educational machinery, because the bulk of the male youth spend their most formative years in "bossing up" the family cattle. Many herd-boys do not reach school until they are practically grown up, and it is quite common to find young men of eighteen in Standard I. They are not backward in the ordinary sense; they have merely started late. But they miss much of the value of their schooling, since mind and character alike are too full-formed to respond properly to school influences.

Little is being done to modernise the attitude of

BASUTOLAND

the chiefs on these and kindred matters, important as they are. The Government, quite rightly, is reluctant to coerce chiefs into giving assent to particular policies, simply because the Government happens to think them wise. The usual line of approach to the problem in orthodox strongholds of indirect rule, such as West Africa and Tanganyika, is of course through the systematic education of the sons of chiefs. In Basutoland this expedient hardly seems to have been tried, and it is left wholly in the hands of a chief to decide whether his sons shall be educated or not. Thus the present Paramount Chief is, I understand, a quite illiterate man. The discovery comes as something of a shock in "the strenuous conditions of the modern world." Leaders of the Basuto nation have long been known for the shrewd political sense inborn in them, and it would be foolish to underestimate its value. But in the difficult transitions afoot in Africa to-day a traditional political sense is not enough. The first requirement of leadership in Basutoland is a trained intelligence capable of grasping the essentials of the not very simple economic situation in which the country now finds itself. Such an intelligence is not merely incompatible with illiteracy; it can only be produced by methodical study of the principles of economics.

Tribal Land Tenure

From the time when the Basuto started to plough this country up to the present, they have done nothing but despoil the land. They have never farmed it as land is treated in other countries; nothing has ever been returned to the land. Its life-blood, manure, is burnt, even to the "khapane" which is picked up from the fields. No artificial manure is ever added to the land, nor is crop rotation practised. The whole system in Basutoland has been, "Get something for nothing; never put anything back into the bank (your land)." This system cannot go on for ever and in time is bound to ruin any country. Much of Basutoland is scarcely worth ploughing up to-day.

This hard-hitting censure was loosed by the agricultural officer at the startled heads of the National Councillors during a recent session. The passage indicates very clearly the difficulties with which the agricultural department has to contend, what it feels about them, and the stage to which its corrective tuition has advanced. It would be rash to discount it as a pessimistic description of the present situation, or to minimise its importance merely because the situation in other parts of the

BASUTOLAND

continent may possibly be shown to be even worse. The dogma, so popular among party politicians in the Union, that self-complacency is invulnerable as long as one's failings exist in exaggerated forms in other people, is happily not accepted by the Basutoland Government.

The plight into which the country is falling because of the long-continued failure in husbandry is, in point of fact, rather worse than the above quotation suggests. There are the complications arising from lack of trees and lack of fencing, which I mentioned earlier. Beyond these, there is the incipient spoliation of the hitherto little-used mountain areas. I have said how overcrowding in the lowlands of the western and northern marches has in the last twenty years been gradually pushing the population up into the Malutis. In time of drought to travel inland is to discover at, say, 7,000 feet and higher an apparently new country. One passes from the parched, exhausted, donga-bitten flats into a vast honeycomb of successive ranges, where each cell's floor is a flat basin of rich soil and its walls the green hillsides, thick with lush grass, watered by hidden streams and springs, and uneroded. It is a sheep-farmer's paradise. But the poor, untutored Basuto, wishing naturally enough to grow food yet lacking agronomic judgment, frequently break up the finest sheep veld on the steep sides of the mountains in order to plant wheat. There are two results. First, the

THE NEW BOER WAR

lands thus ploughed often last only a few years, for the thunderstorms wash them away and dongas take their place. Second, there is a corresponding destruction of the natural and proper grazing grounds of the sheep, which therefore tend to become crowded into other overstocked pastures. Consequently, as the veterinary officer has it, "considerable areas of the very best sheep grazing are now being invaded by inedible weeds, seriously reducing the sheep-carrying capacity of the country."

The Government departments do what they can, and miraculously escape the infection of disheartenment. They sow wattle seed in the banks of dongas to stop further erosion; and the herd-boys habitually pull up the seedlings. They establish tree nurseries in the chief camps in order to distribute trees free of charge to natives; but applications are few, and even when trees are taken away for planting, they most often fall casualties to goats and sheep. At many points near native villages, the departments have themselves undertaken donga-stopping work as an example and a visible precept to the villagers; but the precept falls on barren soil and the example is not followed. In season and out of season, the agricultural officer preaches the need of proper ploughing; and, though it is perhaps in this direction that his efforts have been most successful, the purchase of light, useless implements in-

BASUTOLAND

creases yearly. In season and out of season he preaches the text, "Plant trees for donga-stopping and for fuel: then, when you have become wood-burners, return all manure to the land." But his entreaties re-echo round deaf ears. He appoints native agricultural demonstrators, and sends them out into the various districts. The work they do is often very good. Yet even their irrefutable ocular proofs take years to convince primitive scepticism that better methods are really better.

Why are the Basuto so slow in the uptake? It cannot be a matter of poor wits or pure laziness. They are perfectly capable of seizing the merits of deep ploughing, of careful cultivation of a growing crop, and even the theory of manuring and crop rotation. They have no ascetic preference for poverty before wealth; they hold lucre in no mystical contempt. Yet evidently they have at the back of their minds a set of considerations, peculiar to themselves, which go a long way towards invalidating the white man's arguments.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this primitive scepticism derives directly from the tribal system of land tenure. That system, appropriate enough to the semi-nomadic culture from which first it sprang, is by no means well suited to settled farming of a competitive type, which European contacts have imposed. It lacks the talisman of personal possession that can turn grains of sand into nuggets of gold; and it lacks

THE NEW BOER WAR

the higher stimulus of productive co-operation in the interest of the community. It gives too little security of tenure to sustain keenness or to provide an incentive to long-dated improvements. Under it, if a farmer does conspicuously well, he incurs the jealousy probably of his chief, certainly of his neighbours, who regard his success not as something to be publicly emulated, but rather as something to be privately obstructed. These things being so, some important modification of the present land system seems a pre-requisite of the successful application of any vigorous forward policy in the territory. Whether modifications should be in the direction of individual tenure or of the communal farms now being extensively established in Russia is a question to which it will not be easy to find the right answer. Manifestly change of either kind must have far-reaching results, which may for a time also be unsettling. But other parts of Africa can furnish encouraging precedents, and courage as well as prudence will have to be shown in some form or another if Basutoland's menacing stagnation is to be overcome.

§ 4

Employment

It follows from the general economic conditions of the country that employment, in the sense of

BASUTOLAND

work on a wage basis for an employer, is scarce in Basutoland. Production, being almost exclusively agricultural and pastoral and carried on by an independent peasantry, gives rise to no demand for paid labour; and manufacturing activity is negligible, since the bulk of the produce is exported in its raw state. Such employment as exists is offered for the most part by the Government and by European trading firms; the missions also use a certain amount of paid labour, and there are a few native employers. Wages for unskilled work are low, showing a rough average of 30s. a month without food and often without quarters. This meagre rate seems largely determined by the notoriously depressed levels ruling in the adjacent rural districts of the Orange Free State.¹ But a contributing factor is the circumstance that in most cases the workers are also land-holders. No doubt the native is apt to think of the spasmodic employment he takes up primarily as a way of eking out the private means represented by his land; and, conversely, the employer is not slow to saddle those private means with the work of supplementing the wage he offers. However, the mere fact of the native accepting a wage so cut is evidence that his private means are not worth as much to him as the employer likes to assume. On

¹ The present economic crisis has enabled many Free State farmers to procure native labour virtually without a wage at all—for the mere provision of rations and quarters.

THE NEW BOER WAR

the whole, of course, it is true enough that the possession of a plot of land enables a native to "come out" on a wage which by itself could not possibly maintain him. At the worst, his land means free lodging for him. But there is always a danger of pressing the argument too far. The land is not invariably a source of revenue to its occupier. There are seasons, there are even years, when the land takes money without returning it, and generally behaves more like a sponging friend than a family benefactor. In any case, it is a demonstrably false principle that a wage-rate should reflect the private balance-sheet of the worker rather than the value of the work. In practice the rates now current in Basutoland operate as a stimulus to migration to the urban centres of the Union.

Unfortunately, by such migration Basuto workers, though they may find a higher wage, do not escape the false principle. It is no less at work in Johannesburg than in Maseru. We noticed briefly above how the fact that a large section of the available labour force in the Union consists of land-holders is used to depress the wages of all native workers. Figures may express the position graphically and in a nutshell. A careful inquiry undertaken a year or two ago showed that £7 3s. 11d. represented a minimum monthly budget for a native family of five living in a Johannesburg location; and the sum did not in-

BASUTOLAND

clude provision for clothing. But the wages only of a favoured few reached that sum. The average wage of a native bread-winner in Johannesburg was £4 2s. 6d., of which nearly one half was, in the case of location dwellers, absorbed in rent and transport. Now, even in the absence of collective bargaining, wages cannot be forced down indefinitely. At some point or another, as the Economic and Wage Commission once put it, there arises "a sort of tacit collective agreement among the workers to resist further reductions." Obviously this sticking-point cannot be much below the level of bare subsistence—in the case of the Johannesburg worker with a wife and three children, approximately £7 per month. No doubt Johannesburg employers would by now have been driven to pay an average wage of something like that figure, if urbanised, location-living natives were the only labour on offer. The actual average wage has not risen much above £4, largely because, if an urbanised native seeks to resist the terms of engagement proposed by a prospective employer, the employer can readily find instead a migrant native from the Union reserves or the High Commission territories. Such natives are quite prepared to work for £4 or even less, because their wives and families remain at home on the land and, broadly speaking, do not have to be provided for out of wages. This competition, which is unquestionably unfair, at least in the sense that

THE NEW BOER WAR

the competitors do not start on equal terms, bears a large share of responsibility for the low consuming power of the native community in every part of South Africa. As long as it continues in its present unregulated form, there will be little possibility of increasing that power either in the Union or in the British territories. Yet it is upon such increase that growth in the prosperity of Europeans and natives alike depends.

It thus appears that Basutoland's best contribution to its own prosperity and that of South Africa as a whole would be by checking the flow of its migrant labour. This is not, of course, an argument for formal prohibitions and arbitrary restrictions, or for any interference with the right of the Basuto to take their labour to any market that can attract them as free agents. It is an argument for offering them every practicable inducement to stay in their own territory, and for diverting the labour force thus released to productive work there. By such means it should be possible for them, while increasing their own output, to assist materially in raising the consuming power of the natives of the Union, in supplying whose needs the bulk of Basutoland's exportable output is or could be, directly or indirectly, absorbed. The effectiveness of the whole process would naturally be much enhanced by co-operation on similar lines from the other High Commission territories. Meanwhile, it is plain that the present method of hunting for

BASUTOLAND

the cash requirements of the Basuto nation by casual labour-expeditions into the Union is no result of conscious and rational planning; it is a result of haphazard responses to fluctuating, though pressing needs. And it does little good to anyone except the white employer in the Union.

These considerations inevitably suggest a doubt as to the suitability of present arrangements for recruiting Basuto labour for Union industries. If they are valid, any measures for artificially stimulating or maintaining the migration of native workers are not merely out of place but strictly impolitic; and in the light of what has been said above, it is hard to see how organised recruiting can be defended as in the best interests of natives whether in Basutoland or anywhere else. So far as the High Commission territories are concerned, indeed, it stands out as a plain concession to European convenience, both anachronistic and, in the territories' peculiar circumstances, irrelevant. Apart from this general inappropriateness, the system may or may not be injurious in its detailed working. The Basutoland Government appears reasonably satisfied with it at the moment, and is not harassed by many complaints from returned recruits. But the system is always open to abuse. There have been authentic instances in other places where recruiting agents have found means to induce chiefs to bring pressure on the rank and file to render service. Whether such

THE NEW BOER WAR

devices are actualities in Basutoland or not, they are evident possibilities. There is no need to stress the importance of ensuring that all labour going out from the country should be in the fullest sense voluntary.

By what means the present migrant labour force should be kept in gainful occupation within Basutoland is a large question, involving considerations of high policy and hardly to be answered convincingly in the absence of full inquiry by special commission. As a mere matter of practical economics, it is not a puzzle to tax unduly the wit of man. From various sources certain lines of investigation have already been suggested, including, besides the possible modification of the land system which I mentioned before, the widening of the cast of the net of agricultural instruction, demonstration, and experiment, accompanied by the provision of credits for development. Inquiry has also been proposed into the possible establishment of industries which could be conducted for the benefit of the natives and, as far as may be, by them. The relative impotence of the agricultural department under present conditions is due at least in part to restricted financial resources, and its achievements might well become impressive if it were adequately equipped with the sinews of war. Given such reinforcement, the present agricultural régime could be reformed out of all knowledge, and a profitable start could probably be

BASUTOLAND

made with fruit-farming and afforestation. Much productive work in the way of road construction, the improvement of communications, and the overhauling of the methods of marketing agricultural produce also awaits undertaking. Certain lines of wool manufacture and the development of electricity from water power are further possibilities which deserve careful examination. And the country's natural beauty is capable of attracting an extensive tourist traffic without jeopardising the rights of natives, which to-day are guarded with proper jealousy, but to small economic advantage.

§ 5

The African Setting

The position, then, may be summed up by saying that the old political and economic system of Basutoland, which has persisted without major structural alterations for nearly a hundred years, is ominously creaking under the strain of modern conditions. The anachronisms of what is virtually pure tribal rule result in dwindling productivity as the population increases, and therefore in a sinking standard of living for the majority. The efforts to redress the lost balance by exporting labour are hardly more scientific than the

THE NEW BOER WAR

farming methods, and lead to equally unfortunate effects. In the realm of education, the schools, which in many respects are admirable, partially fail of their effect, because the boys come to them too late; and where they do not fail, the tribal system fails to provide a place for their educated products. This, combined with the extensive attention which is being devoted to the education of girls, gives rise to a class of potential leaders denied opportunity for leadership and therefore discontented with the hierarchy that prevents them from pulling their proper weight in the national boat. The Government is placed in the false position of encouraging education with one hand, and of bolstering up with the other the authority that stultifies its results. It is a characteristic paradox that every year numbers of the best trained Basuto leave their free country to seek a career in the Union, the land of multiple colour bars. The time has arrived when the whole relation of Basutoland to the general economy of South Africa needs to be reconsidered in the light of economic science, just as science is crying out to be given a freer hand in the resolution of the territory's internal contradictions. It looks as though in the last resort Basutoland can only hope to survive as a political unit if it can hold its own in the general South African economy as an economic unit. A policy which aims at maintaining political distinctness should logically give

BASUTOLAND

the first and best of its attention to economic rationalisation.

But it is necessary to see Basutoland and the other territories of the High Commission not only in a South African, but also in a continental setting. Since Mr. Piet Grobler's Pretoria speech on the East African White Paper and General Hertzog's echo of it in London at the last Imperial Conference,¹ it is impossible to disguise or to ignore the fact that the history of native affairs in British Africa in the immediate future is going to be a struggle between two policies,—the brutalitarianism of White South Africa and the doctrine of trusteeship accepted by Britain, the League of Nations, and the civilised world. Between these two opposites there can be neither reconciliation nor compromise. Has Britain, with her experience of racial relations so much wider than South Africa's, at length made up her mind, and in reaching convictions also found the pluck to stand up for them? That is the question. Evidently a good deal of standing up will need to be done. The time is wholly past when Britain can

¹ Mr. Grobler (Minister of Lands), speaking at Pretoria on September 17th, 1930, stated with great emphasis that the Union "cannot and may not" passively acquiesce in the policy outlined in the British Government's White Paper on native policy in Africa, which had been issued a few months before. General Hertzog, who was attending the Imperial Conference at the time, went out of his way in London to associate himself cordially with everything Mr. Grobler had said.

THE NEW BOER WAR

profit in the least by reliance upon a soul of goodness in things evil, or even upon a divinity that shapes our ends in spite of mortal rough-hewing. She is in for a big diplomatic fight, and every step along the path of her lately reaffirmed choice will be contested tooth and nail by the Hertzog-Delamere combine and its successors in title. Only her own efforts will avail her cause. As it happens, the High Commission territories afford her a promising leverage for righting the list on the whole South African vessel, and for striking at the enemy's iniquitous internal system without exposing herself to the charge of infringing Union sovereignty. Now that the Union has arrogated to itself the right to domineer in native affairs throughout Africa, it has abandoned all logical ground for complaint if other responsible parties employ similarly forceful means of combating policies which no humane conscience can approve. The era of idea-tight political boundaries is at end, and that on the Union's demand. But the tactical advantage given to Britain in the war of ideas by the High Commission territories has not yet begun to be exploited.

That the pivotal position occupied by the territories is clearly recognised by the negrophobe element in South Africa is shown by General Hertzog's reaction to the British Government's decision to separate the High Commissionership in practice as well as in theory from the office of

BASUTOLAND

the Governor-General. "In my opinion," he stated publicly, "the change is an exceptionally good reason why the control of the native protectorates should be handed over to the Union as soon as possible." A leading Afrikaans newspaper commented on this observation: "The Union has grounds for asking for a greater South Africa. This will ensure uniformity in native government without any danger of the protectorate natives being the worse off." Plainly, the change in the High Commissionership has imparted a new urgency to the desire of the rulers of White South Africa to bring other parts of the continent into line with their own system. To say that such a consolidation of the Afrikaner position would involve no disadvantage to the natives of the territories is, of course, really to beg the question; but it is well to admit that a case could be made out for the contention, if regard were had solely to the economic conditions of native life in the territories to-day.

No doubt it is true that modern civilisation contemptuously rejects the assumptions of Afrikanerism in racial relations, and, as a matter of doctrine and principle, comes down wholeheartedly on the side of the humanitarian ideal. But it is also true that the world's judgment as between Union policy and British policy will in the last resort be delivered on a comparison of the practical fruits of each. And when it comes to

THE NEW BOER WAR

practical fruits, can Basutoland, for example, show a clean pair of heels to native areas inside the Union in respect of prosperity, contentment, and security?

The Basuto may feel themselves free men in a free country, and that sense may give them some vital satisfaction the Union native cannot know. But if we ask what exactly their comparative liberty has availed them, if we ask whether they lead a life materially fuller or more advanced than that of their Union neighbours, honesty compels the reply that the gap between the two is a narrow one and shows as yet small signs of widening. A sceptical critic might well remark, "If your two opposed policies converge in action towards such very similar results, why dispute so hotly over them?" And the truth is that the Basuto do share to-day most of the economic ills the Union native is heir to. Britain has perhaps justified her policy by faith; so far as the High Commission territories are concerned, it remains for her to justify it by works. Not before she does so can she hope to convince Africa that she is really contending for a cardinal principle. There is danger in delay.

Nevertheless, now that the native question throughout Africa is hastening towards a cross-roads of fundamental significance, a section of opinion even in the Union itself, and a much larger body of it outside, sees in the High Com-

BASUTOLAND

mission territories a last chance of saving for Southern Africa the British ideal of inter-racial justice. A hope is cherished that Britain in face of the approaching crisis may set aside her long hesitations and pass sentence of open and determined war against the visionless repressionism to which for a century she has been nominally opposed, and of whose failure the Union's present native system is so deplorable a monument.

CHAPTER VI

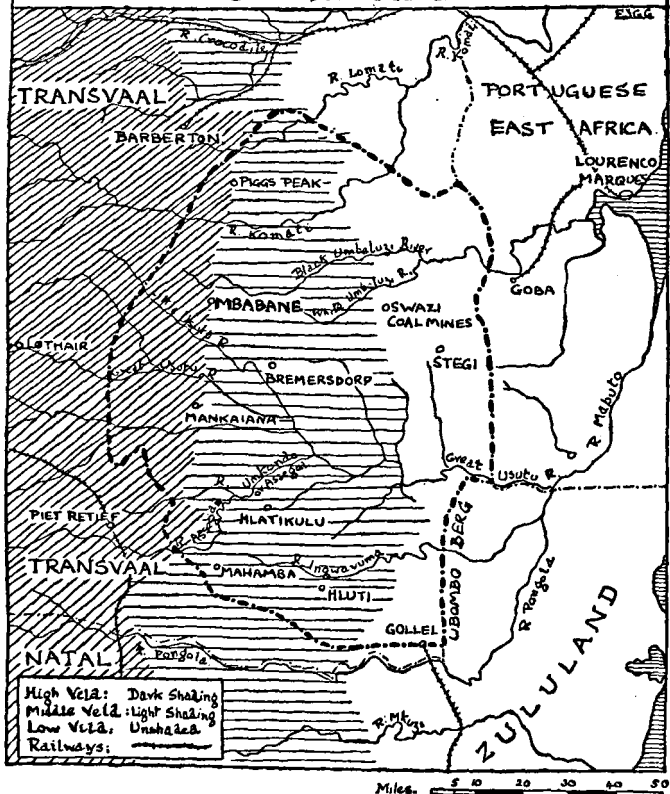
SWAZILAND

§ I

Export Trade

PERHAPS it would be fanciful to represent Mr. Leopold Amery, sometime Secretary of State for the Dominions and Colonies, as a fairy prince kissing the sleeping beauty of Swaziland to life. But it is a plain matter of fact that, since his South African visit of 1927, the territory has stirred to a new awakening. Previously, lack of communications with the outside world had confined the possibilities of economic growth within narrow limits. The nearest points on the Union railway system were at Piet Retief, Lothair and Barberton—all well outside the Swaziland border and many days by ox-waggon from such areas of production as existed within the territory. Much the same applied to the Portuguese railhead at Goba on the east—with this difference, that Portuguese customs arrangements made it in the main even less serviceable from the standpoint of

- SWAZILAND -



THE NEW BOER WAR

the Swaziland producer. Mr. Amery's visit chanced to coincide with important new transport developments, for in July 1927 the Durban-Zululand line was extended up to the Swaziland border at Gollel, thus giving the territory direct access to the Durban market. More than this, by the beginning of 1928 the Union railway administration was operating a regular and systematic road motor service throughout Swaziland itself; and linking every district with the rail either at Gollel in the south or at Piet Retief or Breyten in the west. About the same time, it was arranged that Portuguese buses serving Goba and Lourenço Marques should run through to Stegi, eighteen miles inside the Swaziland border. Thus, as it were in a flash, the country found itself furnished with a transport system many times quicker, more efficient, more complete, and cheaper than it had ever known before. Swaziland was now definitely on the map, with production for export well within the range of practicability. Mr. Amery seized the opportunity to assist such production by ensuring the availability of Imperial funds for agricultural loans and for capital expenditure on roads, bridges, and communications generally. His interest has been maintained by his successors in office, and in the last year or two Swaziland has drawn additional benefits from the Colonial Development Fund set up by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Government, and even

SWAZILAND

Treasury grants-in-aid to balance excess of current expenditure over revenue. The pulse of a new progress is beating perceptibly throughout the land; and Europeans and natives alike wonder at the change from the long indifference of Whitehall, and feel the stimulus of its encouragement.

