

Dawn of Tomorrow

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Editorial

THE CAUSE OF NATIVE UNREST IN AFRICA

We quote the following from the Negro Year-Book of 1921-1922.

"Mr. D. D. T. Jabavu, a native of South Africa, who received his education at London University and who is professor of Banter languages in the South African Native College at Alice, Cape Province, in an address before the Natal Missionary Conference at Durban in July, 1920, read a very illuminating paper on 'The cause of Native Unrest.' He mentioned what he considered to be six causes: first the high cost of living and the inability of the native to bring pressure to bear to get increase of wages, etc., to meet the high cost of living; second, the successive droughts and consequent failure of crops which have rendered the primitive methods of agriculture unprofitable, neglected and unpopular. Third, the taxing of the natives without representation. 'The time has passed when the Bantu people in the Union of S. Africa can be treated as children.' 'They have vivid recollections of how their political rights were bargained away in the passification of Vereening (1902). They reckon the Union Act of 1916 united only the white races and that as against the blacks: for the color bar clause struck the death knell of native confidence in what used to be called 'British fair play.'

Fourth the native has lost faith in his administration of justice. The jury system is against the native. The sentences of the magistrates in their severity are distinctly anti-native. Suspended sentences are only for the Europeans. Europeans get off lightly and quietly for crimes against natives such as murder and rape, while the utmost rigour of the law, amidst press trumpeting and fanfare, a high court judge was not long ago quoted in the 'Daily Dispatch' as practicing and upholding differentiation of punishments as between whites and blacks for similar offenses.

Fifth, the educated native cannot move anywhere without being made to know 'that his black skin is his life-long damnation.' 'He is practically not recognized as a citizen entitled to a place under the sun.' In Pretoria and other cities of the Northern province, the black man is not allowed to use the street cars and must either walk or hire a private

conveyance. The black man in all public places is either Jim-crowed, or altogether ostracized. In stores, he has to wait till all whites are served. In public offices he is bullied by officials. In markets his stock and produce are by tacit agreement earmarked for low prices. His sugar-cane is not accepted at the Zululand mills. Evening curfew bells restrict his freedom of movement among his friends and he is cut and snarled at throughout his life.

Sixth, discrimination on railways. The black man, 'at the very start of his journey is buffeted by booking clerks: in the goods' shed he is unnecessarily anathematized in language that cannot bear repeating. His waiting rooms are made to accommodate the rawest, blanketed heathen; and the more decent native has either to use them and annex vermin or to do without shelter in biting winter weather. His accommodation in trains is usually not equal to the money he pays in fares. There are frequently more people than the half coach can contain."

O England, England, you are called upon to answer a severe indictment. We are waiting, waiting with eager ears to hear you say and prove that these charges are not true. But if they are true—what a dwarf is England of to-day compared to that England over which Gladstone was premier. If it be true that the spirits of the departed ones do revisit this earth, if it is true that they have knowledge of the affairs of men here below, how sorely grieved must be the spirits of Livingstone, Stanley, Baker and the spirits of many other martyrs, who gave their lives and their all that the natives might know the meaning of civilization. And perhaps the spirits of those illustrious African chiefs who wished the white man's civilization upon their tribes are standing together with bowed heads looking down upon Africa and saying: "And this is what the white man's civilization has meant to my people."

On many occasions the South has bristled when the Empire has chided her Jim-crow laws and for her discrimination. She has answered: "Let the British Empire clean her own house." We can now sense her meaning.

We feel called upon as Afro-Americans and as loyal subjects of the British Empire, to remind England that even greater Empires than ours have fallen through the perseverance of such policies as Mr. Jabavu claims that England is carrying out in South Africa to-day.

The Negro was first disfranchised in the District of Columbia by a Republican Congress. While all the inhabitants were disfranchised, the real object was to get rid of the Negro vote. Oliver P. Morton, Senator from Indiana, fought it bitterly and warned the Republicans that it would be a precedent which the South would follow. But the Republicans passed it and the words of Morton came true.

The new President of Cuba is a man of mixed blood, a considerable part of which is Negro. His wife is of Spanish descent and he has two daughters, both girls strikingly mulatto in appearance.



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Pittsburgh, Pa., Nov.—(By the Associated Negro Press)—A bronze medal has been awarded Edward Ashby Pipkin, white, for saving from drowning, a colored woman, Mrs. Lucy Smith, and attempting to save another, Esther N. Smith, by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission of this city.