

THE BLACK PROBLEM

by

D. D. T. JABAVU, B.A. (Lond.)



20+ **STORE, LOVEDALE, C.P.**

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*PAPERS AND ADDRESSES ON
VARIOUS NATIVE PROBLEMS*

BY

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Second Edition.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

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THE BOOK DEPARTMENT
LOVEDALE, C.P.

TO MY WIFE

**But for whose self-denial this volume would
not have been compiled.**

FOREWORD.

Mr. Jabavu has asked me to say a few words as to my opinion of the work—"The Black Problem," which, I am glad to learn, is about to be reprinted.

It is a very well written and thoughtful exposition of the relation of the coloured races to the Europeans in South Africa ; and it deserves careful attention by all of those, whatever their colour may be, who love South Africa and desire that it may be a centre and example of the higher civilisation in the Dark Continent.

Mr. Jabavu writes with moderation. Himself a man of European culture, with a degree recognised all over the British commonwealth as a hall-mark of acquirements of no small order, he states, with moderation, the many slights and indignities, to which in this country of which we are so proud, he and his like are subjected. The subject is a painful one, and in the days to come it may be fraught with difficulty and danger.

Mr. Jabavu is a follower and admirer of Booker Washington who led the school of Negro thought in America, which is in opposition to that which, by emphasising the social disabilities that beset the cultured and wealthy Negroes in the land where all men are free and equal has, under the leadership of Dr. W. E. du Bois, striven to bring about a revolution among the coloured people not only in the United States but all over the world. Mr. Jabavu following in the lines of Booker T. Washington has uttered some words of wisdom to his fellow countrymen : on the value of the gospel of work as the best and truest means of raising them in the path of civilisation and prosperity.

His sketch of Tuskegee and its aims and methods are deserving of study by Europeans and Non-Europeans alike. They are worth a wilderness of windy appeals to social grievances ; and are the surest way of obtaining redress at the hand of all right-thinking men.

I cordially wish Mr. Jabavu success in his effort to uplift his countrymen in the true path of wise citizenship and I hope his book may have the success which it undoubtedly deserves.

JOHN X. MERRIMAN.

Schoonegezig,
12th December, 1920.

PREFACE.

SO much has been said and written about the Native Problem of South Africa that any further intrusion into this vexed question seems to call for an explanation, if not, indeed, an apology. In offering this modest volume of speeches and addresses, the writer has been influenced by certain clearly defined motives.

In the first place, the times appeared to be ripe for the statement of a Native's opinions on Native matters. In connection with the progress through Parliament of that far-reaching measure the Native Affairs Act of 1920, much has been said in Parliament, on political platforms, at conferences and in the press on Native matters. While much enthusiasm, some meanness, and not a little race hatred have been shown, the prominent feature of these utterances has been the ignorance of Native opinion and Native ideals revealed by the speakers and writers. This has been largely inevitable since, through lack of opportunity, guidance and proper education, no Native has hitherto attempted a serious and comprehensive explication of the Native question. It is true that fragmentary statements have been made from time to time in the Native press and by certain organisations. We are still, however, unsupplied with an all-round practical exposition of the Native problem by a Native, an exposition that would constitute an adequate reference work, providing both negative and constructive criticism. This is part of the work essayed by the present volume.

In the second place it seemed necessary that the Native people themselves, should receive such friendly criticism and guidance as can be given to them by one of their own race. If it is true that it takes a Native to know a Native, the writer should be in an especially

favourable position to advise his fellow countrymen, since it has been his task to study the languages of all the South African Native peoples, with their local, racial and social characteristics. He is conscious of their strength and weaknesses. And in several of the articles in the present volume he is addressing people whom he knows intimately, whose life is his life and whose problems are his problems.

The *post bellum* spirit is one of aggressive reconstruction. The world to-day in every sphere of activity, not excepting in churches and religion, wants practical men, preachers and prophets who, whilst seeing the faults in things and men as they are, stand by with remedies and solutions. It has no time for idle grumblers. The present booklet may not fully supply the contemplated need, but the author hopes it may indicate, for future Native African researchers, the way in which this may be done. One says designedly African researchers; for however sympathetic and good a European may be, he cannot undertake such a task with the minute knowledge and enthusiasm that can belong only to the Native African, who must himself be the victim of the untoward circumstances and difficulties under discussion.

In the third place, the black man is in danger of losing confidence in the possibility of good coming his way from the white man—indeed many think that he has already lost it irrevocably. The writer does not share this pessimism; but even if it were the case, it would still be possible, one would like to think, to restore this moribund confidence to life, provided that the black man can secure the right type of leader from his own race, to master his psychology and guide him aright in the difficult task of race-adjustment.

This work, being a compilation of papers and addresses made during the course of the last seven

years, has a certain overlapping of topics due to the disconnection in the dates of the occasions that called forth the efforts. The repetition may, however, prove an advantage as it will serve to emphasise the more important points of the general Native question. Hence for those to whom the use of the first personal pronoun is a rock of offence, the writer should say in explanation that several of the addresses, far from being philosophic disquisitions, were simple talks to simple Native teachers, and frequently to unsophisticated rustics who appreciate the direct personal appeal better than impersonal abstractions.

Thanks are due to Rev. J. E. East of Middledrift, C.P., for to him and to a close association with him in social work among the rural people of our vicinity, I owe much of my information on agricultural matters and conditions. The formal addresses of the Native Farmers' Association included under certain sections are introduced here only because the writer was a collaborator in the framing thereof.

I am thankful to Rev. H. B. Coventry, B.D. (Lond.), of Lovedale, for his valuable assistance in the correction of many proofs and some verbal suggestions, and to my College students for transcriptions and typing.

A word of gratitude is due also to Prof. Alexander Kerr, M.A., Principal of the S.A. Native College, for his generosity in granting me leave to attend meetings of farmers and teachers as well as religious conferences; for had it been withheld, as it could have been withheld *sine injuria*, this book would not have been possible.

To Dr. C. T. Loram, M.A., LL.B., Chief Inspector of Native Education, Natal, the author is deeply indebted for encouragement in the genesis of this venture. May it not be in vain.

D. D. T. J.

September, 1920.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first edition of this volume has been exhausted within three months and the author feels that a piece of propaganda work to uplift his people and to enlighten the Europeans, specially those who have much to do with African Natives, has been in some measure successful. Since its appearance, a number of arresting events, some ominous, others promising, have dramatically compelled attention to the first section of the work: such are the Port Elizabeth riots with other strike-threatening movements elsewhere, on the one hand; and the discussions on the Native Elementary vote in the Transvaal Provincial Council, Rand European meetings for the study of the Native question, and the spread of Native Welfare Associations up-country and in the Cape, on the other hand.

Press notices from the principal papers of the Union (European and Native), from certain papers in Great Britain and many personal communications of writers from all races have welcomed the book notwithstanding its unconventional form; and even though they did not agree with all its contents—and this is inevitable in this world—they have, however, led the author to believe that his endeavour will go a considerable way towards his goal of inducing a good understanding between the black and white races of South Africa.

The section on the Native Affairs Act has been condensed so as to allow room in the book for the kind and valuable foreword by one of the oldest and most genuine friends the Natives of this country have ever had, Mr. J. X. Merriman, to whom I offer my sincerest thanks.

January, 1921.

D. D. T. J.

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