For twenty years Swaziland has suffered from the supposed imminence of its incorporation in the Union. Downing Street allowed it to drift on from year to year, feeling a brief term set to its own responsibility and giving attention to little beyond the balancing of the local budget. Why worry, when in a short space the Union would be holding the baby? In a sense this *dolce far niente* almost justified itself, for there have been several occasions since the end of the war when incorporation was on the verge of taking place. Why, then, has it been so abruptly abandoned? One answer alone seems possible,—the unhappy fact that the Union is the chief enemy of British policy in native affairs on the African continent. The last few years have made it abundantly plain that British Africa is and will continue to be the cockpit of a protracted struggle between humanitarianism and the Afrikaner spirit. If the principles for which Britain stands, and which her Government has recently reaffirmed in unequivocal terms, are to emerge successful from the contest, it would be mere folly to hand over to

THE NEW BOER WAR

their antagonist any further areas now under direct British control.

And, indeed, Swaziland is the most promising of the High Commission territories for development and for experimentation in the African problems of the day—an admirably arranged laboratory where Britain, if she cares to take the trouble, may demonstrate, in full view of Afrikanerism, the practical superiority of her own policy. It is a country with important resources in coal, asbestos, and metals. Its conditions of climate and rainfall afford scope for a wide range of agricultural and pastoral activity. It is hardly touched and almost wholly unspoilt. It is not a simple native reserve, and its settled white population, small as it may be, is genuinely and loyally attached to the land, of which nearly two-thirds is in its ownership. These facts, conjoined, guarantee Swaziland's material development along the lines which European civilisation has made its own. They also reduce the question whether such development can ultimately be to the benefit of Swaziland's inhabitants, black or white, to one of abstract philosophy. For good or ill, they are limiting factors in the administrative problem, and on their basis the contact of European and native cultures must be adjusted with such equity as British statesmanship can devise.

Before discussing Swaziland's prospects of

SWAZILAND

development it is desirable to reach some general idea of its present economic conditions. Unfortunately, available information is so fragmentary that this is not a simple task. Data for estimating the national income and how it is apportioned between white and black are almost non-existent; there is no proper record of the volume of trade and no Customs statistics. A somewhat hazardous starting point, however, is provided by the export returns given in the official Blue Book. These show that in the five years from 1925 the total domestic produce exported rose from £134,096 to £213,588, or roughly 56 per cent. The main expansion was in slaughter stock, tobacco and cotton, and the export value of the three increased from £53,737 to £158,594, or roughly 195 per cent. At first sight these figures suggest an impressive development of farming, and they offer a remarkable contrast with the position in the Union, whence exports for the five years 1923-7—a period of considerable prosperity—increased only by some 25 per cent. They lose nothing of their effect when it is remembered that they relate chiefly to European produce (practically speaking there are as yet no exports of native produce from Swaziland), and that the white farming population is very small and not reputed to be particularly progressive in its methods.

The curious thing is that throughout this period

THE NEW BOER WAR

of apparently rapid growth there has been no corresponding expansion in receipts from income tax, or in public revenue and expenditure generally, or, so far as is known, in imports. Even collections in respect of beer and spirits manufactured in the Union reveal but an insignificant rise. In 1925 the income tax yield was £3,291, in 1929 it was £1,596; and though the latter does not include certain arrears which were to be collected in the ensuing financial year, the total tax assessment for 1929 was, in round figures, a mere £3,000. Again, Government expenditure in 1925 amounted to £96,980, and to £119,404 in 1929—an increase of £22,424; but the 1929 figure includes £32,000 spent out of grants-in-aid from the Imperial Parliament. As regards imports, the Customs receipts do, indeed, show a steady, if small, increase; but these, as they represent a fixed percentage of the total Customs takings of the Union, merely indicate an increase in the import trade of South Africa as a whole, and no inference from them to changing conditions in Swaziland in particular is possible. Official reports state that the volume of trade in Swaziland remains small, and that there has been little variation in imports.

How can these facts be reconciled with the large increase in exports?

Only, it seems, by supposing that the European farmer, in gaining an export market, has *pari*

SWAZILAND

passu been losing a home market. There is some direct evidence to support the supposition. Twelve or even ten years ago there was practically no export of farm produce, and the European farmer lived by growing grain and a certain amount of tobacco for the local native market. Recently, however, an improvement has been taking place in native agricultural methods, and whereas at the end of the Great War the hoe of antique Bantu tradition was still almost the only implement of cultivation in native use, an agricultural census held in 1930 pointed to an average of one plough to each native family. One result of this change is that the output from native lands is much larger than it used to be, and to-day supplies the Swazi people with some three-fourths of their grain requirements, so that, except spasmodically in bad seasons or at the tail-end of the farming year before the standing crops are reaped, they have little need to turn, cash in hand, to the white man. Thus the white farmer's increasing exports do not yet mean for him a net increase in income, for so far he has been simply planting different crops and selling them abroad, instead of planting the old crops and selling them at home. The theory of the lost home market does no violence to the export figures. The difference between the 1925 and the 1929 exports is about £80,000. If we assume that, in spite of the increase in exports, the European

THE NEW BOER WAR

farmer has made little net increase in his turnover, we must also assume that in 1925 he was selling in the local market some £80,000 more mealies than in 1929. There is nothing improbable in this. It would only mean that the native was then spending on mealies 13s. 4d. per head per year more than he is to-day, i.e. that he was buying about two and a half bags more per family. It is quite possible that the increase in native production has restricted the market for European-grown mealies to that extent. But if so, the question arises: How is the money now being employed which in 1925 natives were using to buy mealies? The answer seems to be that some of it is being invested in cattle, and the rest is being spent out of the country by the Swazi mine boys on the Rand. We shall return to these points later.

Upon a rough calculation from the value of the export trade, then, it appears that the average purchasing power of the white population can hardly be less than £80 per head per year, and may easily be more. What can be said of the economic situation of the natives? In some ways it compares favourably with that of any proletariat in more developed countries. The native has his land free of rent; his dwellings, such as they are, are built by his own household. Native-owned cattle number nearly 320,000 and represent savings worth perhaps £8 per head of the

SWAZILAND

population. The native family produces enough food to supply its needs for about nine months in the year, and there is little reason why it should not also produce the balance. Although overstocking is becoming serious in certain parts of the country, the pressure on arable land is not severe, and Swaziland is not overcrowded in the sense in which Basutoland or the Transkei is overcrowded. On a level of simple subsistence farming, therefore, the Swazi household is reasonably self-supporting.

But the Swazi's circumstances do not permit of mere subsistence farming. As a community he has to raise an annual fund of £45,000 for taxation, paying, in point of fact, more per head for the privilege of European government than any other native south of the Nile. He needs cash to supplement the food supply he himself produces, cash for the education of his children, cash for implements and trek-gear, and cash for various articles of personal and household use which are easily got by purchase from the stores. Unfortunately he is without a market. Apart from his stock, which he does not usually regard as a trading commodity, and latterly a little tobacco and cream, he has no goods to sell nor anywhere to sell them. The cash he requires can thus only be raised by the sale of his own labour. There is a strictly limited number of employers in his own territory, and consequently he has for the most

THE NEW BOER WAR

part to migrate in search of work either to the mines or the farms in the Transvaal. This migration takes place to an extent and with results which we will shortly examine in some detail.

§ 2

Taxation

Meanwhile it is necessary to glance at certain fiscal anomalies which the unequal economic situations of white and black throw into relief.

A rough estimate from admittedly inadequate data points to the conclusion that the aggregate income of the 120,000 natives and the aggregate income of the 2,700 Europeans reach, very approximately, the same level. Putting the latter as low and the former as high as seems possible, we reach a tentative figure of £2 a head for the native population as against our figure of £80 per head for the European population. It should be added that Europeans own some 60 per cent. of the land.

This being so, it might seem reasonable, *a priori*, to expect that European and native contributions to public revenue would also be somewhere near equality. Indeed, if our expectations were based upon the practice of a country like England, where almost the whole of direct taxa-

SWAZILAND

tion is paid by the upper 25 per cent. of incomes, we should look for a European contribution considerably higher than the natives'. In Swaziland, however, public finance as yet exhibits few socialistic tendencies.

Although in 1902, when settled government had hardly begun, natives were paying a higher rate of hut tax than they are to-day, and at one rate or another have paid hut tax without intermission throughout the interval, direct taxation on Europeans only dates from 1921. Until that year the only public revenue obviously traceable to Europeans was under the heads; "Base metal royalty," "Customs," "Transfer duty," "Revenue stamps," "Licences," and for a year or two "Wheel tax." At the most generous computation the European contribution was not more than one-quarter of the total.

In 1921 direct taxation was imposed on Europeans in two forms which still survive. One is a poll tax of £2 a head, for which all adult males are liable, unless specially exempted on grounds of old age, ill-health, or indigence. The other is income tax, chargeable on the same basis as in the Union. Income tax payers also pay poll tax, but are allowed to deduct the amount of the poll tax from their income tax assessment. Poll tax and income tax between them yield approximately £4,500. But although the European contribution has increased by that amount since 1921, the rate

THE NEW BOER WAR

of native hut tax was also raised in the same year, so that the proportion of European revenue to total revenue has remained fairly constant at about one-fourth. To-day, if our income estimates are not altogether wide of the mark, about one-sixth of the native's income goes in direct taxation, as compared with about one forty-eighth of the European's.

The position as regards Government expenditure on education is even more surprising. Notwithstanding that direct taxation of Europeans is practically no more than ten years old, Government moneys have been spent on European education since 1909, i.e. for twenty-two years. In other words, European education, so far as it depended on Government finance, was for the first twelve years of its life wet-nursed by the natives. There is a further discrimination in favour of the European which should be noted. In 1929 the Government spent £6,651 on education for 502 European scholars, or £13 5s. 10d. per head. The grant for native education in the same year was £2,200 in respect of 6,018 scholars, or about 6s. 4d. per head. Nor is the mere disparity in amount the whole story. The European education vote, which incidentally exceeds the total proceeds from direct taxation of Europeans, is met from general revenue. The grant for native education, on the other hand, is paid from the Swazi National Fund, a special fund started at

SWAZILAND

the request of the natives for native development and welfare, and maintained exclusively by native taxation which is virtually self-imposed.¹ Thus, while the greatest care is taken that the natives should receive no education but what they themselves (or the missionaries) pay for, European education is still to-day being subsidised from the proceeds of native taxes.

Plainly the whole incidence of taxation is absurdly unequal. A married man with four children pays £1 15s. (hut tax) if he is a native earning £10 a year, and £2 (poll tax) if he is a European earning £640 a year. Such is the effect of the income tax abatements and allowances. The unsuitability of the income tax in its present form can be shown in another way. Poll tax is paid by (again very approximately) 700 Europeans, but there are only seventy-five income tax payers, and they pay on a taxable income of only £65,800. This means that European incomes aggregating at least £150,000 escape income tax altogether. Probably on the majority of incomes between £300 and £600 nothing is paid but the £2 poll tax. By way of contrast, a native with three huts (and an income which cannot exceed an infinitesimal fraction of £300) pays £4 10s. It is interesting to find that, in spite of the mere seventy-five income tax payers, 273 cars and 72 motor cycles are

¹ Since 1929 a small grant has been made from general revenue for native education. In 1930 it amounted to £2,500.

THE NEW BOER WAR

owned in the territory—figures which suggest that the income tax bears so heavily on the people that only those who don't pay it can afford a car!

There are other fish who have little difficulty in slipping through the erratically constructed fiscal net. Chief among them are the powerful Rand interests owning large areas of land in Swaziland, which they have done little or nothing to develop; and the Transvaal farmers who own land along the western borders, and use it as winter pasture for their sheep, but leave it unoccupied in the summer. From neither type does Swaziland derive any appreciable benefit in the way of taxation, or for that matter in any other way. These facts, together with the obvious inappropriateness of the present income-tax-cum-poll-tax system, present in a somewhat attractive light the possibility of a land tax.

The advantages of basing taxation on the value of land owned or occupied are that the method carries with it a natural adjustment to capacity to pay at every level of income, and gives a natural incentive to maximum production. Furthermore, it catches the absentee landowner, and recovers for the State some part at least of unearned increments in the value of land which he has done nothing to improve. In all these aspects of the problem the present Swaziland system conspicuously fails. The last advantage has a special importance in the particular circumstances of Swazi-

SWAZILAND

and, because so much land in the territory belongs to owners who are merely holding for a rise consequent upon the general development of the territory. That they should be reached by some form of fiscal device is, therefore, a condition precedent to the inception of any considerable State-guaranteed schemes of development in the way of transport or otherwise. The State should be careful to avoid the error of putting into their pockets profits they have taken no steps to earn.

The idea of a land tax is not a new one. It was mooted many years before the income tax was introduced, but dropped in deference to the protests of white landowners. More recently, it has been systematically examined by the present Resident Commissioner. He came to the conclusion, however, that the collection of a land tax would probably lead to great irritation and might only result in a small increase of revenue, if imposed at rates similar to those in force in neighbouring territories. It appears that, having regard to these difficulties, he is not for the moment proceeding further with the matter. Meanwhile, he has reserved the right to explore other possibilities of raising revenue from the European population. A super tax has in fact been introduced, and the fee for motor licences has been doubled. The latter is a sound way of touching the majority of car owners who are not income tax payers. But the former is hardly more than a

THE NEW BOER WAR

gesture. It is doubtful whether the meagre £1,000 budgeted for in respect of super tax will be collected.

For the rest, it is safe to say that the last has by no means been heard of the land tax. But the whole question of taxation in the High Commission territories needs expert investigation.¹

§ 3

Migrant Labour

The last section indicates that native taxation is rather high, and that the Government services given to the native in return are rather inadequate. In respect of them his position is precisely opposite to that of the European, who pays very little and receives, comparatively, a great deal. As to whether matters should be levelled up by easing the native's burden or adding to the European's, there can be little doubt that the latter is the proper method, if development is really the aim in Swaziland. To put it with brutal candour, the European has drawn large subventions from the pockets both of the Swazi and of the taxpayer of

¹ Since the above was written, an inquiry into the financial and economic situation of Swaziland has been conducted by Sir Alan Pim. His report has now been published (Cmd. 4114). It recommends a land tax of 1d. per morgen, and the abolition of income tax on agricultural incomes.

SWAZILAND

Great Britain, and if he is to go on shouting for progress, it is high time for him to start putting his hand into his own pocket. Probably he will show little alacrity in doing so. He is quite human enough to find pleasure in getting something for nothing while he can. A candidate for election to the Advisory Council recently proposed the abolition of the income tax (without the introduction of a substitute) as a main plank in his platform.

But the crucial feature of the economic position in Swaziland is related to taxation somewhat less directly. The crucial feature is the migration of native labour into the Union. Once again there are no accurate figures. A statement pointing roughly in the direction of the truth is the best that can be expected. A calculation from the returns of native taxation suggests that the total of adult males capable of work can hardly exceed 23,000. Another calculation from the stamp receipts in respect of passes issued to natives travelling outside the territory shows that in 1929 the fee was paid on 16,440 passes. The native of the Swaziland reserves is not addicted to travelling about the Union for pleasure, and it seems safe to assume that, in round figures, 15,000 men left the country in 1929 to look for work. Of these, perhaps about half would go to the mines. The remainder would place themselves either on farms or in domestic service, mostly in the Eastern

THE NEW BOER WAR

Transvaal. The average term of absence from home for all the 15,000 would probably be about nine months, possibly longer.

It thus appears that approximately 65 per cent. of the adult able-bodied males of Swaziland spend by far the greater part of the year in service with European employers in the Union. And, as we saw in the case of Basutoland, their base on the land of the territory frequently makes it possible for them to accept a wage below what employers would be compelled to pay if migrant labour from the protectorates were not on offer. In this way the soil of Swaziland is used at once to subsidise their employers and to depress the wage-levels of their fellow-workers in the Union.

In discussing the demands of non-natives for native labour, it is always essential to bear in mind the investigations of the two Commissions appointed in the Belgian Congo in 1924 and 1928. The Belgian Government, as Professor Buell has observed, is the only Government in Africa which has had the courage to grapple with the problem arising from the "extreme fragility" exhibited by native societies when they are brought into violent and haphazard contact with a thrusting civilisation of the Western type. The Commissions' conclusion was that for labour at a distance from home no more than 5 per cent. of able-bodied adult males could be withdrawn at one time from tribal life without seriously upsetting the equilibrium of

SWAZILAND

native society. Another 5 per cent. might safely be taken for work at not more than two days' distance from home, when prolonged separation from the family was not involved. Finally, a further 15 per cent. might without damage be treated as available for employment in the immediate neighbourhood of their homes. These proportions, calculated as they have been upon the particular needs of the Congo, are not, of course, to be applied mechanically to every part of Africa. But even if we assume (though I do not know why we should) that the margin of safety is somewhat wider in Swaziland, it is none the less plain that it is grotesquely overstepped by a percentage of 65 absent on long-term contracts entailing a complete interruption of normal family life. It is not too much to say that no tribal system can survive such a strain for very long.

The strange thing about this annual migration is that it persists and expands in spite of the fact that everyone, except the Union employer, dislikes it, sometimes for good reasons, sometimes for bad. The Swaziland farmers dislike it because in some seasons it leaves them short of labour and because they are afraid it may tend to raise the level of local wages. (There is a plausibility about this fear, but there seems to be no evidence of any actual general rise in wages during the last ten years.) The missionaries dislike it because they say, in the time-honoured phrase, that the mine

THE NEW BOER WAR

boy comes back with the white man's vices, and none of his virtues. The chiefs dislike it, whenever they understand its threat to their own authority and the system of which they are the heads. The spokesmen of the Union's civilisation, that triumph of pellucid rationality, presumably dislike it when they snort their disgust at native "invasion" of the towns and at all departures from the blessed principle of segregation, even if they like it when they bellow for more and cheaper labour. The natives dislike it, because they are home-lovers by instinct and because they sense in a vague way its disintegrating effect upon their social structure.

There is, in truth, no possible defence for this wholesale export of labour, nor for any policy which encourages or countenances it. How can a country develop when, broadly speaking, two-thirds of its productive man-power is in permanent exile? Such a position, evidently, is only tolerated on a tacit assumption that the migrant labour force is somehow "surplus" to Swaziland's needs. But this is a patent fallacy. That same labour force is the only possible engine-power for the territory's progress. It is, indeed, arguable that to give the native land on terms which prevent him from making anything out of it, is in some ways worse than not giving him any land at all. As I say, it merely pays a gratuitous subsidy to his foreign employer, and makes it impossible for him, or

SWAZILAND

any other labourer in the market in which he competes, to secure the full value of his labour. Yet these, beyond question, are the terms on which the Swazi holds his land in present conditions.

Taxation, when properly devised, acts as a stimulus to production. In principle, even the comparatively heavy taxation to which the Swazi is liable is unobjectionable. But it is essential to pay some regard to the means by which its demands have to be met. As long as the Swazi meets it by spending the bulk of his life in exile, the possibility of agricultural progress, except within narrow limits, is denied him. He is often rebuked for his slowness in adopting European methods of cultivation, when white farmers are continuously demonstrating them before his very eyes, and he himself, as employee, is even taking part in them. But the point is as often overlooked that, in general, new methods are not applied to native lands because the men who ought to be applying them and supervising the change-over are not there. Women, small boys, and old men are not progress's swiftest vehicles. Labour-migration, which began and to a large extent continues as a response to taxation, has in fact reached a point incompatible with increased native production in the territory. It is the main reason why the natives, as a community, still fail to grow more than a nine months' food supply for themselves,

THE NEW BOER WAR

and why they are obliged to furnish their requirements for the remainder of the year by purchase of European-grown produce—produce sold, needless to add, at a price based not on local costs of production, but on what it would cost to import from the distributing centres of the Union. That is to say, when the Swazi buys maize, he does not pay the Swaziland price which is probably lower than the Transvaal price, but the Transvaal price plus transport etc., charges from the Transvaal. This artificially augmented price is at least four times which it would cost him to grow the maize himself. The natives are, in short, caught in a vicious circle; their productivity is low because their man-power goes abroad, and their man-power goes abroad because mere productivity, in the absence of a market, cannot supply them with what they need—namely, cash.

The device of migration was, in the circumstances in which it arose, necessary, and therefore to that extent, and while confined to reasonable limits, useful. But it has been carried far beyond the peak of its utility. Though the number of natives going out has risen by 32 per cent. since 1924, the total deferred pay remitted to Swaziland has fallen by 41 per cent. in the same period. A smaller proportion of workers is making use of the deferred pay method, because a larger proportion is acquiring the habit of spending its wages on the Reef. Labour-migration is thus progressively

SWAZILAND

failing of its primary purpose of bringing money into Swaziland. Many mine boys come back with nothing and take a fresh advance from the recruiters the day after their return, in consideration of a promise to re-engage. Even when they do bring back something in the way of pay or compensation for accident or disease—something, that is, in excess of what they need for taxation and the other purposes mentioned above—it is habitually invested in scrub cattle, a doubtful blessing for a country in parts of which overstocking is already becoming a serious problem.

