

E. AFRICA  
East Africa

38739

38739

Brevet

P. Col. U. S. A.

1919

26 June

(referred)

Last previous paper

Colon Quarter

Mr. Read

Mr. H. Read

I kept this off the public  
register because some persons  
did not seem to come up to the  
standard of security one would  
expect of an officer of Col. Bennett's  
distinguished administrative &  
military service.

I have spoken of you  
You will see from his file  
that he has been involved  
long with intense mental  
depression which still persists.  
There is little in these letters  
which is fresh to anyone who  
has been connected with official  
administration in any way, and

next subsequent paper

Do not think that we need  
concern those people, whose  
want of prejudice is evidenced  
by the fact that he first came  
prominently to our notice by  
taking the law into his own  
hands in a case where a native  
was alleged to have insulted  
(by gesture or impudence,  
forget which) a European  
woman at Nairobi.

The Horn problem is <sup>in</sup> a  
slight degree an E. A. matter  
as one nation comes to this  
country & very seldom - a  
few Lusitani planes &  
occasional Somalis at Cardiff.  
Males (chiefly I think West  
African) have figured largely in  
recent occurrences, but it is  
mainly due to the Indian  
element of the population that  
the intra-racial appetite has  
grown among a section of the  
female population.

I do not see what we can  
do about it or it will be  
sufficient for a part of the  
Native's <sup>own</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~be~~ <sup>sent</sup> to Col. Bennett

by the Private Secretary?

600-2/7/17

Private Secy

Japra

H. J. R.

3/27/19

I have acknowledged

Her

4/7/19



Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., P.C.,

Colonial Office,

LONDON.

My Lord;

Owing to what my numerous friends call my "unique knowledge" of this question, I am being constantly urged by them to write to the "Press" about the matter of "Colour Prejudice." I do not claim to have "unique knowledge" of this or any other question, but as an ordinary Englishman, who from childhood has had no class prejudice and have always mixed on equal terms with rich and poor alike, and who for a great number of years has made the study of human nature and character, <sup>Coloured</sup> in both Colonial and white races, my main hobby in life, I may claim to know a little about the matter of "Colour Prejudice."

If our present Prime Minister, who appears to me to have a greater knowledge of the working of the human mind than any other living Britisher was not so busy in France helping to settle a matter of even greater importance than the one I write to you about, which latter in the opinion of many thinking Englishmen comes second only to that of the Social upheaval we shall see here in England, unless the brain of Mr. Lloyd George has thought of a way to avert it, I should have obtained an introduction to him for the purpose of bringing the facts I enclose herewith to his notice.

As a government official, knowing the intense bitterness that exists among many people in England, rich and poor alike, against not only the black and black coloured races, but against the government itself over the unchecked association of white women with black and coloured men, I consider it my duty to write to you about the matter. I have discussed this evil with great numbers of Englishmen and Colonials who have lived among Black and Coloured races, and all agree that something must be done, and done soon.

Many Englishmen and Colonials express the wish that the rioting would end in a general massacre of blacks, the majority, however, are against mob violence, but all are united on the one point, namely, that if they found a black or coloured man carrying on with their own sisters they would kill him, or do their best to do so, I admit that, much as I like the Black man for his many good qualities, I should do the same. If I did not do so I should consider myself contemptible. This might not be justice, but it is the working of human nature, the strongest force in existence.

Everyone who knows our race, is perfectly well aware that on account of the association of English women and coloured men a large spark has been ignited in England, which only needs fanning into flame by an organized and well conducted propaganda to end in the massacre of large numbers of coloured people living in our midst. In fact, the flame might easily be brought into being by the return to this country of the many thousands of our Troops from the East and Egypt. I have reason to know that the feeling among some of the Rank and File of our Army in Egypt is intensely bitter against Coloured

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race - I have talked to some of them and seldom in my life have I met men so bitter about anything. Knowing how some of their comrades have been brutally done to death and their corpses mutilated, one is not surprised at their bitterness. This feeling may wear off by the time they reach England, but the sight of perhaps their own womenfolk, associating with coloured men will most surely revive it.