On the physical and moral side the present indiscriminate migration is equally injurious. If migration were limited to the stronger and more enterprising characters, who should leave home in purposeful spirit to seek their fortune and the hard schooling and wide experience of the outer world, there would be much to be said for it, and the migrants might return with a valuable cargo of new ideas and enlightened leadership. Even now traces of such valuables are no doubt to be discerned in the extremely mixed bag which the traveller carries home. But they are rather like needles in bundles of hay, too often submerged and concealed in a various mass of injured health, occupational and venereal diseases, debt, criminal inclinations, disrespect of parental, tribal and Governmental authority, and a general malaise of mind, for which tribal life is less and less able

THE NEW BOER WAR

to offer any beneficial appeasement. Obviously, labour-migration on the present scale turns the traditional family existence upside down. Apart from the dangers attending the prolonged separation of husbands and wives, it is inevitably followed by a growing migration of unattached women, few of whom return the better for their adventures and many of whom remain abroad to ply the least savoury of trades. What is more, the system, as Swaziland knows it to-day, must strike at the sources of life itself and impair the survival rate of the nation. It is highly significant that the yield of native hut tax shows no appreciable rise since 1922.

§ 4

Native Production

But how to put an end to labour-migration, and all the ills it brings in its train? The reply of economic theory is simple and obvious. It is to replace migration by export trade in native produce, sending out goods instead of hired labour to fetch back the cash the natives need. The difficulty is not to find the principle, but to apply it in practice.

In establishing an export trade in native produce, two distinct kinds of obstacles have to be overcome—one social, arising out of tribal custom

SWAZILAND

and tradition, the other economic, arising from the ordinary difficulties of production and marketing. The social obstacle is somewhat solid. As we saw in the case of Basutoland, tribal tradition is antipathetic to individual enterprise. A man who assiduously follows modern methods and achieves any marked increase in production always runs a risk of incurring the envy both of his chief and his fellow tribesmen. Then it quite possibly follows that the witch doctors are put on his tracks, and even that he is evicted from his lands. It is largely a question of manners. A well-bred tribesman does not take pains to demonstrate his superiority over his fellows. That spirit of competition, that passion to excel, which, through many generations, have been bred into our European psychology, are alien to the Bantu, and pull roughly against tribal convention and etiquette. Naturally the "raw" native is much more sensitive to the tribal atmosphere than the educated native is. For this reason it seems politic to begin the effort to set up a native export trade by concentrating on the schools and the class of educated adults. Educational policy should probably be framed in the light of the export trade idea; at the least it should always be checked by reference to it.

It must be remembered that education itself is quite a young growth in Swaziland. The first missionaries arrived in the country nearly sixty years ago, but for forty of them the war against

THE NEW BOER WAR

heathenism was of a purely guerilla type. It is only since about 1910 that the missions have been operating from a consolidated position, and their educational labours can only now be said to be coming of age. Not until three years ago was any plan evolved for co-ordinating these labours. The posts of agricultural officer, director of education, and native school supervisor are all barely three years old. The first native agricultural demonstrator was appointed in 1928. To-day Swaziland still has to import such demonstrators from the Union because she has not yet trained her own; indeed, this is true in the main of all types of native teacher in the territory. All, or almost all, the educated Swazis have found their education beyond their own borders.

These facts are additional reasons for focusing Swaziland's limited resources on those points where education has something of a hold, and leaving the "raw" areas aside for a later campaign. It seems, for example, that if the best value is to be obtained from the agricultural demonstrators their attack should be intensive round and about the schools and not diffused over the remoter tribal districts. Again, one of the teacher's chief perplexities at present is that the native seems to require of education that it should turn him into either a clerk, a teacher, or a parson. Some daylight might perhaps be let in on this particular problem by establishing a land settle-

SWAZILAND

ment scheme for educated Swazis. Such a scheme could be linked up with the schools by awarding some of its benefits as prizes to selected scholars.

Whether it should be run on a co-operative basis or on a basis of individual tenure would need careful consideration.

The second, or economic, aspect of the problem—the aspect of production and marketing—brings us to the concrete possibilities of export. At the head of the list, obviously, comes slaughter stock. A native export trade in stock has special attractions, because it would kill several birds with a single stone. Besides bringing in the cash return, it would ease the pressure on the pastures of overstocked areas and minimise the danger of serious soil erosion. Erosion has nowhere yet assumed the alarming proportions common in Basutoland, but they have been avoided more by luck and the natural advantages of the country than by conscious good management. In many parts the offences against proper husbandry, which are erosion's most fruitful causes, are freely indulged in—overstocking, unregulated grazing, and the ploughing of fields on steep slopes. The coming penalty is already casting a visible shadow, for example on the red-soiled hill-sides south of Mbabane and in the middle veld sections of the Hlatikulu district. It will inevitably spread unless means are found to thin out the cattle population of such areas. The export of stock might also

THE NEW BOER WAR

have the further advantage of modifying the native's ideas in relation to cattle and turning his attention to other forms of investment. Attempts by Government officers and missionaries to interest him in savings banks and suchlike institutions have hitherto failed largely because of his inability to grasp the fact that money breeds quite as quickly and remuneratively as scrub cattle and is, on the whole, more immune to the attacks of pests. Once he ceased to regard cattle as a simple lock-away investment he might well become accessible to new ideas about money.

Production presents less difficulty than marketing, which is a very special problem not usefully to be considered here. In the low veld there are large areas of first-class grazing which have hardly yet been touched. At present the only permanent water is in the big rivers, and it is, in the main, only on pastures within easy reach of these that stock is raised. By building small dams to store the water of streams which do not run the whole year round, much new grazing land away from the river frontages could be thrown open for stock raising, and the cattle population of the country considerably increased without overstocking. The Government is, as it happens, already contemplating dam construction on this plan in native areas, and a grant from the Colonial Development Fund has been obtained for the purpose. But if the scheme is to be an

SWAZILAND

economic success, it seems essential that it should go hand in hand with a cattle export trade in the early stages, and possibly with dairying later.

After slaughter stock the most promising native exports are tobacco and cream. With both a beginning has been made. In 1930 thirty-four native growers produced 21,000 lb. of tobacco, and the average return from the crop was probably not less than £25 per head. Similarly, two small dairies are at work, one at the new Swazi National School near Bremersdorp, and the other at Chief Mnisi's kraal at Forbes' Reef. The dairies take all the milk which neighbouring natives care to deliver, separate it, and send the cream to Johannesburg, charging 10 per cent. of the proceeds for their services. Some natives are already making £3 a month in this way. Dairying is still on a very small scale, but if it continues as well as it has begun it may perhaps lead natives to grow stock feed in order to keep their cows longer in milk, and even to experiment with breeding up their stock. And were those things to happen, the establishment of a central creamery and cheese factory at Bremersdorp would not seem a visionary project. Swaziland is associated with the Union's dairy control scheme, so that a Union embargo on Swaziland cream, butter, and cheese is improbable—at least much more improbable than an embargo on cattle. For this reason,

THE NEW BOER WAR

dairying is safer than ranching, as a permanent line of development.

Tobacco growing also seems capable of indefinite expansion, and, given a lead by the Government and by the more enterprising type of native, the time will no doubt come when every native garden in suitable districts will contain a few thousand plants. Of all crops possible to Swaziland, tobacco probably gives the largest return per acre.

In the future cotton may take an important place among native exports, even turning out to be a purely native crop as in Uganda and parts of Nyasaland and Tanganyika. The Swaziland cotton grower is not unfavourably situated in these days of improved transport, and he can get his cotton ginned, pressed, baled, insured, and carried to the Durban market for an inclusive charge of about 1½d. per lb. of lint. But cotton is a tricky crop, both as regards pests and markets. European farmers are at present against cultivation by natives on the ground that the stringent regulations directed towards pest control, under which they themselves operate, would not be properly observed; and the Government hesitates to put the native on to a venture which owing to fluctuations of a world market may prove highly speculative. That there is substance in both objections cannot be denied. But, at the same time, there seems no reason why a start

SWAZILAND

should not be made by selected natives under close Government supervision and in selected areas outside the zone of danger to white farmers.

Whatever may be the future of cotton, the possibilities of stock-raising, dairying, and tobacco growing are such that their development for export could gradually absorb the bulk of the man-power which now dissipates itself outside the territory. It is only by some such means that the Swazi people can be freed from the noxious domination of the Union labour market and that a home market can be built up in Swaziland with sufficient consuming power to purchase the products of European industry. The mere withdrawal of the Swazi labour force from employment in the Union would tend towards a rise in the wage levels of unskilled labour in the Union, and thus towards an increased demand for Swaziland produce, such as meat, butter, and tobacco.

§ 5

The Transport Question

Second in importance only to the conservation of native man-power comes the question of transport. As we saw, the position in Swaziland has undergone a wide and beneficial transformation by the extension of the Durban-

THE NEW BOER WAR

Zululand railway to Gollel, and by the establishment of the road transport service by the Union Railway Administration. These improvements have cheapened transport by some 50 per cent., and speeded it up in a higher proportion still. Nevertheless, the present system has certain peculiarities which make it less attractive than it may appear at first sight. It is essentially a foreign service, carrying the bulk of its revenue out of the country and spending it abroad. Swaziland thus derives no benefit from the capital expenditure on its establishment and little from expenditure on operation, maintenance, and repairs. Her one direct benefit, apart from the service itself, consists in the £5,800 paid out annually in salaries and wages at Bremersdorp. She receives no share, even of the profits, no revenue from licences in respect of the vehicles employed, and no contribution towards the upkeep of roads on which the wear and tear of the heavy lorries is extremely severe. In short, the service, for all its great utility, is concurrently a big drain on the resources of the country.

All these disadvantages to Swaziland are, of course, advantages to the Union. It is true that Swaziland has no liability for losses which may be incurred; but the immunity is of the less significance since, if there were any persistent losses, the service would be discontinued. Its maintenance and extension are evidence that it

SWAZILAND

pays its way. The Union also enjoys certain less direct gains from it. We must take into account the fact that the great bulk of the traffic handled by the road service is fed straight to the Union railways, which make a further profit on it in respect of rail carriage for greater or less distances. Another point is that the service for which Swaziland pays has opened up a large farming area in the Union—namely, the area between Breyten and the Swaziland border, including the Lake Chrissie district. In all these circumstances, the white population of Swaziland, grateful as they are for the Union's opportune assistance, are quite rightly inclined to regard the present arrangements as no more than temporary.

The attitude of the Advisory Council has been to press for the appointment of an expert commission to investigate local transport needs, and, keeping in view the possibility of developing the coal resources, to report on the desirability of constructing a railway through the territory. Their hopes obviously are that the report would be favourable to the railway idea, but they frankly state that they are ready to abide by the findings of such a commission, favourable or unfavourable. The Secretary of State's first response to this very reasonable proposal was unsympathetic. A further petition was subsequently drawn up, and the Resident Commissioner promised his help in getting the matter reopened.

THE NEW BOER WAR

It is to be hoped that he will be successful, for beyond question there is a genuine need for expert inquiry into the whole transport problem.

Without anticipating the possible results of such an inquiry, it is permissible to doubt whether railway building is likely to figure largely in the problem's solution. For years it has been the fashion in Swaziland to assume that a railway is a *sine qua non* of any considerable economic development. In Blue Books, annual reports, and up and down official publications generally, as well as in the speeches of members of the Advisory Council, the assumption is continually propounded with a dogmatism for which modern conditions seem to afford little warrant. The experience of railway systems in every developed part of the world to-day increasingly suggests that, except for heavy, long-distance traffic, they are destined to be superseded by the more mobile and adaptable road transport. And an attempt to read the Swaziland situation in the light of that experience leads naturally to the inference that the main job of transport in so small a territory must always be to feed, by road, the railways with which it is surrounded. Coal might conceivably prove to be a special case; and should the time come when an assured export or bunkering market were in prospect, there might be a case for linking the coalfields by rail with the Goba line. But the determining factor there would be the practical

SWAZILAND

conditions of the market in question, and until the market puts in a concrete appearance the point is not to be settled, *a priori*, by theories of ideal means of transport. Furthermore, by the time the Swaziland coalfields come to be exploited, scientific experimentation with fuels derived from coal may have altered the whole position; and the need may be not for railways or even for roads, but for pipe-lines or something else which to-day seems equally remote.

However that may be, the view that a railway and nothing but a railway can do the trick for Swaziland seems an archaism surviving from the cast of thought of Victorian times. Nothing could be clearer than that in the main, i.e. in normal conditions in most parts of the world, the future lies with road transport. The railway is no longer the unique Open Sesame to progress and prosperity; indeed, it would be more reasonable to regard it as a very expensive incubus to be avoided whenever possible and only resorted to when shown to be indispensable in special conditions.

§ 6

Future Progress

Whatever may be the right solution of the transport problem, it may be hoped that it will not

THE NEW BOER WAR

now be many years in coming. Swaziland's feet seem planted on the highway of economic progress, and the administrative authority is quite alive enough to the posture of the country's internal and external affairs to encourage the belief that transport facilities will by one means or another keep adjusted to its growing needs. In this the European population may look, with some reason and confidence, to the British Government for further assistance. Even on the basis of the present transport arrangements, which are open to criticism much more for their high cost than for inadequacy of service, the white farmer has an almost bewildering choice of agricultural and pastoral possibilities before him. Beyond his present lines of tobacco, cotton and ranching there lie at least fruit, timber, wattles, dairying and eggs. All are promising, and in none has potentiality been more than superficially scratched. Tea and sugar are also being experimented with, and in a few years may perhaps claim inclusion in the above list. The farmer, clearly enough, has plenty of material to hand for moulding, by his own energy and enterprise and by informed sympathy with native development, a prosperous future for himself.

Swaziland is also able to look forward to a growing mineral development. The working of tin and asbestos on a scale considerable in relation to the general economy of the country only awaits

SWAZILAND

the recovery of the world's markets. The extensive deposits of coal, given favourable external circumstances, may one day become an important factor in economic expansion. There is, further, ample water power for the electricity requirements of the population.

But perhaps Swaziland's best asset of all, and one which has not yet begun to be exploited, is her proximity to the sea. This is of especial significance in relation to citrus and coal. In the case of citrus the advantage is climatic. The Union is the only country in the world in which any large commercial production of citrus takes place at a distance of hundreds of miles from the coast, and there is little doubt that this peculiarity is a serious handicap in growing the best quality of fruit. Swaziland is so placed that she could start without that handicap. In the case of coal the advantage is geographical. The coal resources of Natal and the Transvaal are easily and cheaply worked, the average pithead price being under 7s. and 5s. respectively. There is no reason, so far as present knowledge goes, to expect that Swaziland coal would compare unfavourably in this respect. But export trade and bunker trade in Union coal have shown a disappointing development for one main reason—namely, the situation of the mines far inland, and the consequent cost of freight to the coast. It seems at least possible that Swaziland might capture the exports and bunkers

THE NEW BOER WAR

which Natal once hoped would fall a prize to herself, though both, by reason of the increase in the proportion of oil-driven shipping, are perhaps dwindling trades.

The economic exploitation of Swaziland's proximity to the sea, of course, implies the cultivation of the closest and most cordial relations with her Portuguese neighbours. This is a task, possibly somewhat neglected in the past, to which the new High Commissioner may be expected to address himself. It should prove to be simplified for him, both by the change in the High Commissionership itself and because Swaziland's incorporation in the Union is obviously no longer a possibility of the immediate future.

I mentioned above that the progress of the white community depended in a special sense upon its informed sympathy with native development. Upon the bridge of this observation we may make the passage from the field of economics to the field of politics. How is this informed sympathy to be attained? At present the distinction between European affairs and native affairs is cut very clear, alike in the minds of Europeans and natives, and in the practice of the Government. The Advisory Council consists exclusively of Europeans, and, theoretically, it advises exclusively on European affairs. Policy in native affairs, on the other hand, is framed by the Government in consultation with the Paramount Chief, who has his

SWAZILAND

own council of natives. This sharp differentiation corresponds, of course, with no economic reality, and is in practice increasingly difficult to maintain. As the country develops, it will evidently have to give way to something better suited to the facts, and presumably the first complete stage in the adjustment will be a joint Advisory Council of Europeans and non-Europeans. European opinion is as yet unripe for such an innovation, and will, no doubt, take some time to assimilate and adapt itself to the idea. Nevertheless, it seems essential that Europeans should be gradually associated with the formation of at least the broad principles of native policy, and educated by means of co-operation with the Government to the view that native interests and European interests are neither separable nor antagonistic, but twin-yoked and complementary. Similarly, some regular machinery will before very long be needed for the proper consultation of representative native opinion on changes of policy which primarily affect Europeans.

In the former direction at least there is already a well-marked tendency. When, for example, the annual estimates are presented to the Advisory Council, members are encouraged to take into their purview the whole field of public finance, and the Government does not attempt to confine discussion to items of revenue to be derived from the European community and items of expendi-

THE NEW BOER WAR

ture proposed for its benefit. An even plainer index of the official line of thought is seen in the new Native Education Committee, whose membership includes, besides natives, missionaries, and officials, certain members of the elected Advisory Council. By such means, it may be, European opinion will be stimulated to a friendly concern for native advancement, and familiarised with the idea of co-operating with natives to secure it.

The influence of the Government on relations between the European and native communities can hardly be more than indirect. And the example set by the Government in the last two or three years is beyond cavil. Much has been done to establish intimate and unbroken touch with the various phases of native sentiment. Arrangements have been made for monthly meetings at headquarters with the Paramount Chief, as well as for monthly meetings between assistant commissioners and chiefs in the districts, and at both types of meeting matters of interest or importance to the natives are freely discussed with a minimum of formality. Both have rapidly proved their usefulness, and the former in particular now form an indispensable link in the administrative chain; for the Paramount Chief, besides being a highly engaging personality, distinguished for his intelligence and public spirit, enjoys great confidence among his people, so that his willing co-operation with the official element

SWAZILAND

is a notable simplification of the work of government. Committees, elected at public meetings, have also been formed throughout the territory to represent the views of educated natives and coloured persons. The Committees have access to the Resident Commissioner at any time and are encouraged to tender advice on matters affecting the classes they represent. In addition, they meet twice yearly at headquarters for general discussion. If the spirit shown by the Government in these arrangements should come to animate the European community as a whole, the outlook in Swaziland would be reassuring.

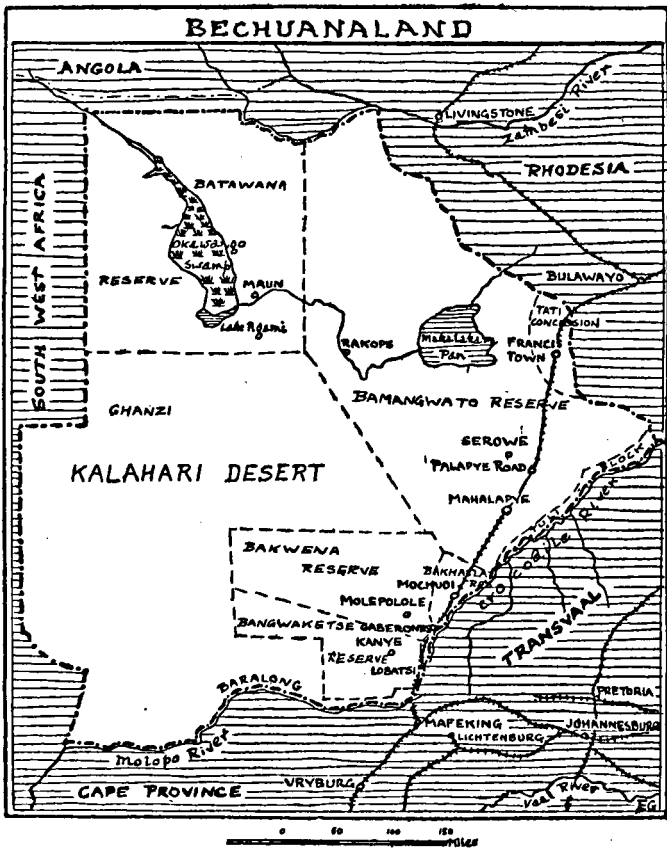
CHAPTER VII

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

§ 1

The Waste of Man-Power

THE Bechuanaland Protectorate reproduces the general economic features of the other High Commission territories. The population appears to be stationary in number; economic advancement is almost entirely arrested; standards of living are falling. The country only keeps itself going by sending its manhood abroad to seek employment. Collections of native hut tax were actually smaller in 1928 than they were in 1917. Such figures as are available seem to show that imports have not risen appreciably since 1925, and that exports in the same period have only increased by some £20,000, or about 6 per cent. So far as the native population is concerned, one may say that it takes 150,000 people to herd some 600,000 head of cattle, produce £8,000 worth of cream, and grow rather less kafir corn than they need for their own consumption. On the



THE NEW BOER WAR

face of it, it is not a striking record of human endeavour.

Admittedly, native development has been faced with formidable obstacles. The country is semi-arid, in spite of its rich pastures; stock-raising and dairying are, perhaps, its only important farming potentialities. It is, in any case, remote from markets, and transport charges are exorbitantly high. In recent years particularly, the customs arrangements with the Union have pressed unfairly on the Protectorate. Thirty-five years ago rinderpest carried off 95 per cent. of its cattle. For more than half a century its herds were infected with contagious pleuro-pneumonia, and they were wholly freed from it only in 1927. Thus export trade in cattle has always had to work under hampering restrictions. Even now that the territory is "clean" its neighbours jealously protect their own markets. In such circumstances, some may say, what wonder that many men had to migrate to seek the means of continuing life elsewhere? And is it not something to have conquered lung sickness and raised the cattle population to 600,000 in 35 years?

The British authorities stepped in in 1885, declaring a protectorate and their intention of interfering as little as possible with tribal law and custom. Their first subsequent act was to tax the tribes and demand from them something they had never possessed—namely, money—thus immedi-

ately imposing a profound modification of tribal custom. The imposition might have been balanced by a simultaneous offer of the means of making money, i.e. by stimulating tribal economic development. If the conditions at which we glanced in the previous paragraph made an effective offer of the kind impossible, then there was only one logical alternative. That was to recognise that the tribe would have to go outside the tribal system to acquire the money, and that acquisition would *ipso facto* necessitate some measure of detribalisation. The implications of these facts have never been faced by the Protectorate Government, which has consequently never sought to adapt the tribal system so as to compensate for the tendencies towards detribalisation thrust upon it and give it a chance of subsuming them once more into itself. The failure to ease the tribes' transition from a subsistence economy to a money economy has made the present administration of the Protectorate the *reductio ad absurdum* of indirect rule.

Apart from difficulties of marketing, there is another serious brake on economic development—namely, the heavy wastage of man-power. Of this there are six main causes:

- (1) Labour migration.
- (2) Venereal disease.
- (3) Malaria.

THE NEW BOER WAR

- (4) Malnutrition.
- (5) Regimented labour.
- (6) The "slave" system.

The last two items will be discussed below in connection with the administrative problem. As regards the question of nutrition no accurate survey has been made. The staple foods are kafir corn and milk, and it seems likely that of the kafir corn consumed far too high a proportion is taken, by the men at least, in the form of a strongly fermented beer. The people sometimes kill their goats and sheep for meat, but game is much scarcer, and the hunting-pot therefore much less copiously supplied than once it was. Probably the only times when they are not seriously short of meat are when their cattle die in large numbers from starvation or disease. Fruit and vegetables are almost unknown, except for the oranges which the Bakhatla grow with fair success at Mochudi. Quantity is perhaps even less satisfactory than quality, for in the frequent years of drought when crops fail or partially fail, the people are left with insufficient grain for their needs and are often too poor to supply them by purchase. At such times also most of the milk is needed for the calves. Some of the chiefs have attempted to deal with the position by forbidding any man to sell his grain unless he has at least a three years' reserve in hand. The ruling has been fairly effective in

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

stopping trade, but less so in securing an abundance of supplies; for native husbandry is such that a man will often not bother to plough his lands and put in a crop, if he knows that he has an unconsumed iron ration in his granary. Certainly the general impression borne in upon the observer as he watches the people in their villages is of the wide prevalence of deficiency diseases. But the whole question needs systematic investigation.

The scourges of venereal disease and malaria are also obviously hard at work, though here again no exact statistical information is available. A member of the European Advisory Council recently observed to his colleagues: "I dare say fully 20 per cent. of our native population are a useless drag on the progress of the country owing to their being totally unfit through syphilis, and I would go so far as to say that 70 per cent. of the population are enervated and in some way deleteriously affected by this disease, thus lessening to an alarming extent the native's efficiency and ability to earn and promote his own welfare." The principal medical officer himself has stated in regard to malaria, "Taken as a whole the standard of living of the Bechuanaland native is below that of most of the natives of South Africa. No doubt malaria is an important contributing factor. One of the medical officers in his report says of the natives of his district: 'The majority

THE NEW BOER WAR

of the people are rotten with the infection, and chronic malarial pains are a common complaint.' Can one wonder that with such a physical disability and its resultant mental lethargy, they only make such efforts as will supply them with the absolute bare necessities of life—this in turn lowering their resistance to malaria when it comes their way ? ”

There remains the question of migration. We have discussed it in dealing with Basutoland and Swaziland, and endeavoured to show that it is one of the crucial points in the whole administrative and economic problem of the Protectorates. It is the main factor in detribalisation, and it is essential for any policy which aims at maintaining tribal rule to devise some rational check upon it. Such a check is as imperative in the interests of the whole native labour force of South African industry as in those of the Protectorates considered by themselves. And the first step, we have argued, must be to abolish recruiting.

Bechuanaland has even less reliable information as to the extent of labour-migration than the other territories. Natives leaving the territory are supposed to take out a pass, but in practice few of them trouble to do so. The frontiers are huge in length and easy to cross at a hundred points, so that there is, in fact, no official record of comings and goings that is anything like complete. But from the general social evidence it is

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

plain that the country is denuded of its adult males in much the same proportion as Basutoland and Swaziland—that is to say, to the extent probably of 50 or 60 per cent. The Johannesburg gold mines are debarred from drawing labour from regions north of latitude 22. Roughly speaking, therefore, the Bechuana people living nearer the equator than Serowe are not available for recruitment, and actually the numbers of Bechuana who go to the gold mines are smaller relatively to the total population than the corresponding numbers in either Swaziland or Basutoland. But this gain is fully offset by the proximity of the diamond workings in the Lichtenburg area, at Kimberley, and even in South-West Africa. Bechuana labour goes out freely, not only to all these areas, but to the towns and farms of the Western Transvaal, the Northern Cape, and both Rhodesias as well. Thus the dispersion is pretty complete.

The Government, with its habitual penchant for the line of least resistance, has always favoured this dispersion, as simplifying the fiscal problem; and annual report after annual report complacently announces that “the Protectorate offers a large field of operations for recruiters of native labour for work on the mines and elsewhere outside the territory.” But their preference is shared by no one inside the territory, except, possibly, by certain traders who happen also to be recruiters

THE NEW BOER WAR

and who say they could not keep their heads above water but for recruiting fees. For obvious reasons the missionaries object to it. Members of the European Advisory Council have repeatedly directed the Government's attention to the loss which labour migration means to the whole territory. "Anything," as one member put it, "anything that will tend to improve the native's method of farming and keep him at home, developing his own country, and so promoting the native's true welfare, must react in the prosperity of the territory, and all of us who live here."

The attitude of the natives themselves is acceptance of an evil they see no way of avoiding. It is quite certain that very few of them would work abroad for wages if they could earn money at home. The main migration takes place in the first four months of each year. A good proportion of the migrants manage to return in October in time for ploughing; but if they know that they have someone at home to plough for them they often remain away for more than a year. When a married man goes on contract he usually leaves his wife in the charge of his parents, and, if he can, arranges for them to help her with the ploughing and the care of cattle, etc. It not seldom happens that she has to hold the plough while her father-in-law drives the team; in any case, she only gets the help of her husband's relations after they have

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

done their own ploughing, so that she usually misses the benefit of the early rains. As regards cattle, they are often very slackly tended by the relatives, who, after all, receive no compensation for any trouble they may take. Consequently the owner may find on return that his herd, so far from increasing, has actually dwindled. On the other hand, the cost of living in the towns of the Union is too high in relation to native wages for him to save money and make up for his loss of cattle. It is a system which leads to domestic complications and the neglect of lands and stock, and so to diminished output. Prolonged separations of husbands and wives have an effect on the survival rate of the tribe which no one has yet tried to measure accurately, but which must be severe. Human nature being what it is, the men when they are away get into trouble with other women, and their wives with other men. A large percentage of the chief's time is taken up in hearing cases which arise out of such difficulties.

In general, the tribal sentiment towards them is one of free-thinking common sense. If a husband leaves his wife for long periods, he must put up with moderate infidelity on her part. It is even held that a woman should not allow her child-bearing capacity to fust in her unused, even if she has to seek from someone else than her husband the hearty co-operation on which nature insists. Infidelity, even when marked by an "illegiti-

THE NEW BOER WAR

mate" birth, is not very frequently brought forward as a ground for divorce; it seems to be regarded as incidental. But family life is often broken up by the results of the unwillingness of a wife who has long enjoyed comparative independence to resubmit herself tamely to her husband's authority.

Of late years there has also been a large increase in the numbers of children born of unmarried women, a phenomenon closely related with the labour migration of so many young men. When the young men return after long work abroad they cohabit with their betrothed or with unattached girls, for whom their traveller's assurance and knowledge of men and cities seem to have a special attraction—of the same kind, no doubt, as Desdemona felt for Othello. It is common enough, too, for a youth to put a girl with child and then slip off on contract to avoid the consequences.

One chief stated to me that there was no household in his *stad* which had not "lost a man on the mines," by which he meant that in every one a man had gone abroad to work and never returned. On the average, however, the percentage of permanent loss through labour migration must be smaller than this evidence suggests. But what is unquestionably true is that, when the men come back, they come back dissatisfied in mind and out of love with the old tribal life. They have acquired tastes in food, clothing and amusements

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

which tribal life offers no means of satisfying. The loss of a steady cash income is a thing they feel heavily, for though tribal economy does not yet work on a cash basis, the presence of white traders in tribal areas does involve the temptation and the opportunity to spend money without any general possibility of earning it. A man in employment can buy a new pair of trousers every six months; living in the tribe he may have to weather an interval of two years between pairs. The thing touches his personal pride. Such an instance may seem trivial, but clothes are of quite absurd importance to the semi-detribalised native; and trivialities of the kind mount up in the aggregate to the detribalisation problem, which is not trivial at all.

The chiefs on the whole do not like the mines or any other sphere of outside employment for their men, and they are inclined only to let men go as a last resort when taxes and levies cannot be got out of them in any other way. But in special circumstances the rule may be departed from. At least one chief makes use of the mines as a kind of penal settlement, calling up batches of people he dislikes or disapproves of from time to time, and sending them off; and no doubt in this plan he co-operates not unprofitably with the recruiting agent. It is applied especially to those who are more than three years in arrears with their hut tax; in their case it may be thought of also as

THE NEW BOER WAR

a way of saving them from imprisonment by the Government. In certain tribes, again, there is a custom known as *sethlako*, by which the chief gives each recruit 5s. for food on the journey to Johannesburg, and receives in return a tribute of £1 when the man comes home at the end of his contract.

It is the well-defined policy of the chiefs to discourage the migration of women as far as they possibly can. One of them, indeed, would only agree to the extension of the road motor service to his territory on condition that his own tribesmen were employed as bus conductors to see that women of the tribe should not use the service as a means of leaving the territory; he was even at pains to come to an understanding with the station master of the nearest station on the railway, by which tickets to destinations outside the Protectorate should not be issued to women.

But in spite of these limitations and precautions most of the men between the ages of twenty and forty-five do go abroad to work; and they are followed, though in smaller numbers, by women.

§ 2

Poverty

The Bechuana differ from the south-eastern Bantu in living in large villages, or towns as one

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

might almost call them. As a consequence of this peculiarity, their farming economy expresses itself diagrammatically as a series of concentric circles. The bull's-eye is the village itself, the seat of the chief and the headquarters of the tribe. Broadly speaking, the village is the home, the one permanent home, of the people, who, however, are accustomed to leave it at the chief's order between the time of ploughing and the time of reaping. Outside the limits of the village in a roughly circular belt, which may be twelve or fifteen miles deep, are grouped the arable lands of the tribe; beyond them is a much broader belt of cattle posts and pastures; and beyond them again the hunting stations of the richer members of the tribe.

It was probably for geographical reasons that the Bechuana departed in this way from common Bantu custom. The tribes are not very numerous groups—their average strength is well under 20,000; and the total territory they occupy is some 275,000 square miles. They are thus but a few grains of humanity dotted about on a huge expanse of steppe. The country is not sufficiently broken up into hill and dale to throw people naturally into compact groups. If each tribe were to spread itself more or less evenly over the whole tribal area, the chief's control would be greatly weakened, his administrative troubles would be increased, and that close cohesion and solidarity

THE NEW BOER WAR

which it has always been a governing principle with the chiefs to maintain would be lost. The village system with its concentric rings is doubtless an attempt to surmount these difficulties. Its convenience from the standpoint of the chief is obvious; and throughout the period of British protection the chief has shared that convenience with the trader, the missionary, and, to some extent, the British Administration. In the old days the people never left the village to plough or reap until the chief gave the word of command; and upon his word also they desisted from reaping and ploughing, and returned home. This drill is still largely in force to-day.

Such a mode of communal life has one accompaniment which is of great importance in modern conditions. It means that the cattle posts, remote as they are from the village centre and the main life of the tribe, have to be manned by people who can see that the stock are properly grazed and watered, the calves fed, and the cows milked. Tribal custom has decided that this work shall be done in the main by youths who have not yet been formed into a regiment—by youths, that is, whose ages may range from twelve to twenty-four. The herd boys are pivotal in the economic life of the tribe.

Naturally, they are relieved from time to time, the frequency of reliefs depending on the ratio between the number of available youths and the

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

number of cattle posts. But in most tribes all the youths spend the bulk of their time away in the distant bush, pretty completely cut off from village influences. When, every now and again, they do come home, they come with sexual hunger extremely keen set, and they look, in conquering mood, to the village maidens for its appeasement—willing, if that may be, but if not, then unwilling. It takes a shrewd girl to dodge their ardour. Menstruation can often be effectively pleaded; yet the pretext has a weakness—the essential impermanence of its validity.

But the system has other and more serious social effects. It makes it extraordinarily hard to bring the boys within the range of education. That in itself would be bad enough in the general circumstances of to-day, although it would not upset any ancient equilibrium of the tribe. But it is not all. With it goes the fact that the main benefits of the educational efforts of missionaries and Government fall to the girls. Average school attendances show about 75 per cent. girls; probably, nearly 90 per cent. of the girls get some kind of education, while only some 30 per cent. of the boys get any education at all, and even of those many start too old to reap full profit from its influence. This is a situation which really does bid fair to shake the traditional balance of forces within the tribe. What is going to happen to the tribal system when all the women are educated and half

THE NEW BOER WAR

the men uneducated is a point which has not yet been sufficiently considered in the High Commission territories.

From this angle it is perhaps a favourable sign that the people are beginning to remove away from the villages and set up their homes near the lands and even farther afield in the neighbourhood of the cattle posts. The tendency, which, though new, is well marked, springs from a variety of causes. The people are finding that living is cheaper away from the villages with their stores and other tempting amenities. Again, in a country which is woefully short of surface water, the drawing and carrying of water can be a great inconvenience among the concentrated population of a village; women and girls, by whom the water-carrying is done, sometimes have to walk long distances to and fro, and to queue up for hours waiting their turn at the wells. In some cases, without doubt, people uproot themselves from the village and settle elsewhere, mainly in order to simplify the water problem. In others, they do so to escape the call for regimented labour, and to keep away from the chief. But, whatever the full account of the matter may be, fewer people come back nowadays after ploughing and reaping, notwithstanding the chief's order. The Government might well look around it for ways of strengthening and directing this spontaneous trend. For if the people came to live in

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

more numerous but smaller villages sited at tactical points, the improvement of agriculture and husbandry would be facilitated, the water problem would become more manageable, and there would be a better prospect of getting the boys to school. As regards the last point, another hopeful line is the development of dairying. Whenever a household becomes able to earn a steady cash income by selling cream, an immediate inducement is offered to the grown men in it to stay at home and tend their cattle. And that would have the double advantage of checking labour migration and releasing some of the young herd boys for education.

But both these processes take time. In the meanwhile, as a temporary palliative, it may be necessary to consider the possibility of catering for the herd boy's needs by the establishment of bush schools, though there are obvious difficulties confronting such a project.

An idea of the average scale of living among Bechuanaland natives may be got from the following tables relating to trade in the Bamangwato reserve in 1930:

	<i>Imports</i>	£
Mealies and meal	..	3,431
Wheat and meal	..	2,272
General merchandise	..	73,915
Sundries	<u>3,065</u>
Total	..	£82,683

THE NEW BOER WAR

Exports

		£
Kafir corn		280
Mealies		480
Cattle		34,336
Sheep and goats		3,184
Hides (cattle)		11,259
Skins (sheep and goats)		369
Karosses		3,294
Sundries		1,870
Total		£55,072

The population of the reserve may be taken as somewhere about 60,000. The table of exports, being compiled from traders' returns, does not include cream sent direct to the creamery; but when allowance is made for the omission, it is clear that the exports do not amount to more than £1 per head of the population.

According to the above figures there is a surplus of imports of £27,611. So far as the natives are concerned, the true adverse balance is not as heavy as this, because, while the export figures represent purely native production and trade, the import figures include stock brought in by the traders for sale to the handful of European residents in the reserve. But even so, the true balance against the natives must be large. It must be remembered also that the native population has to raise an annual

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

fund of some £30,000 in respect of Government taxation and tribal levies. In the aggregate, therefore, it has liabilities amounting to between £40,000 and £50,000 more than it can meet from the proceeds of its exported produce. These excess liabilities are presumably met by wages earned inside and outside the territory and by indebtedness incurred with the storekeepers.

On the whole, the purchasing power of the Bamangwato does not seem to be on the increase. In the last few years, especially, the natives have been badly hit by the fall of prices for cattle and hides; and because of lower prices they are disposing of fewer beasts. Other sources of revenue, too, are drying up, such as the sale of wild animal skins and ostrich feathers; a good lion's skin used to fetch £10, but nowadays it seldom goes for more than £2 10s., and there is much less game than there used to be. Attempts to ease the pressure are made, as we noticed, by removing away from Serowe to the lands and the cattle posts where living is less expensive; also by selling cream, and by transport riding with waggons, of which quite a number are owned among the Bamangwato. A dairy costs perhaps £200 to establish, and a good man with a sizeable herd sometimes makes from his cream as much as £30 a month in the season and from a third to a half of that amount out of it. But dairying is at present on so small a scale that the average earnings must be much less than this.

THE NEW BOER WAR

The outlay on a waggon, on the other hand, together with trek gear and a span of sixteen oxen, cannot be far below the cost of a dairy, yet the waggon does not as a rule bring in more than some £30 a year. Probably many waggon-owners would do well to dispose of their waggons and build dairies instead.

On balance, it appears likely that the native community, even at present standards, is living beyond its income and eating into capital. There is evidence, too, that of late years standards have dropped. For example, traders once never thought it worth while to stock any article below 1s. in price; to-day they are obliged to stock many sixpenny lines, and a good deal of trade takes place in them.

Plainly, the rut is deep, and it will be hard work getting the natives out of it. The initiative and the main task of rescue lie, or should lie, with the Government. But there is much work which calls for the personal, the intimate, touch that a Government cannot give. One wishes sometimes that the missions could widen the scope of their activities, or give them a different emphasis. The medical mission is an established and an important fact. Is it impossible that the economic mission should make its appearance? The need for trained workers in the economic field is very great—men and women who should live in the same close and friendly contact with the day-to-

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

day life of the tribes as the missionaries do, and who should unobtrusively select, stimulate, foster and guide the appropriate lines of tribal economic development, with reference not only to the traditional habits and aptitudes of the people, but even more to the all-important factor of markets. Some experiment of the kind has, I believe, been made with success by the London Missionary Society in the South Seas. No doubt lack of funds and of suitable personnel are the main reasons why it has not yet been tried in South Africa.

Deeper perhaps than the problem of material poverty lies the problem of intellectual poverty, poverty of character, poverty of culture. The Bechuana natives, as a group, are to-day cowed in spirit by the harshness of their chiefs, chilled by the vacillations of British administration, and perplexed at the disintegrating changes in their old life which they feel but cannot understand. The prime need is to set their minds in motion and to accustom them to standing firmly on their feet. Their life calls out for a new integration, their minds for schooling in team work and the art of citizenship. British protection has robbed them of their old interests of fighting and hunting, and in consequence they concentrate out of due measure on the only one that remains to them—the drinking of beer. Where the two first were is now only a void, which Government and missions

THE NEW BOER WAR

have done nothing effective to fill. Their place should be taken by a strong communal life in the social, æsthetic and intellectual realms.

It may seem a far cry from Bechuanaland to rural England, but there is in this matter much guidance to be found in the revival of English village life since the war. Two of the outstanding features of that revival have been folk-dancing and popular choral singing. To both the Bantu mind is pre-eminently attuned, and both, one would say, could be methodically developed in the village life of the Bechuana without the slightest difficulty. Musical competition festivals in which school choirs, church choirs, village choirs, tribal choirs might join would find a wide spontaneous support. There is good reason for thinking that out of singing and dancing contests of this kind would naturally grow a village drama and a system of dramatic competitions. Games, such as football and athletics, also have a ready public awaiting them. All that is wanted to set every one of these expressive and unifying activities in vigorous train is initial stimulus and a little gradually diminishing guidance. Native talent would soon provide all the organisation required, except perhaps for some loose supervision designed to make a rough whole of scattered movements and to keep them in touch with standards better than their own. Much of the groundwork could be done by the more or less educated natives, for

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

whom tribal life at present is so empty a thing.

In the soil prepared by such movements and their social results there could be sown fresh seeds of thought and imagination in the form of lectures, discussions and debates, which in turn could be irrigated and fructified by the establishment of small village libraries and reading rooms, where perhaps selected films might also be shown from time to time.

§ 3

The White Farmer

The position of the European ranching and farming community may be conveniently considered by itself. For though their economic interests are virtually identical with those of the natives, since both are dependent upon an export trade, their mode of life and methods of production are so dissimilar as to make their needs widely different in degree. The actual relations of the two groups, European and native, are superficial and insignificant, whether in the social, the political, or the economic field. Socially and politically the normal South African tradition of segregation is followed as a matter of course; and economically neither group forms a market for the other, except that the settlers employ a certain number of natives as labour, and the natives

THE NEW BOER WAR

occasionally buy pedigree stock from the settlers to improve their herds.

The settler is not unduly burdened with direct taxation. In much the same way as his counterpart in Swaziland he is liable for a £2 poll tax, and for income tax on approximately the Union basis; but if he pays the latter, the poll tax is deducted from his assessment. Income tax has only been in force since 1922. For the few years previous to that, its place was taken by a cattle tax and a cattle export duty, imposts which turned out to be unpopular less from their actual weight than from their intrinsic character. But until after the outbreak of the Great War the European was scarcely taxed at all, except through the customs. Nor has he much ground for complaint at what he receives in return. He sometimes criticises the Government, and with reason, for extravagance, and, as one used to the ways of democracy, he is apt to feel "taxation without representation" as something of a hardship; but with his present numerical strength and economic importance he cannot seriously expect more political influence than the Advisory Council gives him, and on the whole is sensible enough not to do so. Meanwhile, the provision that has been made for him in the way of schools, medical services and hospitals, veterinary and dairy services, etc., is at least commensurate with his contribution to the revenue of the country.

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

At the same time, the settler community has not made any impressive advance either in numbers or in wealth. The former have risen in the last twenty years at a lower rate than that of the natural increase; and, without going into detailed figures, it may be said that this retardation reflects the general economic circumstances of the group.

In truth, the settler finds many obstacles in his path, not all of them inevitable accompaniments of pioneering in a remote country. First is the absence of any home market, in spite of the fact that the few hundreds of settler families have 100,000 natives within commercial range of them. But both natives and Europeans are engaged mainly in stock-raising, for unquestionably the best potentialities of the country lie in that direction; so, quite properly, the native population supplies its own requirements (so far as they are supplied at all) in meat and milk. In these circumstances it is hard to see how a home market can be built up, except by means of mining. A mining law, which is an essential forerunner of mining operations, was, after having been on the stocks for years, actually issued in October 1931. It has been followed in March 1932 by the grant of a comprehensive mineral concession to the British South Africa Company by the chief of the Bamangwato tribe. On general grounds it is a matter of regret that the opportunity has been

THE NEW BOER WAR

missed of making an experiment in tribal mine ownership and mine development under European direction; and it now appears that, for legal and other reasons, development, if and when it takes place, will follow the usual lines of European exploitation which the Transvaal and Rhodesia have made familiar. But this particular point does not directly affect the question of a home market for the settler. For him the opening up of mining on any important scale, by whatever method it should take place, is perhaps the brightest of visible hopes.

In the meantime he must scratch round for export markets as best he may. It is a discouraging job. In Southern Rhodesia and South West Africa there is a total embargo on Bechuanaland cattle. In the Union also restrictions are severe. Export of Bechuanaland cattle to the Union's open markets has been prohibited for more than eight years, and there is little prospect of the prohibition being lifted. A minimum live weight of 800 lb. for all exported animals was imposed in March 1924, and in January 1926 it was raised to 1,050 lb. for oxen. (The Union's weight requirements, though they do constitute a grave handicap to Protectorate producers, are not invariably fulfilled; fortunately for Bechuanaland, the Union border is a very long one, and a certain number of underweight cattle are regularly smuggled over it.) As regards cattle consigned for export over-

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

seas the Union naturally does not interfere, and they may pass through to Union ports without restriction as to weight. Recently Protectorate cattle have been finding their way in small numbers to Angola and, through Northern Rhodesia, to the Belgian Congo.

In the aggregate, the Protectorate has been able in the last six years to dispose of perhaps 40,000 head of cattle annually, and the annual value of the trade is probably under £200,000. These figures, of course, include exports of native-owned cattle as well as European-owned. The restrictions on the markets hit the natives just as hard as they hit the Europeans; but in spite of them, or perhaps because of them, the European farmers gallantly persevere with the improvement of their herds, and the more enlightened of the tribes are beginning to follow suit. The project of a new railway from Rhodesia to Walvis Bay through the Protectorate is enthusiastically spoken of, and the British Government has advanced funds on the Protectorate's behalf towards the cost of a preliminary survey, the theory being that such a line would afford a shorter and less expensive outlet to the meat markets of Europe. It seems to be overlooked that Southern Africa is already overprovided with railways, having regard to its actual and potential traffic; that the opening of the Benguela line has deprived, for a good many years at least, any possible Rhodesia-Walvis Bay

THE NEW BOER WAR

line of most of such utility as it might have had; and that, if a Walvis Bay line were constructed, there would be necessarily a general rise in rates to keep it and existing lines in being.

Notwithstanding every difficulty, there has been a steady expansion of the cattle industry, and the number of head officially recorded as exported during the first seven months of 1930 was greater than the corresponding figure for the whole of 1923 (19,795 as against 18,147). The dairying industry has gone ahead more rapidly, for there is an unrestricted market in the Union for butter, and the High Commission territories are partners with the Union in the arrangements made under the Dairy Control Act. A large up-to-date creamery has been established inside the Protectorate at Lobatsi, and the exports of butter-fat and cream have risen from 166,160 lb. in 1923 to approximately 450,000 lb. at the present time. Of the latter figure about 120,000 lb. represents native production, with a cash value of some £8,000. In addition, the settlers have made a beginning with cheese-making, and now export some £7,000 worth of cheese a year. Of late the Dairy Control Board's scheme for subsidising the export of butter overseas has led to revised methods of grading cream which seem for the moment to bear somewhat hardly on producers, and there has consequently been some murmuring among farmers that the Board is "simply a device of the

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

manufacturers to exploit the producer." But the influence of farmers upon the Board is enough to warrant the surmise that this particular trouble will work out to its own solution.

At all events, it is clear that the future of farming in Bechuanaland depends upon a balanced alliance of beef-production with dairying. The Government is wisely directing its efforts accordingly. Its search for new markets has recently become unremitting. Subject to unavoidable veterinary limitations, it is doing all it can to facilitate the import of pure-bred stock. It has established "bull camps" where natives may send cows for service with a view to breeding up their herds. It has engaged a staff of dairy experts and native demonstrators. Under its auspices there has been a good deal of research work on indigenous pastures, and it is endeavouring to set up an experimental grass station to determine the best food values for local cattle.

Inseparable from the problems of production and marketing is the problem of transport. For the Bechuanaland settler in the conditions of to-day it is an urgent one. Prices of all farming products have fallen below pre-war level, but railway rates for him are on the average 60 per cent. above those of 1914. For every purchase he makes he must effect a corresponding sale, and onerous transport charges have to be added to the price of the former and deducted from the pro-

THE NEW BOER WAR

ceeds of the latter. A single instance will illustrate the severe weight of the burden. Suppose a farmer in the Tuli Block buys a load of timber for building. He pays, say, £15 for it in Durban. Railway and motor lorry charges to his farm would amount to £15 3s. 4d. In order to meet the total bill he would have to sell, let us say, fifty sheep in Johannesburg at 15s. a head; and it would cost him £7 10s. to rail them to market. Thus his £15 purchase in Durban would add no less than £22 13s. 4d. to railway revenues.

Nor is his expenditure on transport of benefit to the Protectorate, except very indirectly inasmuch as the Rhodesia Railways (which own the line through Bechuanaland) may be liable for income tax to the Protectorate Government. Both the railway itself and the various road lorry services operated in Bechuanaland by the South African Railways are strictly foreign services. The latter are not even liable for income tax; and although the value of the facilities they offer is not in dispute, they are open to precisely the same objections which we noticed in the case of Swaziland, for they carry practically their entire revenue out of the country and spend it abroad. The Rhodesia Railways do no doubt afford some employment for Protectorate natives, and pay out some thousands of pounds in wages in the Protectorate every year; but in their case also the bulk of their Bechuanaland revenue is money permanently lost

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

to the territory. On the whole it is true of the present transport system that, so far as the inhabitants of Bechuanaland are concerned, it takes away with one hand most of what it gives with the other. European traders, in fact, have sometimes opposed the extension of Union lorry services to their districts on this very ground; they prefer to continue using the antiquated ox-waggons of the past, because these are usually hired from native owners who are the traders' customers, so that the payment of transport charges automatically increases business done at the stores. The point, of course, constitutes a strong argument against constructing further railway lines in the territory to compete with the existing one. A new line, such as the proposed one to Walvis Bay, must have the effect of raising, or preventing the fall of, railage rates for Bechuanaland traffic. The best hope of rate reduction lies first in a return of prosperity conditions throughout South Africa, and then in making as general as possible the use of the existing line by Bechuanaland interests.

It may be said that geographical position, huge area and scattered population, and the paucity of traffic on offer, make it inevitable that Bechuanaland should pay through the nose for transport. And certainly it is true that lower charges and increased traffic are mutually interdependent. At the same time it cannot be maintained that the

THE NEW BOER WAR

present system represents the practical optimum. It would be a real economy for the Protectorate to operate its own road services on lines which might also be feasible in Swaziland—that is to say, by a locally organised Road Transport Board, spending its revenue in the territory, employing local labour, having local repair shops and possibly a local assembly plant, and eventually perhaps owning its private rolling-stock on the railways. Such a Board would not only be responsible for road motor services; it would be responsible also for road policy and the upkeep of roads. If all its mechanical requirements were purchased in Britain, the Imperial Treasury might consider guaranteeing a loan for its initial finance.

Bechuanaland has also been forced to hold the least wholesome end of the agreement with the Union about customs. The arrangement by which the territory is treated as part of the Union for customs purposes is in some ways not unfavourable; for the Union does all the work of duty collection and pays over to the territory a fixed percentage of the total customs revenue. As that percentage represents the proportion borne by Protectorate imports to the total imports of South Africa at the time of Union, the Protectorate gains in so far as Union imports since 1910 have risen more quickly than its own. And the gain is greater by the extent to which the Protectorate's recent customs agreement with Southern Rhodesia

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

has diverted trade to Rhodesia from the Union. But in every other respect the customs position is less than fair to the Protectorate.

The tariff policy of the Union is designed first to secure the home market for her own producers, and then to foster secondary industries with a view to expanding the home market, extending the range of employment, and generally building up the amenities of urban life which are regarded as essential to civilisation. Whether or not such a policy is really suited to the needs of the Union as a whole, it is certain that it is sharply opposed to the interests of the primary producer for export, since it increases his costs of production and thus weakens his competitive power in the world markets. The Union farmer receives compensation for these disadvantages in the form of State subsidies, direct and indirect, amounting to millions of pounds a year. The Protectorate farmer, on the other hand, gets no such solace for his increased costs of living and production; he has no interest in the secondary industries which are thus being developed partially at his expense; and even the markets which theoretically follow that development are kept to a great extent out of his reach by the Union's embargo on his chief product—livestock.

Why should the High Commission territories acquiesce submissively in a system which affects them so vitally and so detrimentally? They are

THE NEW BOER WAR

expected to drain themselves of native man-power to supply the Union's industrial needs (it is believed in some quarters that the Union's cattle embargo is not unconnected with the maintenance of the labour supply by means of the impoverishment of Protectorate natives). They are expected to keep open to the Union such markets as they have, and practically all their requirements are in fact brought from or through the Union. They must accept any tariff changes the Union cares to impose, regardless of the bearing of such changes on their own interests or even sentiments. Thus, when the Union undermines the tradition of Imperial preference in its Trade Treaty with Germany, the Protectorates must do the same, although their inclination is rather to tighten their trade links with Britain. Similarly, they must pay a duty of 5s. per 100 lb. on flour and meal in order to subsidise the wheat-growers of the Cape and the Orange Free State; a duty of 12s. 6d. per 100 lb. on sugar to subsidise the sugar-planters of Natal; and duties of 25 per cent. on clothing and soap, 30 per cent. on boots and shoes, and 20 per cent. on hardware and furniture, to subsidise Union manufacturers.¹ The system might have been specially designed to secure the economic stagnation of the Protectorates.

The two Rhodesias, finding themselves in this

¹ Some of these rates have been increased by the Union budget for 1932-3.

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

very position *vis-à-vis* the Union, decided to assert their right to trade and alter their tariffs at will to suit their own needs—a right which, as the Union Minister of Finance observed in Parliament, “the Union Government does not, and has no wish to, contest.” Why the High Commission authorities did not take up the cudgels on behalf of their territories at the same time and in concert with the Rhodesias is not easy to understand. But they did not.

At the beginning of 1930 the Rhodesias, by their energetic and timely efforts, secured a new customs agreement with the Union in which the following crucial points were embodied :

1. On imported goods purchased from open stocks in the Union, the Union undertook to pay over to Rhodesia the duty originally collected, less a small charge for expenses.
2. On certain specified goods of the kind, on which Rhodesian rates of duty were higher than those of the Union, the Union undertook to collect the difference and pay it over to Rhodesia.
3. Rhodesia undertook to admit Union manufactures (with certain exceptions) free of duty on the understanding that the Union Treasury should make her a compensating payment of 12 per cent. of the value of the imports in the case of certain classes of goods

THE NEW BOER WAR

(mostly foodstuffs) and six per cent. in other cases.

By these means Rhodesia safeguarded her freedom of action in fiscal policy generally and her British preference in particular, and cut down the expense of helping to protect Union industries in which she had no interest and which, sometimes competed with her own.

It is urgently necessary that the customs agreement between the Union and the High Commission territories should be revised so as to secure similar safeguards for the latter.

§ 4

The Powers of Chiefs

The main problems in the three High Commission territories may be viewed from two angles, the economic and the administrative. And in all three the economic situation is generally similar. The same may also be said of the administrative situation; but the Bechuanaland Protectorate has a special interest, since there the problems of administration, common also to Basutoland and Swaziland in their degrees, stand out in most conspicuous relief.

At the heart of the administrative problem lies the chieftainship. This venerable institution, on

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

which for centuries the whole tribal system has centred, has so far made little progress in adaptation to modern conditions, and with every passing year the results accompanying its failure become more unfortunate.

Before Western economic organisation established its present dominance in Southern Africa, the ideal of chiefly rule was not ill-suited to the somewhat stagnant life the Bantu had evolved for themselves. The chief was semi-mystically regarded almost as the incarnation of the soul of the tribe. He was the living link between ancestors and posterity, at once the symbol and the vehicle of the tribe's continuity. In the practical sphere, in the religious, social, and political life of the tribe, he was supreme,—high priest and rain-maker, legislature, judiciary, and executive all in one. He was both Chancellor of the Exchequer and Comptroller and Auditor-General. All the important agricultural phases of tribal life were regulated by him, and no man might begin to plough or to reap till the chief gave the word. Heads of families were responsible to him, through the sub-chief of their district, for all acts of the members of their families; and they were also judicial courts of first instance, from which appeals lay to the higher courts of the sub-chief and the chief. At the same time, there were acknowledged restraints upon the chief's arbitrary caprice. He was expected to use any surplus

THE NEW BOER WAR

wealth that came his way in the interests of the tribe, e.g., by allocating cattle to the poorer members for their subsistence. He was expected to seek and attend to the advice of a council; indeed, among the Bechuana, constitutional practice recognised three distinct councils, first an intimate or privy council of royal headmen who were regularly consulted as a matter of course; second, a somewhat wider council, comprising the royal headmen reinforced by such district sub-chiefs as happened to be affected by the matter at issue; and third, an ecclesia of the whole tribe. He had regularly to hold a *kgotla* or public assembly, at which all affairs of State could be discussed, and where every member of the tribe was free to express his opinion; and the *kgotla* was effective enough as an organ of public sentiment for the anthropologists to be able to speak of the political system of the Bechuana as the most democratic known among Bantu peoples. Further, the tribes have always had an innate tendency to be fissiparous; pretenders or usurpers in the form of the chief's sons, younger brothers, and so on, were continually cropping up, so that a chief could only prevent the disintegration of the tribe and the consequent collapse of his own prestige and authority by carrying the large body of the public with him.

Obviously, such a system is capable of bearing very hardly on the individual subject; and the

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

careers of even benevolent despots such as Khama and Linchwe show that it often has borne so. But individual inconveniences and burdens were on the whole accepted by a patient public as part of the inevitable wear and tear of life and as being in the general interest of the tribe. And certainly, until the impact with white civilisation, the system did fulfil well enough its primary function of fostering strong tribal solidarity, and so providing machinery for preserving the tribe's independence and increasing, if that might be, its renown among its neighbours. Even to-day, when the chiefs are coming in for a good deal of criticism from their own people, there still survives much of the old popular faith in the tribe as an ultimate atomic unit and in the chief as its true embodiment according to nature. There seems to be little popular affection for the chiefs as persons, but there is an immense respect for them as symbols. Nowhere among the Bechuana, or for that matter among the Basuto and the Swazis, have I heard any proposal for the serious mutilation of the chieftainship, still less for its abolition. In Bechuanaland, in spite of all the heated censure of the policies and methods of government employed by chiefs, even the most violent agitator suggests no more drastic reform than the establishment of a statutory council to co-operate with the chief. On this point it is essential to remember that all heathen Bechuana, and very many

THE NEW BOER WAR

Christian Bechuana also, believe that the chief is literally responsible for bringing rain. The belief explains, in some large part, why there is so little desire among natives to see the chieftainship abolished. Rain is even more vividly a matter of life and death to the Bechuana than to most people; and once the faith that the chief is the sole person capable of providing rain is understood, it is easy to follow the confusion of ideas by which it operates as a powerful buttress of the chieftainship as a political institution. And no doubt some form of chiefly rule is still what the people desire and think of as most congenial.

Meanwhile for several decades the chieftainship has been subjected to two great modifying influences, British protection on the one hand and economic contact with the Union on the other.

Under the former it has contracted a kind of dry rot. In the old days a chief could only maintain his position by means of a vigilance as sharp as that of the priest of Diana Nemorensis in the *Golden Bough*. Not to keep his council on his side and not to seek the support of the tribe was simply to manufacture openings for possible usurpers; and exile or assassination was the expected wages of wanton misrule. To-day he is materially strengthened but morally weakened by the Government which stands between him and the consequences of failure or neglect. "We used to get better chiefs in the old days" is a complaint frequently

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

heard from intelligent natives in the Protectorates. Buttressed up by the British raj, a chief has been able to do very much as he liked. His council have become mere courtiers and flatterers, selected by himself as being easy tools to work with; and it has become safe to ignore the main body of the tribe. Paradoxically, one effect of British protection has been to make tribal rule not only less self-sufficient (that was perhaps inevitable), but actually harsher and more capricious. There has thus been a real loss of personal freedom among the Bechuana since the British came. Possibly South African history may suggest that the loss would have been greater had British protection been withheld; but the British administrator cannot becomingly make use of the plea.

Concurrently, the industrialism of the Union has become a dominant factor in the life of the tribes. A large proportion of the adult males go out each year into the Union to work, with the moral and social consequences already indicated. There they become familiar with a wage and labour system of the Western type; they become steeped in the ferment of ideas and the mental unrest in which wage-earners the world over to-day have their being. The trends of thought thus set up often lead natives who are still regarded as unsophisticated much farther afield than their white rulers are generally aware. During a recent tour of the Bechuana country I

THE NEW BOER WAR

was asked pertinent questions about one Cardinal Wolsey, who had come to grief in attempting the simultaneous service of Pope and King, and about a certain King Charles I, who had been beheaded by the people. I found among the more intelligent men an unexpected interest in the course of English political history,—in the passage of power from the Crown to the aristocracy, from the aristocracy to the bourgeoisie, from the bourgeoisie to the proletariat; and they were frankly speculating about the possibility of tribal development following comparable lines in the direction of an accession of dignity for the chiefs, together with a re-apportionment of effective power on somewhat democratic principles.

When the Bechuana are not selling their labour to Europeans, they live by disposing of their cattle, grain, and dairy produce in European markets. This fact, in turn, is implanting a new spirit of individualism in the tribes. There are large numbers of small dairies in the Bamangwato reserve, for example, and most of them are run by private enterprise. Thus even among those who have never been outside Bechuanaland a class is springing up with an awareness of new notions, however vague and unformulated at present, of economic and political liberty. Again, one of the most marked characteristics of the younger generation of Bantu all over Southern Africa is an anti-European sentiment unknown to their

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

fathers. The Bechuana youth have not escaped this influence, and in them the old tribe-consciousness is being supplemented and perhaps superseded by a novel consciousness of race. They are looking gropingly for race-leadership, awaiting a race-leader; and though they do not yet behold him, it is hardly too much to say that they feel subconsciously that the chiefs are potentially subordinate, as it were, to the shadow he casts.

The effect of British protection, then, has been unwittingly to cut off the rule of the chiefs from the democratic forces which once helped in guiding it, and to transform it into a simple tyranny; in seeking to shield it from change the British have precipitated its decay. And simultaneously with this movement towards autocracy within the tribe, the development of the general economic situation in South Africa has produced a context in which an autocratic chieftainship is more and more out of place.

Such is the predicament in the midst of which the chief sits to-day, like a child on a sand-castle in a flowing tide. The observer cannot help feeling a good deal of sympathy for him. Left largely to his own devices by the British authorities and receiving little positive leading from them (except in purely technical matters), enjoying, moreover, a mere veneer of education which is quite inadequate to enable him to grapple under-

THE NEW BOER WAR

standingly with the position himself, he drifts in a very real bewilderment. The dilemma is accentuated by the accident that the present chiefs of all the most important tribes are very young men; they have all been at school in the Union and there absorbed the new Bantu race-consciousness, which in their case and in the general circumstances of the Protectorate, manifests itself not so much in actual hostility to Europeans as in a kind of pride that makes them anxious to dispense with the counsel of Europeans even when it is on offer. Small wonder that the larger vision passes them by, and that lack of inspiration drives them back upon the one task which any man, however perplexed, can understand,—namely, that of hanging on to what he has.

And, indeed, with proper application the post of chief can be made quite a cosy little billet. Its holder receives from the Government a commission of 10 per cent. on the total hut tax collected from his tribe. He keeps the net proceeds of fines paid into his court. The labour recruiting agents often bring extra grist to his mill. He is free, without seeking Government approval, to make special levies from his tribe, whenever he can induce them to pay: one chief lately imposed a levy of £6 10s. per taxpayer,—a sum representing more than five years of Government taxation. (It is true that such a levy must be

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

imposed for tribal purposes, but it is equally true that no one asks what happens to the money collected.) He also reaps the benefit of the regimented labour system, by which his lands are ploughed, cultivated, and reaped, his cattle tended, even his houses built, by pressed labour for which he does not pay.

§ 5

Tribal Rule

How chiefly rule works out in practice in such a setting may be illustrated by the case of the Bamangwato, the most populous tribe in the territory. At Serowe, the tribal headquarters and a town which until recently was inhabited by more than 20,000 people, three main elements go to make up the political life of the tribe, (*a*) a group of certain royal headmen, standing in bitter opposition to (*b*) a group of common headmen, led by the chief, and reinforced by certain royal favourites, who, however, are for the most part recognised by tribal custom as coming below (*a*) in order of precedence; and (*c*) the large, but normally inactive, body of the people, whom the inertia of tradition inclines towards support of the chief, but on whom both the active elements play as far as they need or can.

THE NEW BOER WAR

Here the natural order of things is reversed. Many royal headmen, who traditionally would be the chief's closest advisers, are ignored or persecuted by the chief. The opposition dates back to the days of Khama, if not beyond, and, as always in tribal life, has many complicated ramifications. On the accession of the present chief regent it may be that the malcontent group sought to exercise undue influence over him, and that he, with proper motive but tortuous method, defended himself by offering them every provocation to actions which would give him ground for dismissing them from his court. Whatever the chain of causation may be, the resultant fact is that the group in question are at loggerheads with the chief, and wholly excluded from the counsels of the tribe. In their place the chief has elevated, as it were, to Privy Council rank a group of commoners unconnected with the line either of Khama or of Machen (the former royal line whom Khama's family forcibly displaced). These men are the chief's real councillors, and the only people whom he takes into his confidence and discusses measures with beforehand. They are men selected by the chief, "made" by him with gifts of wealth, in every sense his creatures. In *kgotla* the procedure is for the chief to put forward his proposals for public approval. The chief's headmen then rise one by one and speak in favour. When three or four of them have spoken, the meeting knows

that it will not pay, and may seriously injure, anyone to oppose, and the thing goes through without dissentient voices being heard.

I have asked many men who voiced complaints against their chief, why they did not take their grievances to the *kgotla* and discuss them openly there. The invariable answer was "We are afraid." "Afraid of what?" "Of losing all we possess." One's first inclination is to take this hesitancy as a sign of lukewarmness or lack of courage. And lack of courage, in a sense, of course it is. But it does not take long to discover that there is ample ground for fear. Broadly speaking, it is true that a public complaint implying adverse criticism of the chief is either ignored, or, if pressed, visited with flogging, confiscation of property, and in extreme cases exile. The weight of evidence on this point is impressive; indeed I have not found a single native to dispute its accuracy, and many instances of the infliction of such penalties were quoted to me and are recorded in my note-books. It further appears that the floggings are sometimes very severe, and there have been cases recently where men have died shortly afterwards. Floggings are administered either publicly in *kgotla* by direct order of the chief or privately in the victim's hut, by officers of his regiment or the chief's police. The attitude of the Resident Magistrate in such cases of violence is commonly to turn a blind eye to

THE NEW BOER WAR

them, or, if they are thrust upon his notice, to treat them as matters of tribal custom which are the chief's business and not his. The traditional powers of chiefs and headmen in regard to flogging are, in fact, so commonly and so outrageously abused as to constitute perhaps the most crying scandal in a land of scandals. A Government which has exercised as little discretion in the control of this matter as the British Government has done is, frankly, hardly fit to bear the name.

In Bechuanaland, as in the other High Commission territories, one of the worst features of tribal life at its present difficult transition stage is that there is little room in it for the educated man. This is true in the economic sense, for as a rule he has to seek employment in the more Europeanised structure of the Union; it is also true in the social and political sense, for the system of rule is at pains to close up all outlets for his energies and talents. The Government in giving a strong general support to the chief's party often lend their aid to the least progressive and least worthy element in the tribe. They set themselves at odds with the intelligent ferment, which, thus foiled of its legitimate hopes of leadership, turns almost automatically to disaffection. Any intelligent man under the existing régime is bound to be a revolutionary at heart. What is more, unless he quits the country, or, staying, sins against the light within him, he is bound sooner or later to be

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

treated as a revolutionary by chief and Government. This in turn tends to transform responsible opposition to extremism. In Basutoland and Swaziland attempts, however rudimentary, are being made to assign some useful scope to the educated man and to enable him to pull his weight in the polity. Basutoland has its recognised Progressive Association, with a representative on the National Council. In Swaziland, more effectively, there is the device of elected committees of "intellectuals," who have formal meetings with the Resident Commissioner twice a year, enjoy access to him at any time, and are encouraged to tender advice whenever they feel inclined. In the Bechuanaland Protectorate alone has intelligence been unequivocally regarded as the enemy of the State.

Two further aspects of chiefly rule deserve mention for their gross wastefulness and inefficiency, the regimented labour system and the system of tribal finance. According to old tribal custom, labour for "public works" for the benefit of the tribe must be provided on the chief's demand; and every member of the tribe, man, woman and child, is technically liable to be called out for such purposes at any time. The custom has often been attacked on humanitarian grounds, and no doubt its observance in practice, especially where women and children are concerned, has afforded reasonable ground for attack.

THE NEW BOER WAR

Clearly, if the custom is officially sanctioned at all, it ought to be strictly limited to adult males in sound health. One may hope that pending legislation in connection with the powers of the chiefs will deal satisfactorily with this particular point. But there are economic objections to the custom of even greater cogency than the humanitarian. At Serowe I had an opportunity of seeing a dam-scraping operation in progress with regimented labour. The men were paraded in numbers far exceeding the requirements of the job. Many of them had no tools of any kind; others had nothing more effective than sardine tins. These they would fill with the mud to be removed, balance on their heads in the native way, and solemnly carry for two hundred yards to the bank to empty there. In the course of an hour they would make perhaps four of these farcical journeys. A similar level of efficiency was reached in work on another water-conservation scheme. It was proposed to build a concrete barrage across a river. When I saw the work the river bed was quite dry, and a trench was being dug for the foundations of the wall. There were nine men on the job, one of whom had a hammer and a chisel; neither he nor any of the others did a hand's turn during the hour or so in which I had them in view. They had been five months on work representing a normal output of perhaps three weeks for a gang of that size. The tribe was having

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

to pay a European overseer for as long as the job lasted, so it would certainly have been cheaper to have paid the native labour the standard wage and finished the work in a month, thus saving four months of the overseer's salary. And at the rate of progress which I witnessed, the foundations would not have been completed before the next rains came down and washed away or silted up the fruits of the regiment's labour.

Inquiries showed that there was nothing exceptional about this position. The regimented system has perfectly naturally led to a ca'canny policy among the conscripts, who point out with disarming candour that their output at least corresponds with the wage they earn. It seems certain that if the system is to serve any useful purpose in future, the labour will have to be paid for at a fair rate, and controlled as hired labour is controlled in civilised countries. As far as I was able to ascertain, the tribe would not object to some increase in taxation to this end. But naturally they would want some assurance that such increase would actually be applied to the purpose avowed.

And this brings us to the question of tribal finance. In the financial field the chief is freer than ever from irritating formalities and restraints. He is accountable to no one. He can raise what money he likes how he likes, and he can spend what money he likes how he likes. He is

THE NEW BOER WAR

not even required, as chiefs are in the Cape, to seek Government approval before imposing new taxation. (Possibly a forthcoming proclamation will remove this immunity.) The accounts kept are of the sketchiest, and they are never audited. Probably no one ever knows, not even the chief, what the exact financial position of the tribe is. To ask questions or offer criticism about finance in *kgotla* is apparently regarded as a form of incipient treason, and men have been fined an ox on the spot for doing so. It is not difficult to imagine the grotesque wastefulness to which all this irresponsibility leads, and the unnecessary hardships with which it burdens a community, one of whose most insistent problems is the problem of poverty. The system is unfair to the chief, since it leaves entirely to his own integrity the extent to which the tribe shall benefit from moneys in his charge; and it is doubly unfair to the tribe, since it bears no relation to their capacity to pay and affords no guarantee that what they pay will be expended in the tribal interest.

§ 6

The "Slave" Tribes

The so-called slave tribes form another essential feature of the Bechuana tribal system as it oper-

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

ates at present. They put an awkward poser to the theory of British protection. Is slavery (if that word can fairly be applied to the facts) to receive tacit support as being part and parcel of customary tribal rule; or is it to be firmly given its quietus at the expense of the principle of non-interference? The answer given in Bechuanaland is not entirely unambiguous. In the eye of the statutory law, of course, the "slaves" are just as free as anybody else; the British have not compromised there. But as regards the actual life lived by the subject peoples, the Government seems, as always, to have taken the line of least resistance, leaving matters to the tribe and only intervening when some particularly striking case of ill-treatment came to light.

The important practical question is what kind of life the "slaves" do actually lead. The facts are not easy to come by, partly because the chiefs and the owners are busily concerned to conceal them, and partly because most of the "slaves" live in the less accessible parts of the country. Again, there are several different classes or tribes of "slaves," and their conditions vary somewhat; even the same class is sometimes accorded rather different treatment by different owning tribes. And, as everywhere, there are good owners and bad owners in each tribe, so that treatment also differs from household to household. No complete general statement, therefore, is possible.

THE NEW BOER WAR

Our method will be to take two characteristic examples of "slave" types, the Bakgalagadi in the Southern Protectorate and the Masarwa in the Northern, and to describe briefly their place in the life of the owning tribes.

The "slave" system is common to all Bechuana tribes, is of considerable antiquity among them, and was probably brought with them on their migration southwards to their present territory. Of that territory the Masarwa (which is simply the Sechuana name for Bushmen) were in occupation when the Bechuana invasion began; or if not occupying it, they were at least leading undisputed their nomadic, hunting life over it. The Bakgalagadi were the first of the Bechuana waves to arrive, and they are said now to have more Bushman blood in their veins than other Bechuana, though the Bushman admixture is traceable in all. Whether the Masarwa were ever slaves to the Bakgalagadi is not, I think, known. But what seems to have happened is that the Bakgalagadi were gradually pushed westwards into poorer and waterless districts by subsequent waves of immigrant Bechuana, so that they became impoverished and automatically drifted into service under their wealthier compatriots. To-day they still live for the most part along the margin of the Kalahari desert, but some of them own considerable numbers of cattle, and their economic condition is perhaps little lower than that of their owners.

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

Compared with their owners they are an industrious people, and if the shortage of surface water did not severely restrict the expansion of their herds, they would soon be a prosperous one.

The Masarwa's story has probably been similar. Finding their old hunting-grounds gradually closed to them by the incoming Bechuana, they, too, edged westward into the desert, leaving some of their number in Bechuana hands. And the desert, in spite of the difficulty of maintaining life there, has always been their refuge whenever the service into which their Bechuana masters pressed them became too irksome. The runaway "slave" is still a frequent source of exasperation to Bamangwato owners, although he has no sure sanctuary to run to and economic necessity as a rule soon drives him back to bondage. For even a Bushman is hard put to it to support family life permanently on wild roots and the much diminished game supply of to-day. Even to him crops and cattle are becoming necessities; and he can only find them with his master.

The Bakgalagadi in the modern stage are differentiated more by economic function than by theoretical civil status. They are a class of cattle herds, tied pretty closely to the cattle of their masters. Large cattle-owners among the Bechuana like to split up their herds in various parts of the country, partly as a primitive form of insurance against disease, and partly because they do

THE NEW BOER WAR

not wish their chief or their neighbours or the Government to know exactly how many cattle they possess. The Bakgalagadi are used to help in this concealment. They are subservient in the sense that they are not regarded as full members of the owning tribe either for religious or political purposes. But though they do not usually attend the chief's *kgotla*, they are free to, and sometimes do; and this is true also of the Masarwa, at least among the Bakwena and certain other owner tribes. Nor are the Bakgalagadi always dispersed among the households or at the cattle-posts of their owners. In some places they live their own sub-tribal life in their own villages under their own headmen; and in such cases the rights of their "owners" over them are somewhat shadowy. Numbers of them, indeed, are quite unclaimed. The "owning" chief would normally consult a Kgalagadi headman in relevant matters, and would not discriminate between him and other headmen on grounds of his being a Kgalagadi. The Bakgalagadi may own property, and as I have said, some of them have quite respectable herds of cattle.

They pass from one owner to another by inheritance, and "slave" families remain attached to owning houses from generation to generation. A child born to a "slave" woman becomes automatically her master's "property." But there is no traffic in slaves; they are not commonly

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

bought and sold, and probably never have been. True, if a man sends word to a friend of his that he is short of a servant, the friend may offer him a Kgalagadi as a loan or a gift, just as he might lend or give him a horse. On the other hand, he would perhaps be equally likely to send his own son to perform for a while the service needed. To-day "slaves" are often treated quite well by native masters, and in some cases are even paid wages in cash or in kind more or less regularly. To this extent the system appears to be improving itself. But payment, when given, is merely given as an act of grace, and not on any contractual basis. And masters of another type still use much harshness, even brutality. Among every tribe many tales are told of flagellation and other cruelties, and it is impossible to doubt that such episodes are of frequent occurrence. Broadly speaking, however, the Bakgalagadi are in practice fairly free to move about the country as they like, and even to leave the territory to work on the mines of the Union, or for other European employers. Probably they have no effective means of redress in case of ill-treatment by a master, except escaping from his service. Among the Bakgatla, if they do this, they are not usually followed and recaptured; and perhaps this holds as a general rule among the Bakwena and the Bangwaketsi also. But the Bamangwato are not so easy-going with their Masarwa.

THE NEW BOER WAR

While the Bakgalagadi are at work for a master tending his cattle or ploughing his lands, tribal convention accords them the "use" of the herd; that is to say, they may drink the milk of the cows, provided the young calves do not go underfed, and they may use the oxen for their own ploughing. If a beast dies, they are not generally liable for the loss; they may eat the meat, and are only required to report the loss and render the hide to the master.

Theoretically it may be that the position of the Masarwa among the Bamangwato is not dissimilar. Their rights in relation to their master's cattle, for example, are much the same. But in practice their lot is distinctly more unhappy. Seldom or never are they paid wages, the master thinking that he has done quite enough for them if he provides food, milk, and an occasional blanket. If they try to run away, they are usually pursued, and brutally punished when captured. In general, of course, they have nowhere to run to, except to the chief, who then uses them for his own purposes, like any other master—a mere leap from the frying-pan into the fire from the standpoint of the fugitive. It is a curious commentary on the whole situation that the Masarwa, who have hitherto evinced a tenacious instinct for avoiding white civilisation like the plague, are now beginning to turn to industrial employment in the Union as respite from service under their Bantu masters.

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

There seems to be no absolute prohibition against the ownership of property by Masarwa, but a master may at any time, upon application to the chief, confiscate from a "slave" whatever property the latter happens to possess. Masarwa do not often own anything except a few head of cattle and perhaps some goats. A case occurred a few years ago, however, where one of them by the careful collection and sale of goatskins, ox-hides, and the pelts of wild game, had contrived to buy a waggon and a team of oxen to pull it. The whole outfit represented a cash value of nearly £150, a considerable fortune for a Mosarwa. Such a rise to wealth by a "slave" was considered an undesirable precedent, and the late chief Sekgoma, who was then ruling, authorised the man's owner to dispossess him of waggon and team, on the grounds that Masarwa ought not to be allowed to acquire the means of independent livelihood.

Unlike the Bakgalagadi, the Masarwa are racially distinct from their masters, and although they have now been largely assimilated to the latter's culture, are by origin of a more primitive, pre-pastoral type. For this reason they are often treated with an instinctive contempt and a disregard of common humanity, such as the Bakgalagadi are not called upon to endure. A good illustration is the recent notorious case of Rayaba, one of the Bamangwato headmen, who accused a

THE NEW BOER WAR

Mosarwa of having stolen a cow and thereupon hauled him out into the bush, pinned him prone on the ground by means of thongs, stakes, and logs, and flogged him to death. In a most matter-of-fact way Rayaba admitted to the flogging, when he was brought to court on a charge of murder. "I did not beat him so severely as I have seen others beat their Masarwa," he said. "There was no blood running on the ground. I started beating him just as the sun went up, and it was not yet very high when I stopped." Whether or not Rayaba's treatment of his "slaves" was typical, there is good reason for thinking that his general outlook in respect of them was so. At least it is clear that for every case of systematic torture which comes to court, many must go undetected. And there is evidence that, besides flogging, other methods in use are the cutting off of fingers with an axe, the burning of hands, and the branding of flesh with a hot iron. After mutilation or torture, the victim is sometimes, perhaps more often than not, left helpless in a waterless country infested by lions, hyenas and wild dogs.

Of course there is an edict that the Masarwa are free to leave their masters' service, and there is a law which makes it an offence to commit violent assault or to inflict grievous bodily harm. But these things make little practical difference in the lives of the "slave" people. On the whole the

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

“slave” system has had the support of the district officials, who are to some extent involved in it and to some of whom it is, or has been, a source of private gain. There is also a well-known missionary who owns herds of cattle in a certain tribal reserve, where they are tended by the Masarwa under the direction of the chief. The chiefs and the principal headmen, in their turn, are extremely reserved on the “slavery” question; which is not surprising, when it is remembered that most of the Masarwa are owned by the chief and his immediate entourage. Overtly the line taken by the district officials seems to have been that “slavery” is a matter of native custom, and must be left to the chiefs to deal with. Tacitly they have always been anxious to ensure that it should not be shown up. An official inquiry has, it is true, recently taken place (September 1931). But that is due to the initiative of the new Resident Commissioner, before whose time there was no attempt fully to study the facts, still less to break the system down or modify it. Even now no report has been published. The prevalent attitude is well exemplified by the observations of a certain Resident Magistrate when the “slavery” question cropped up in a celebrated case which was being tried before him. “To say that the Mosarwa is a slave is,” he remarked, “a sinister propaganda against the Government. The administration is being attacked

THE NEW BOER WAR

under cover of a criminal trial." In consonance with this unintelligent touchiness the district officials generally have been inclined to shield the chiefs whenever the system and its results threatened to get them into trouble.

What some at least of the subject tribes are capable of is shown by the economic progress made by certain of the Makalaka in the north of the Bamangwato country. By their industry and application as farmers these people have risen from virtual serfdom to a degree of wealth in grain and in stock higher than many of the Bamangwato enjoy; so true is this that for fear of their further advance the authorities of the ruling tribe now keep them deliberately short of lands and of schools. Certain Bakgalagadi groups in the Bakwena reserve and elsewhere have similarly improved their status by means of the habit of thrift and hard work which their subordinate condition first imposed upon them, and which those who were their masters are tending to lose by reason of their very privileges. There is also evidence of the mettle even of the despised Masarwa. A section of them at the Botletli river have lived alongside the Makalaka as their equals for many years. When the Makalaka in Khama's time were permitted to work for themselves if they preferred it to service with a master, they quickly seized their opportunity; and these Masarwa followed suit. To-day both groups are

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

comparatively rich in cattle and even own a number of waggons. The Botletli Masarwa are probably the only Masarwa who are unrestricted and more or less secure in the ownership of property. They form a precedent on which the Government might well work in affording similar opportunities to less fortunate Masarwa elsewhere.

§ 7

Administrative Failure

Such, then, is the system to whose preservation the main efforts of British administration have been directed. The quality of these efforts has suffered throughout from the fact of the protectorate. The British came into the Bechuana country to keep the Boers out, and they have ever since been inclined to suppose that in safeguarding the Bechuana peoples from outside aggression—Afrikaner on south and east, German on west—their duty has been done. It is, of course, an arguable point of view; but its results have not been happy either from the Bechuana standpoint or from that of the European settlers who were encouraged to enter the country after the Boer War. To the latter it has meant simple stagnation; to the former that “tribal law and custom should be interfered with as little as possible,” or in other

THE NEW BOER WAR

words that no systematic or sustained attempt to assist the internal life of the tribes need be made. As we have seen, tribal custom is not always so fine a thing, or worthy of such august support; and in fact the mere passivity of the British (combined with the operation of external economic forces to which little attempt at adaptation has been made) has paradoxically led to a degeneration of tribal rule.

Admittedly there are here, as everywhere, two sides to the case. If the predatory instincts of the Boer had not been short-headed in 1885, the Bechuana might now be in worse plight than they actually are; although there is little enough in the Warren expedition to flatter British national pride. The British have rendered valuable veterinary aid; they have done something for education, they have provided such medical services as the country could afford to pay for, and very recently they have established two good hospitals and given some assistance in boring for water. But the old tribal life is disintegrating under their hands, and so far they have done nothing either to repair it or to put a substitute in its place. To-day the Bechuana are probably poorer and certainly less congenially governed than at any time during the last thirty years. The method of simple protection has manifestly failed, and the British are faced with the alternatives either of reshaping their policy and making a job

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

of government, or of yielding place to other and perhaps less benevolent suzerains.

The trouble is that the Bechuanaland Protectorate has never had any first-class mind at work upon its problems. And the local administrative officers, lacking light and leading from above, have hardly been of the calibre to take charge, and frame a constructive policy of their own. Drawn for the most part from the police service, they rejoice, as a group, in the mental habits and range of outlook customary in that walk of life. The passage of some law examinations has won them promotion to the rank of Resident Magistrate, but their administrative grounding has been narrow and their training in economics almost non-existent. Thus their general capacity has rested on a lower level than the importance of the task they have been somewhat unfairly saddled with, and they have never risen to an adequate comprehension of what one may call the gravitational field in which that task has to be discharged.

If they have failed, failure lies less at their door than at that of the superior authorities who appointed them. Most of them are now long-service men, and they have doubtless received so many rebuffs and so little encouragement from on high that it would be surprising if their spirit had not become enfeebled. The method of selection of their successors is of material signific-

THE NEW BOER WAR

ance to the future well-being of the territory. It seems highly desirable that the High Commission should draw its administrative staff direct from the Appointments Department of the Colonial Office.

The régime as a whole has resulted not only in incoherence of policy but in a general laxity of administration. A few instances will throw much light on the latter point. One is a story told of the new Resident Commissioner, and I am able to vouch for it as authentic. Shortly after his arrival in the country, he was touring the tribal reserves, and expressed a desire to meet three of the chiefs at a certain place. When the appointed time came, only two of the chiefs were there. The Commissioner inquired about the third. No one seemed to have any definite information, but there was a feeling that he had found himself unable to attend. On this the Commissioner, who had been used to better things, sent forth a brace of police messengers to greet the absentee, renew the invitation, and bring him in in handcuffs, if it were not promptly accepted. There was a brief interval, and the man arrived at a steady double. Not only that; the hut-tax receipts from his area were trebled at the next collection. Other revealing examples are of an official who boasted that his £600 a year salary was worth £1,100 to him, and of another who volunteered the news that he had been eighteen months in his station

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

without drawing a single cheque on his private account.

However, with matters of detail of this kind the new vigilance imported by the present Resident Commissioner will perhaps deal. The broad criticism of the Government is that its record has so far been one of pretty complete failure to establish fruitful relations with the natives. The policy of non-interference with tribal custom sounds liberal enough, but it has this weakness, that, while it cannot wholly absolve the Government from the duty of occasional intervention, it leaves them without any clear principle whereon intervention should be made. The completer the form in which it is applied, the wider the pretext it affords for governmental indolence of thought and action. For it erects the insufficiency of tribal custom into a general scapegoat for every kind of failure, whatever the true responsible source. The tendency for actual administration to fall between two stools is thus very strong; and whatever profession may have been, practice in Bechuanaland has for many years been a confused hybrid of native custom and European administrative and legal ideas, in which neither the chiefs nor the rank and file of natives have ever felt sure how they stood. Most of the abnormally numerous Privy Council appeals which have come out of the Protectorate in the last decade are traceable to this confusion. The upshot is that the

THE NEW BOER WAR

Government is held by its wards in an esteem very different from that usually accorded to British colonial authority. Even the chiefs, who have been given much more rope than their administrative merits entitle them to, and who might be expected to look with kindly regard upon the authors of such favouritism, champ aggressively at the bit. For they are aware that the present state of affairs cannot possibly last; Bechuana-land cannot stand still indefinitely while its whole field of economic reference is in rapid motion. They suspect that the Government, in spite of its non-interference principles, will be driven to curtail their powers, and evidently there is good ground for their suspicion. They are alarmed by the deposition, long overdue as it was, of the Bakwena chief Sebele, who had for years been a pernicious influence upon his tribe; they are alarmed at the prospective proclamation dealing with the powers of chiefs, and none the less so because they do not yet know its contents. A quite unprecedented movement is already taking place for some kind of organisation among themselves to stand up for what they consider their rights. And the Government has drifted into the position that it cannot now carry out any of the vitally necessary reforms without the bitter resistance of the chiefs, who embody the sole effective administrative machinery at its disposal and whom, at the expense of the well-being of the

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

tribes, it has been at such pains to conciliate. At the same time, it has no hope of neutralising the opposition of the chiefs by an appeal to popular support from the tribesmen. The chiefs' "reign of terror" is still too firm for that. Besides, the Government is in any case looked upon with copious cynicism and lack of faith by the rank and file; and when it comes along and starts talking about progress and reform, their quite simple reaction is to think, "We give it 25s. hut-tax to keep it quiet; what on earth does it want now?"

In a nutshell, then, the *status quo* cannot be maintained, yet any movement of reform, whether from above or from below, is practically bound to create deadlock. To find a way out of the dilemma will require much more courage and determination than the responsible authorities have hitherto shown. Radical handling is called for. New impulse and new direction to policy could perhaps best be lent, as I have suggested before, by an authoritative commission of inquiry into the whole situation of the High Commission territories. But whether or no a commission is appointed, and whatever degree of assent from the chiefs official diplomacy is able to win, certain obvious lines of reform need to be tackled. And time is no less important than firmness. Changes such as these tentatively outlined below cannot be made with a stroke of the pen, and may take years to complete. But if tolerable rule is to be established,

they should be put in train with the minimum of delay.

1. The present "absolute monarchy" of the chiefs needs to be watered down to a form of statutory native authority with defined powers,—the authority in its executive aspect consisting of a council in which the chief should be *primus inter pares*. The council should represent all phases of political sentiment within the tribe, and the appointment and removal of councillors should not be left to tribal custom in the present acceptation of that phrase. For otherwise the chief will simply select his own councillors, as happened some years ago in the case of Sebele. But this does not mean that the tribe should not be consulted in such appointments and removals by means with which they are familiar. The council should be competent to discuss, and any member of it to raise, any matters whatever—legislative, administrative, financial—affecting the tribe.
2. In its judicial aspect, the native authority should be required to keep written records of court proceedings, and the records should be systematically revised by district officers.
3. Tribal finance needs to be put on a modernised footing. Separate tribal treasuries should

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

be established, and their relations with the Government exchequer defined. The Government should be the sole taxing authority, but certain revenue other than taxation should be earmarked for the tribe, and the Government might, as in Tanganyika, return some proportion of its tax revenue to each tribe for expenditure by the tribe on tribal purposes. In the case of approved *ad hoc* special levies, the Government might delegate its taxing powers to the chief's council, on a request from the council endorsed by the tribal *kgotla*. All matters of tribal finance should be open to free discussion in *kgotla*. Tribal treasuries should keep proper accounts, and their transactions should be submitted to Government supervision and audit.

4. Regimented labour should be restricted to adult males in full health and should be paid for at standard rates from tribal funds; and there should be generous provision for exemption where a person can show that he is already engaged on work of tribal importance, with which regimental service would seriously interfere. Alternatively this whole form of tribute should be commuted on the lines of the Tanganyika precedent (see Chapter VIII).

THE NEW BOER WAR

5. Definite attempts should be made to secure some suitably specialised education for the sons of chiefs and headmen, which will really help to fit them for their coming responsibilities. Might it not be possible to arrange for the Government school at Tabora in Tanganyika (or any more appropriate institution) to take such students from all three High Commission Territories? It would also be very desirable to arrange tours for ruling chiefs to such places as the Transkei, Tanganyika, and Uganda, in order that they may see the achievements of native effort there.
6. Genuine opportunities for a self-dependent life should be provided by the Government for the Masarwa and other so-called slave peoples. They should be given effective security in the ownership of property, and suitable areas up and down the country should be set aside under Government control, where such people might plant crops and graze cattle whenever they elect to leave their masters and seek an independent livelihood.
7. It is essential that the Government should control the system of personal violence that is at present indulged in with such disgraceful freedom by chiefs, regimental officers,

BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE

and headmen. The system derives from a long-established custom of cruelty and torture, but the respect for tribal manners which thinks it entitled to consideration on that account is surely exaggerated. To define by law conditions on which floggings shall be permissible is of little use by itself and so long as the onus of seeking redress is left upon the victims. It should be for the Government to take steps to inform itself about every assault that takes place, and to take action when necessary. At present many floggings are administered with a sadistic frenzy that makes no pretence of being judicial.

PART III

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

§ 1

Historical Background

THE Tanganyika experiment, as it has come to be called, reveals British native policy in Africa in some of its most encouraging aspects,—the more so because in 1919, when the King accepted the mandate, the territory was in a war-worn condition that held out little promise of rapid native development. It forms an instructive contrast with the position in the South African High Commission. The scope of the remarkable advance of the last thirteen years can only be seen in proper perspective against a background of Tanganyika's previous history.

“Three centuries of intermittent bloodshed” is the broad summary of that history given by

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

Buell. And it is the fact that from a fairly remote past Tanganyika has suffered from a long series of military incursions alike from north and south and from the sea. Some hundreds of years ago the Hamitic peoples of the Galla and the Wahuma drove their way across East Africa into the region of the great lakes, and the native states of Uganda, Bukoka, Urundi, and Ruanda still stand as monuments of their adventures. They were followed at the end of the eighteenth century by the Masai, Hamites also, who have remained a tribe of predatory nomads almost to this day. Meanwhile, as early as the sixteenth century, Zulu invaders penetrated across the Zambesi from the south. They were eventually driven out by the Portuguese with the assistance of local natives, but they reappeared as the Wangoni in the nineteenth century, and, deeply imbued with the spirit of Chaka, dispeopled the country about Kilwa with a ruthless efficiency that Chaka himself would have admired. "For fifty years," Buell records, "they kept this area in continual bloodshed."

Another process of depopulation, parallel in effect though divergent in motive, was carried on through several centuries by Arab and Portuguese slave-traders. Finally, the last decade of the nineteenth century witnessed the German occupation. It was strenuously resisted by (among others) the Wahehe, who, flushed with some recent successes against the Wangoni, had come

THE NEW BOER WAR

to fancy themselves as warriors. The Germans took five years to put them down. Nine years later, in 1905, certain features of German policy provoked a fresh series of revolts, of which the most important was the so-called Maji-Maji rebellion. This time the Germans resolved to act decisively. They launched a campaign of subjugation which was completed in two years at a cost of some 70,000 to 120,000 native lives. "It does not appear," Buell drily remarks, "that the Germans were troubled with further revolts during the remainder of their occupation." This feat of arms was followed by a seven years' respite; then 1914 came, and with it the world bonfire. And for two or three years more Tanganyika was the cockpit of an East African war.

In 1919 then, when the British first turned their attention seriously to the problems of civil government, the territory, exhausted by several hundred years of bloodshed and upheaval, was in a state of economic and political prostration. Bantu life has everywhere for centuries been a stranger to enduring peace,—in the south because of the Zulu ascendancy, the Kaffir wars, and the accompaniments and consequences of the Great Trek; in Rhodesia because Mashonaland and Barotseland comprise the corridor through which the big Bantu migrations to and from the sub-continent have always passed, and because of the activities of "large-visioned Empire-builders."

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

But Eastern tropical Africa has perhaps been the most continuously harassed region of them all.

In Tanganyika trade and revenue had fallen in 1920 by more than 50 per cent. from what they were in 1913. Moreover, the Germans had tended to foster European production rather than native production, and towards the end of their régime European agricultural products, for example, had more than twice the value of native agricultural products. But by the end of the War German subjects had, of course, been removed from the plantations and commercial enterprises. It was thus clear that the economic rehabilitation of the country under British hands would have to be based in the main on native development. The need accorded well both with the mandate, which placed in the forefront of its requirements the obligation to promote the social progress of the natives "to the utmost," and with the traditional British practice in all tropical Africa outside Kenya. But it undoubtedly made the task of recovery more formidable.

There was another aspect in which German practice did not seem happily conceived from the standpoint of a mandatory power,—that of the *akida* system. The Germans made a great point of economising on European officials. In 1913, when Urundi-Ruanda was included in Tanganyika, they governed a country larger than Nigeria and having a population of $7\frac{1}{2}$ million

THE NEW BOER WAR

natives, with seventy white administrative officers. Urundi-Ruanda is now under mandate to Belgium, and Tanganyika is consequently smaller by a large slice of territory and $3\frac{1}{2}$ million inhabitants; yet the British service in this reduced area comprises a staff of over 150 white administrative officers. German reliance on native assistants was therefore much heavier even than British is. The fact is not in itself a criticism of the German system; it might even be a recommendation of it. But tribal disorganisation became so extensive under German rule that the Government was debarred, over the greater part of Tanganyika, from incorporating tribal institutions into the machinery of administration. The Germans consequently developed a system, which they took over from the Arabs, of appointing alien native officials called *jumbes* to headship over single villages, and similar, but more exalted, officials called *akidas* to headship over groups of villages. The British authorities held, and their belief has been amply borne out by experience, that such a system, being essentially foreign to the people subjected to it, was calculated to stunt that indigenous institutional life which the mandate enjoined them to foster. They thus reverted to the familiar British principle that the country should be governed through the popularly recognised chiefs, wherever they could be found; and the *akida* system was gradually abandoned, except in

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

some places, mostly along the coastal strip, where no certain vestiges of a traditional tribal authority persisted. Careful studies were made of the ethnic distribution of the population, and the twenty-two districts of the German system were first redivided and rearranged in accordance with tribal groupings, and then themselves grouped into eleven provinces, each in charge of a provincial commissioner. At the same time, efforts were made to restore the natural cohesion of tribal elements which had become scattered or disorganised. By the persuasion, though never the coercion, of district officers, innumerable petty chiefs who once fought and bickered for pre-eminence gradually came to accept what was in native custom no doubt their rightful position of sub-chief to one of their number. And the centripetal movement, gathering way, began to manifest itself also as federations of independent chiefs, each of whom, while co-operating with his colleagues in matters of general policy, retained full executive authority in his own area. By these means, in four provinces alone, the number of units of native administration was reduced from 446 to 50 between 1925 and 1930. It was as though the substance of the life of the tribes, long held in solution, had suddenly been precipitated by some awaited chemical affinity. It would be difficult to exaggerate the increase in administrative efficiency or the improvement in the prospects

THE NEW BOER WAR

for economic and political advance, which has been secured by this gathering together of social forces long dissipated and run to waste. A recent provincial report states that in North Pare (Tanga Province), "the chiefs were never displaced by *akidas* under the Germans or the tribal organisation broken up, with the result that the administration and country is a generation ahead of South Pare, where foreign *akidas* were introduced in the early days in accordance with the policy of the Wilhelmstal administration, and the country disintegrated." This preliminary work of reorganisation seems to be nearly completed, and the Governor was able to say in 1930, "I do not think there is much more amalgamation of units to be done for the present."

British policy in Tanganyika has from the first meant a sharp break with the country's past and a clear reversal of German administrative method. It recognised at once that it must use native institutions in the work of government, but it was for some years undecided about how exactly it should use them. Was the plan to impose a form of British rule, with the support of native chiefs, to use the chiefs as instruments and mouthpieces? Or was it to maintain and support a form of genuinely native rule, within certain defined limits? It was not until 1925 that the choice was finally made. On the whole, the tendency during the governorship of Sir Horace Byatt, the first

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

Governor, was in the former direction, and a law was passed in terms of which the administrative officer became the executive authority for native affairs even in the area of administration of a native authority. In 1925-6, under Sir Donald Cameron, an important change took place. A new Ordinance, superseding the old, was passed, which clothed the native authority, and not the administrative officer, with executive authority in its own area. Tanganyika's feet were thus placed firmly upon the path of indirect rule in the strict sense. The administrative officer, as Sir Donald Cameron himself puts it, now merely advises, guides, and supervises, giving direct orders only if the native authority shall neglect or refuse to issue them when called on to do so.

The concrete basis of native rule, so defined, consists of (a) the executive authorities, (b) the courts of law, and (c) the treasuries. The forms which these institutions are assuming in Tanganyika will now be considered.

§ 2

Native Authorities

A native authority in Tanganyika remains, in its executive and administrative aspects, as far as possible what it was under native law and custom. If it was the recognised practice in a tribe or village for the chief or headman to rule with the

THE NEW BOER WAR

aid of traditional councillors and advisers, he continues to rule with such aid, and the councillors and advisers are constituted an integral part of the native authority concerned. But the powers of every native authority are regulated in two ways by the Native Authority Ordinance of 1926. The Ordinance defines, in the first place, what powers may be conferred and what obligations imposed upon native authorities; and in the second place, it provides that the Governor may at any time direct that any such authority shall exercise only so much of the powers conferable under the Ordinance as he may specify. The Governor may also direct that any native authority shall be subordinate to any other native authority.

These provisions mean, in effect, that the Government can (*a*) always prevent native custom being invoked to justify the oppressive treatment of a tribe by its chief, and (*b*) give clear and distinct legal recognition to traditional differences in status between so-called "paramount" chiefs and their sub-chiefs. Anyone with experience of administration in tribal areas will recognise that these two forms of control are half the battle for good government.

The Tanganyika system stands in remarkable contrast with the practice followed in the territories of the South African High Commission. In Tanganyika, to adapt Sir Donald Cameron's language once again, the British Government

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

rules through native authorities which are regarded as part and parcel of the machinery of British rule, with well-defined powers and functions, recognised by the Government and by law, and independent of the caprice either of an administrative officer or a chief. In the High Commission, if anything is specified at all, it is not the powers of chiefs, but some limitations of those powers. Broadly speaking, the British Government does not rule; the chiefs rule—at their own sweet will—until they get themselves into trouble, and then the Government intervenes to extricate them as best it can. The High Commission displays two sets of rulers, British and native, working sometimes in co-operation, more often separately; their functions both conflict and overlap; neither set knows well how it stands to the other, and the unfortunate ruled are at a loss to tell to which they should turn in any given situation. The only certainty is with the chiefs, who understand that they can safely do what they like, provided it is not grossly repugnant to civilised principles. In Tanganyika there is a single Government in which the chiefs have their prescribed duties and status side by side with the British officials. The functions of officials and chiefs are complementary one to the other, and the chiefs are clearly given to realise that they have no right to their place and powers unless they render their proper service to the State.

THE NEW BOER WAR

The difference is the difference between indirect rule in its one legitimate sense, and a spurious combination of the opposed principles of indirect and direct rule. It is also the difference between good and bad government.

All over Africa white settlement has inevitably introduced many influences which are at work to impair the authority of a chief over his people. This tends to make chiefs grab hastily and sometimes harshly at their power, to repress the natural movements of the tribal mind under the new stimuli, and so to call into being a class of agitators who cry out for "some western form of self-government neither understood by the mass of the people nor preserving the truly democratic features of native society." Developments of this kind are conspicuous in certain of the High Commission territories, where British policy has taken no intelligent steps to counteract them, but has instead been content, with singular want of ambition, to buttress up the power of the chiefs against innovation and opposition, however "constitutional" and however rational, and to keep the agitators out of sight. Consequently it is broadly true that in the High Commission, with the possible exception of Swaziland, private persons no longer have any effective remedy against a chief. Political suffocation has been added to economic stagnation.

The difficulty in many parts of Tanganyika has

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

been to identify any living vestiges of indigenous institutions; when they were found, they had to be tenderly nursed back to vigour. In the High Commission, on the other hand, the difficulty arises from the chiefship having been allowed to flourish rankly at the expense of the democratic aspects of tribal life. It is ironical that the dangers of chiefly tyranny should have been ignored in the High Commission, where they have long been very real, and carefully provided against in Tanganyika, where they might have been thought remote. But one cannot doubt that the Tanganyika authorities showed a sound instinct in giving strict instructions to administrative officers to study patiently and fully "the nature and extent of the safeguards against oppression by a chief or headman, set up by native society through the ages for its own protection." Particular emphasis, indeed, is laid on this crucial point throughout the standing orders to the Tanganyika staff. Another injunction reads:

"It will be the primary duty and object of the administrative officers to educate the native authorities in their duties as rulers according to a civilised standard; to convince them that oppression of the people is not sound policy or to the eventual benefit of the rulers; to bring home to their intelligence, as far as may be possible, the evils attendant on a system which holds the lower classes in suppression, so de-

THE NEW BOER WAR

stroying individual responsibility, ambition, and development amongst them.”

Again, elsewhere, the Governor declares:

“ In my judgment, we shall be doing sufficient during the next few years, if we sit down firmly to the task of consolidating existing institutions on existing foundations, gradually purifying and strengthening them; taking the greatest care always that the strongly established democratic character of existing native institutions is not in any way impaired.”

The practice in a place such as the Bechuana-land Protectorate shows plainly enough that the above essentials of sound government have hardly received even perfunctory attention from the responsible authorities, although they have had nearly forty years of leisure for the task. The backwardness of the High Commission in these and kindred matters is brought out more sharply still when we pass to the consideration of the native treasuries and native courts of Tanganyika.

§ 3

The Treasuries and Courts

In Tanganyika each of the new consolidated units of native administration, which have been evolved out of the former crowd of quarrelsome,

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

jealous, and incompetent petty chiefdoms, has its own treasury and its own court.

It is perhaps on the side of tribal finance that the progress made in the territory has been most striking. Before 1925 the custom prevailed here, as it still does in the High Commission and elsewhere in Bantu Africa, of paying tribute to the tribal authorities both in kind and in free labour. These authorities also received a small percentage of the hut and poll tax which they collected on behalf of the Government. No clear distinction existed between funds belonging to the tribe and funds personal to the chief, nor was the chief accountable to anyone for the expenditure of any part of his revenues. In practice, a chief's income was commonly spent under three main heads—salaries for his sub-chiefs, the support of his household, including his wives (who might number as many as seventy), and charity and the entertainment of visitors. The allocations to each head no doubt varied widely in different tribes and in accordance with the personal idiosyncrasies of chiefs; but in the best regulated chiefdoms they were perhaps approximately equal.

The tribute system is open to much abuse. In exposing the tribesman to constant, and often capricious, demands from his chief it puts a heavy drag on the economic development of the country. So far as it took the form of compulsory unpaid labour, it was also, in Tanganyika, of doubtful

THE NEW BOER WAR

legality under the mandate. Consequently tribute in both its forms was abolished in 1925. At the same time, the hut and poll tax was raised from 6s. to 10s. a year, the extra 4s. representing the commuted value of the tribute previously paid. The proceeds of the commutation were not, however, turned over to the personal use of the chiefs. Instead, native authority treasuries were instituted with a view to the benefit of the tribes as such. The treasuries are financed from a rebate of 25 per cent. of the tax collected, and from court fees and fines. From them are paid fixed stipends for the chiefs, their colleagues and subordinates, and all clerks and other employees of the native authority concerned. The balance is carried to a common purposes fund or to reserve.

The institution of native treasuries is the first main step towards the economic development of the tribes. It is significant that the change-over from the old system to the new was carried out in Tanganyika without trouble. The following account of it is given in the Annual Reports of Provincial Commissioners. "Those who had formerly been liable to tribute were happy to be relieved at a cost of an addition of 4s. to the annual tax, and the chiefs and their subordinate authorities who had to relinquish their tribute dues accepted the new order quietly because they realised that insistence on tribute in many cases embittered their relations with their people, that

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

tribute in kind was uncertain and increasingly troublesome to collect, and that the regular incomes assured to them from the native treasuries were sufficient for their proper maintenance in their positions."

The treasuries, on the whole, have come through the tests of practical working with flying colours. Now that the tribes have a direct interest in the volume of public revenue, it has been found that the spending capacity of native authorities enlarges itself from year to year, without any increase in the tax rebate, and without tapping new sources of revenue. Thus in one province the amounts expended annually by native treasuries on services of public utility rose as follows between 1928 and 1930:

Medical and Sanitation ..	£48 to £636
Education	£160 to £420
Roads and Bridges ..	£89 to £328

Total £297 to £1,384

Again, the Provincial Commissioner of the Central Province reports that the stage has now been reached where the public works carried out by the native authority are on such a scale as to permit of everything being done by contract. In the Shinyanga district (Tabora Province) 41 per cent. of the total expenditure by native treasuries is now devoted to works for the benefit of the

THE NEW BOER WAR

people as distinct from salaries of chiefs, headmen, etc. The natives themselves are surprised and gratified to find it possible to do so much with their own funds. "Their maternity and leper homes," reports the Provincial Commissioner, "are probably the finest of their kind in the territory, and are maintained solely by native treasury funds." The same native authority also runs a school, a demonstration and seed farm, a stock farm, a ghee industry, and is responsible for roads, reclamation schemes, and so on. Altogether, the native treasuries throughout the territory now dispose of revenues amounting to £200,000 a year, and have accumulated balances on hand of over £100,000. Tribal life has thus been transformed from a static to a dynamic thing, controlling the propulsive power for secure and orderly progress.

In a country where many of the chiefs are illiterate, and efficient and trustworthy clerks are scarce, it is not, of course, all plain sailing for native treasuries in their early days. Defalcations have inevitably occurred in the treasury offices; and there have been cases of chiefs who, instead of dealing with court cases in open court, sometimes preferred to fine people out of hand and put the money in their pockets. One such chief, indeed, went to prison for six months for this disregard of the formalities. But, in general, irregularities automatically diminish year by year, as the people become accustomed to working the

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

new machinery, as chiefs, headmen, and employees receive their salaries promptly on fixed dates, and as expenditure on public works takes place more and more in terms of written contracts. Administrative officers, too, give every assistance they can find time for in checking cash books and other records. Native treasury clerks are required to keep both a cash book, in which all payments and receipts must be entered, and a vote book which shows what sums are available for expenditure each month. Every treasury has its bank account, and all cheques have to be countersigned by an administrative officer. Having regard to the many difficulties, the working of the system has not disappointed the most sanguine expectations. One Provincial Commissioner sums up his experience in phrases which may be taken as having a general application throughout the country. "Treasury clerks on the whole have proved their worth. In Liwale it was necessary to engage youngsters who had just left school, as no other literate persons could be found who knew the local language. In spite of their age and inexperience, many of them did quite well. Systematic training of all clerks is constantly undertaken."

Native courts, unlike native treasuries, are part of the traditional tribal system. The British system, naturally, makes use of them to the full, but also seeks to increase their efficiency by that process of purification and strengthening on which

THE NEW BOER WAR

Sir Donald Cameron was wont continuously to insist. The first-class courts and the second-class courts correspond generally with the chiefs' courts and the sub-chiefs' courts distinguished by native law. But the law of the territory now regulates their jurisdiction by confining it to purely native cases, and by defining its extent on both the civil and the criminal sides. Appeal lies from second-class court to first-class court, and from first-class court to the courts of the white man.

In all this Tanganyika is merely following the usual British colonial practice. But the Tanganyika system also introduces various safeguards which, in the High Commission, for example, are often neglected with lamentable results.

- (a) Proper written records of all cases are kept by native clerks employed by the native authority.
- (b) These records are automatically inspected, and if necessary revised, by administrative officers, who may themselves give leave for an appeal to the High Court.
- (c) In some backward areas where litigants do not always fully understand their right of appeal, or perhaps do not care to exercise it for fear of offending their chief, a practice is made of asking the losing party to a suit whether he accepts the judgment of the court, and, if he does not, of treating the case as an appeal.

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

- (d) It is impressed on chiefs that their main duty in court is to pronounce judgment, and that the weighing and trial of cases should, in the interests of impartial justice, be left for the most part to the elders and "the more respectable of the audience whose opinions are worth hearing."

These steps are well designed to preserve an effective right of appeal, and to keep litigation out in the open and as free as possible from the bribery and corruption to which under the unimproved native system it often becomes liable. The court books give the administrative officer a power of genuine supervision, and they also afford a permanent record of completed litigation, thus "preventing the native from indulging his favourite pastime of resuscitating an old grievance."

A general judgment, applying implicitly to the Tanganyika system of native administration as a whole, was given by a Provincial Commissioner when he wrote in 1930:

I believe that during the last twelve months a distinct advance has been made by these young native administrations, and that they are beginning to feel greater confidence and to assume a large share of responsibility. A better feeling of public spirit and broad-mindedness is noticeable, a closer sense of co-operation and a real desire to work for the general good. Procedure

THE NEW BOER WAR

in native courts is improving, their records are better kept and judgments more fairly made. Their cash accounts are clean and generally accurate, their council deliberations aim at the restoration of the sound tribal customs and laws, and their tax collections are conducted on generally approved lines.

§ 4

Some Economic Results

In the first efforts at reconstruction after the War, the British authorities, following a common practice, turned to customs duties as a chief means of increasing revenue. The Berlin Act, which had fixed the tariff at 10 per cent., was accordingly amended in 1919, and a tariff of 20 to 30 per cent. imposed. Grants-in-aid were also forthcoming from the British Treasury, and by 1926, when the budget was finally balanced, these grants had reached a total of over three million pounds, representing roughly £600,000 a year. As a result of the administration's efforts, the revenue of the country increased, as Buell notes, by 65 per cent. between 1921 and 1926; and the railway revenue increased in the same period by 118 per cent. There is no need to describe in detail the grave difficulties with which the British

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

Administration found itself faced throughout the first five or six years of its existence. But it is worth recording the one advantage it enjoyed. The Tanganyika Government, in common with other mandatory Governments, has interpreted Article 257 of the Treaty of Versailles as exempting it from liability for interest on the German colonial loans by means of which were built those parts of the railways and harbours system that were in existence before the War. Had that liability been assumed, the territory's ordinary expenditure would have been increased by charges which, at 1913 values, amounted to some £1,750,000 a year. For purposes of comparison, however, it should be remembered that Kenya has also enjoyed a similar exemption, and that its revenues have not yet been charged with any interest payments on the money by which the construction of the Kenya-Uganda railway was financed—money found, in point of fact, by the British taxpayer.

The following table graphically sets forth the progress that has been made. In reading the table, it is necessary to bear two things in mind: (1) that the revenue figures for 1920-21 include a substantial grant-in-aid from the British Treasury (the deficit in ordinary revenue ceased in 1923); and (2) that all figures for 1912-13 relate not to the area now known as Tanganyika, but to the whole of the German Protectorate, which included also the Urundi-Ruanda territory now mandated to

THE NEW BOER WAR

Belgium. Urundi-Ruanda comprises a population of some $3\frac{1}{2}$ million natives. The table therefore shows that Tanganyika to-day, in spite of this huge curtailment, has a total trade larger by 62 per cent. than that of all German East Africa before the War. It is, of course, impossible to compare this result with what might have happened under German administration, had there been no war. But it does go to show that the British Administration has not failed.

	(ooo's omitted)				
	1912-13	1920-1	1925	1927	1930
Revenue (ordinary)	£753	790	1,240	1,904	1,749
Expenditure (ordinary)	£995	946	1,025	1,517	1,835
Imports	£2,466	1,386	2,863	3,101	3,982
Exports	£1,540	1,441	3,007	3,295	2,635
Total Trade ..	£4,006	2,827	5,871	6,396	6,518
European Population	5	2	3	5	6
Asiatic Population ..	14	14	15	19	25
Native Population ..	7,600	4,106	4,250	4,319	4,852

One other tabulation should be made—that of the hut and poll tax collections in Tanganyika. They are as follows:

1923	..	..	..	£426,333
1924	..	..	..	£446,900
1925	..	..	..	£674,973
1926	..	..	..	£682,106
1927	..	..	..	£708,533
1928	..	..	..	£736,970
1929	..	..	..	£748,734
1930	..	..	..	£700,852

THE CONTRAST WITH TANGANYIKA

The jump in 1925 was due to the increase in the rate of tax at the time of the commutation of tribute. Up till 1926 the figures include "House Tax" amounting to some £25,000 a year; thereafter they represent hut and poll tax alone. It thus appears that between 1925 and 1929 there was an increase of approximately 15 per cent. both in total native population and in hut and poll tax receipts. That is quick going, and it forms another illuminating contrast with the economic and biological stagnation of the High Commission Territories. It is difficult to resist the general conclusion that the High Commission has done much less than Tanganyika with more promising material, and that failure in the former has been due in large measure to the apathy of the British authorities and their inability to take an intelligent and courageous view of their opportunities.

CHAPTER IX

THE HANDS-UPPERS

It is a misfortune that, whenever the average intelligent Briton thinks of South Africa, the Dutch come first to his mind and the native second. If it occurs to him that he has any responsibility at all in connection with the place, he supposes it to be merely the responsibility to maintain Anglo-Dutch relations on the friendliest possible basis. He takes a patriotic pride in the circumstance that the Union is still a member of the Empire. For him it is an almost miraculous justification of "the great act of faith" of 1910, when Britain handed South Africa back to the defeated foe of eight years before. He remembers that four years after that retrocession, Britain was fighting with her back to the wall, and the ex-enemy statesmen brought South Africa in on her side, and kept her there to the bitter end. In 1919 General Hertzog petitioned the Peace Conference to release the South African Union from the Empire, or failing that to sanction the break-up of the Union and a return to independent republican status for the Transvaal and the Orange Free

THE HANDS-UPPERS

State. Both objectives were denied him. Nevertheless, when in 1924 he became Prime Minister of the Union, he dropped the republican cry like a hot brick, and by 1926 formally accepted South Africa's membership of the Empire as satisfying his people's aspirations after unfettered nationhood. To the average Briton these things seem almost too good to be true. Are they not signal tributes to the imperial genius of his fatherland? What other country in the world could have won over an old and stubborn enemy so completely to its cause?

Indeed, it is a diplomatic success as admirable in most respects as it is surprising in all. To make as full amends as she could for the war of 1899-1902 was in Britain an honest and laudable motive, worth stretching many a point to realise. And its realisation passes in the popular mind for the acme of large-visioned statesmanship. There is enough of truth in the view to make it plausible, and enough of self-flattery to make it comforting. People feel that, as long as the Boers stay in it of their own free will, there can't be much wrong with the old Empire after all. They also feel that Boer loyalty has been very cheaply bought—for the price, merely, of a little British magnanimity.

Unfortunately, there is a converse side to the acceptance of Boer loyalty as a test of the general health and solidarity of the whole imperial organism; it is subconsciously felt that Boer de-

THE NEW BOER WAR

fection would be a disaster of the first magnitude, the beginning of the Empire's end. Thus the primary aim of British policy since Union has been to avoid giving any shadow of offence to Boer susceptibilities. Every Boer politician, of course, recognises this, and knows that in the threat of secession he has a trump to cap any card that Britain cares to play.

There would be little to deplore in this situation, were it not for the South African native question, in which Britain, having still a direct responsibility for nearly a million South African natives, is very closely involved. It is easy to see the prudence of conceding to the Afrikaner his right of self-determination, and of humouring him whenever that can be done without throwing over serious principles. But the plain truth is that the cost of Boer loyalty, such as it is (and the republican movement is only dormant, not dead) has been met to a very slight extent by drafts on British magnanimity; the big drain has been on the material and spiritual pockets of the natives. Britain has, in effect, fumbled about with her small change, and then, jerking her head towards the native, remarked "My friend will pay." Anyone who knows South Africa will agree that the native has paid indeed. Britain has bought the Boer by sacrificing the native. Or rather she has tried to buy him. The sacrifice is complete; not so the purchase.

THE HANDS-UPPERS

Meanwhile, it is necessary to emphasise to what lengths British officialdom allows itself to be led by the pathetic awe in which it holds the Union. A responsible official recently delivered himself in the following terms:

I must confess that I view with very grave anxiety any statement which would even suggest that Great Britain would use the High Commission territories as a medium through which to attack the native policy of the Union. The British Government would be the first to repudiate such a suggestion. To embark on such a policy would (a) outrage public opinion in the Union, (b) render our position in the territories more precarious even than it is to-day, (c) utterly fail to achieve any advantage for either His Majesty's Government or the natives. . . . If we endeavour to challenge the Union through the territories, the result would be fatal to those whom we were trying to protect. It would be comparable to attempting to contest French policy by supporting a few brigands in the Vosges.

That this attitude would be heartily endorsed by the Dominions Office is, I fear, only too certain. From it springs the guiding principle hitherto followed in the administration of the territories, namely that the territories exist to supply the requirements of the Union's labour market, without

THE NEW BOER WAR

any claim for reciprocal benefits and regardless of the effects on the vitality, the tribal organisation, or the economic conditions of the territories themselves. To this principle and the spirit which informs it the present economic and social plight of the territories is directly due.

To the three specific grounds on which is rejected the contention that the High Commission ought not to use its native man-power to depress the standards of native life throughout the sub-continent, the replies are surely: (a) that the High Commission has the same right to pursue a native policy divergent from that of the Union as the Union has to pursue one divergent from that of the High Commission. While the Union remains as insensitive as it is to native public opinion in the High Commission territories, there is no need for the High Commission to show any special sensitiveness to European public opinion in the Union; nor, probably, would it do so, were it not for its dual function, which imposes on it (irrelevantly from the standpoint of the territories) a deep-seated concern for the goodwill of Union Ministers.¹ (b) If Britain's position in the territories is really precarious, it is only so, and can only be so, because the Union can plausibly con-

¹ Over and above his administrative and legislative responsibilities in the Protectorates, the High Commissioner is also accredited to the Union Government as a quasi-diplomatic envoy of the British Government.

THE HANDS-UPPERS

tend that their native populations would be no worse off, economically and socially, under its own system. Conversely Britain can only strengthen her position in the territories by notably improving the social and economic condition of the natives, and such improvement can only be effected by some measure of rational antagonism to Union policy. (c) What advantage to His Majesty's Government or to the natives is likely to accrue from mere acquiescence in the *status quo* ?

It is, I suppose, possible to credit the "hands-uppers" of Cape Town and Whitehall with the belief that if they can only turn enough cheeks to the Afrikaner, they may gradually win him over to the humanitarian view. This, as we saw in the opening chapter, is the very fallacy on which the Cape delegates worked at the National Convention. In the past it has led everyone astray who has ever tried it, and it cannot be sanely imagined to hold out any promise of future success. To-day, after years of practical reliance on it by the British, they have the settlers throughout Africa perhaps more solidly and vehemently opposed to British policy in native affairs than ever before. Mr. Grobler can speak for the Union, and the Kenya Association of Conventions for East Africa. As a Northern Rhodesian witness we may take an elected member of the Legislative Council who, in the middle of 1931, gave his views as follows:

THE NEW BOER WAR

East Africa would be under the domination of the British Government for generations in the matter of native policy, and Northern Rhodesia did not feel that it had treated the natives in such a way that this domination was necessary in its case. He considered that native policy should be based rather on that of South Africa, which placed European interests first.

The speaker proceeded to develop the thesis that if Northern Rhodesia were to amalgamate with Southern Rhodesia it would be in order to share the comparative freedom from such "domination" that that lucky self-governing colony enjoys.

Since the eighteenth century Britain has only had one way of dealing with settlements of white men overseas, and that is to give them whatever they ask for, provided they ask loud enough. It is not a bad method in the case of comparatively homogeneous societies such as those of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. But in Africa it is quite incompatible with the so-called trusteeship for the natives. Nevertheless, it has been applied in turn to the four territories which now form the provinces of the Union, to the Union itself, and to Southern Rhodesia; in Kenya the local whites have even been permitted to exercise, to the detriment of native welfare, various powers which they do not constitutionally possess. Yet in no instance

THE HANDS-UPPERS

has this "generosity" done anything whatever to commend to its beneficiaries Britain's ideas on native policy. "The white man on the spot in Africa always has us beat," is a dictum I once heard fall from the lips of a senior Whitehall official. As a judgment of fact it is lamentably true. But the implication that some divine necessity makes the fact now and for ever inevitable is surely false. The question is: Is this the spirit in which Britain is setting out to tackle the African problem in the fourth decade of the twentieth century?

One crucial point, as Milner long ago recognised, has to be frankly and firmly grasped—that in native policy Britain has either to face the music of the white colonist's opposition, or else to eat her words and break her pledges. To reconcile the white colonist as a class to liberalism and rationality in native affairs has been throughout African history, and remains, beyond the compass of statesmanship. "In spite of Majuba, in spite of Jameson," wrote Milner to Asquith in 1897, "I remain firmly of the opinion that, if it were not for my having some conscience about the treatment of the blacks, I personally could win over the Dutch in the Colony and indeed in all the South African dominions in my term of office, and that I could do so without offending the English. You have only to sacrifice 'the nigger' absolutely and the game is easy." The converse

THE NEW BOER WAR

is equally true; if you do not sacrifice the nigger, you cannot win over Dutch or English in the colony.

The warning was ignored, and the easy game was the one which Asquith and his party chose to play, when their time came. The same spirit of sloth has infected the administration of the High Commission ever since.

Yet how clearly Milner saw, and how great is the need of another Milner in the British Africa of to-day. In the same letter he also wrote: "You say, and say truly, that self-government is the basis of our colonial policy and the keystone of colonial loyalty. That principle fearlessly and unflinchingly applied would make South Africa as loyal as Canada—but what about the price? The abandonment of the black races, to whom you have promised protection, and the tolerance of a state of things in a self-governed State, which we should never tolerate for a moment in India, in Egypt, or in any of our Crown Colonies." The phrases paint, word by word, the South Africa we know; it is strange to reflect that in them their maker was but sketching a possibility hidden thirty years deep in the future.

There is queer irony in the fact that, so far from stipulating that membership of the British Empire shall mean the observance of certain minimum British standards, we have actually come to connive at South Africa's outrageous oppression of

THE HANDS-UPPERS

backward and defenceless peoples, simply because South Africa happens to be what is called a self-governing Dominion. If the Union were, say, Portuguese or Belgian territory, and if the position of the Protectorates in relation to it remained what they are to-day, there can be little doubt that Britain would have long ago made some effective protest against the treatment of natives within its borders. This is what non-Europeans in the Union mean when they say, as they quite often do, that they would be better off if the Union were not a part of the Empire.

In what circumstances, and in defence of what principles, is the British Government nowadays prepared to take a strong line? Perhaps the dispute with Mr. De Valera's Government in Ireland indicates the answer. In a blaze of righteous indignation glorious to behold, Britain will risk a first-class Empire rumpus in order to twist the tail of one republican malcontent over £5,000,000 land annuities; but if another frowns from the heights above Pretoria, not all the miseries of 6,000,000 oppressed natives can strike a spark of moral zeal out of her or make swerve her loyalty to the sacred cause of Safety First. Evidently in her modern reckoning a pound sterling counts for more than the well-being of a primitive African who has not yet learnt to kick up a shindy for himself.

Britain's failure in Africa to match the deed

THE NEW BOER WAR

with the word is almost a necessary consequence of her own verbosity. The British authorities have displayed a tireless zest in academic discussion of how natives ought to be treated. In a long and thick series of White Papers and reports Britain's intentions have been set out in much detail and with reasonable lucidity. And beautifully blameless intentions they are. There are two things wrong with them. One, that the exertion of expression has left little energy available for carrying them out—as far as South Africa and the Rhodesias are concerned, indeed, almost literally none. The other, that they always annoy the settlers, because, while they fail to touch their rather blunted consciences (it must be recognised that a blunted conscience in native matters is a normal, though not an invariable, acquisition of the settler), the settlers see in them a threat to their privilege and security.

If you are going to annoy the settlers in any case, is it not better to be hanged for the sheep of determined action than for the lamb of unfilled promises?

At present, native feeling is everywhere in favour of British policy and the British attitude. After seeing the High Commission territories one is inclined to wonder why, and whether the Transkei and Zululand quite know what they mean when they ask, as they recently have asked once again, to be brought under direct British

THE HANDS-UPPERS

control. For so far British benevolence has counted for extraordinarily little in practical things. The answer presumably is that, just as the settlers hate the British attitude because they fear its bite may prove worse than its bark, so the natives like it because they have not yet realised that its desire is more potent than its performance. But to the observer untouched by fear or hope it begins to look as though both the trust and the mistrust are equally misplaced. The trust at least will not last for ever, unless the stones now proffered to it are replaced by something edible and fairly nutritious.

If the Government of Great Britain has any serious purpose in Africa, if it holds any genuine convictions about African colonial government, if it embodies anything more than a balance of the forces of outside opinion that impinge upon it, there is one primary step it must find the pluck to take. Bluntly stated, that step is to stop talking, and to demonstrate in the economic field the point for which it loudly and sometimes almost sanctimoniously professes to contend. The native problem is, first and foremost, a problem of grinding poverty and all the many ills that flow from grinding poverty. Native prosperity cannot conceivably be inimical to the interests of the European, whether he be a settler in Africa or a manufacturer in Britain. Why not try in earnest to create it? Only by that means can Britain civilise the local whites and create new markets. As

THE NEW BOER WAR

yet there is no native prosperity anywhere in British Africa south of the Zambesi.

In the second half of this century Africa will be Britain's major pre-occupation in the sphere of Empire, as India is to-day. If Britain cannot muster for the task more constructive ideas and more of the crusading spirit than she shows in her equipment now, she throws away all possible justification of her imperialist adventures in Africa.