It is not for me to, unasked, suggest any remedies for combating the evil that exists, but I could do so. Every word I have written in the attached letter is absolutely accurate, but in case, Sir, you may want to verify anything, I would suggest that you show it to Major Swart Grogan or any other unprejudiced Colonist, official, Military Officer or Missionary, who has really associated with the Black or Coloured Races in their own countries. I mention Major Grogan, as, though he is no sentimentalist, he has a great knowledge of and real affection for the blacks, and because he has always at heart the interests of those white races who form the ruling races of the British Colonial Empire, but like myself is utterly opposed to the foolish, and in fact criminal and mistaken idea held by some people that the only way to gain the friendship and respect of a black or coloured man is to let him cohabit with English women unchecked or do just as he pleases. I regret, Sir, that I am not good at putting my knowledge on paper and have therefore been unable to go into the matter of "Colour prejudice as fully as I would have wished.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

*W. H. Barrett*

Lieut. Colonel.  
District Commissioner British East Africa,  
(late 1/5 King's African Rifles)

Ston Hall,  
The Marina,  
Boscombe,

BOURNEMOUTH.

26th June, 1919.

Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.O.M.G., P.O.,  
Colonial Office,  
LONDON.

My Lord;

As one whose family has for three generations been intimately associated with India, and myself have served a few years in that Country and seventeen in Africa, may I be permitted to write a few words on the question of so-called "Colour prejudice."

My life in Africa has been spent almost entirely among the Black races, for whom I have a very real liking and admiration, some of them make excellent soldiers, policemen, clerks, overseers, servants and labourers; these men, if treated properly, that is to say, strictly, but justly, are very reliable and loyal to those over them, whether they be black or white. There are many well-known cases where the black soldier has given his life to save that of his black or white officer, and many where a black servant has saved his master from death at the risk of his own life.

I know numerous black men whom I look upon as my friends, and am very grateful to them for various things they have done for me in the past, and I have good reason to know that they like and respect me.

When, however, I am asked if I approve of Black men living on intimate terms with white women, I say most emphatically, No! Any white officer or settler in Africa who permitted his womenfolk to associate on intimate terms with a black man would instantly lose the respect, not only of those natives serving under him, but of every native in his District who heard about it. If, on the other hand, a white man associates with a native woman, and I regret to say that some have done so, the majority of uncivilized blacks in parts of Africa look on it as quite a natural thing, and simply say "Man should not live without a woman." They, however, look down on the woman.

The character of black men in Africa, their ideas of life and customs have been very carefully studied by me. I have asked very great numbers of them the following questions:-

- I. What to you makes life worth living more than anything else?

The answer almost invariably has been Sexual intercourse with women. In a very few cases cattle or food have come first and Sexual intercourse second.

- II. Would nothing prevent you from indulging in this Sexual intercourse?

To which the answer has always been, nothing but fear or lack of opportunity.

Dr. Henderson, an American Missionary, on being asked why he would never allow any of his Missionary Ladies to live on a Mission Station without an European man, replied: "Because I know the black men's nature after nineteen years of work amongst them."



In bringing the above to your notice I do not in any way try to disparage the Black, but simply mention it to show that, really, he is in no way to blame for what has happened in England. Events which have led to scenes of rioting in Cardiff and elsewhere.

Many Englishmen have told me that they apportion the blame as follows:

"Firstly, the Colonial governments who allowed the Black man to come to England at all. Members of these governments know, or at any rate should know, of the sexual desires of the black man as well as most white men and women who have lived among them do.

"Secondly, successive British Governments have had every reason to know that there existed in England women of a certain temperament, who unlike Colonial women, admire any man who has a touch of colour in him. They should have known that the meeting of these women and black men could have only one result.

"No effective measures were taken by the Authorities to keep these people apart, in fact, the blacks were allowed to drink and live in the lowest quarters of big towns, with the disastrous results that have already occurred.

"Thirdly, some of the parents of these women, and the women themselves are very greatly to blame."

If it is proposed to repatriate all the blacks, the question which arises is, will the Colonies they come from take them back. Their governments, if they wish to do so, can produce unanswerable arguments as to why they should not. I am sure that large numbers of blacks will not depart willingly.

Some of the Black troops returning to Africa after the Coronation in 1902 complained that the women in England would not let them alone, and the name they called these women is unprintable. They added that the women they found over here must be of a different race to our white women in Africa.

This so-called "Colour Prejudice" is by no means confined to the Black and White races.

Not so long ago, in Mombassa, a dance was given in aid of the Red Cross. It was for Europeans only. Some Indians arrived and were denied admission, on which they were very annoyed, until a gentleman who knew them very well arrived on the scene, and told them that if they went and fetched their wives and daughters to the dance, all would be admitted. This suggestion horrified them. "Well," said he, "you cannot expect us to allow you to mix with our womenfolk, if you will not allow yours to mix with us." They quite saw the absolute justice of this remark and thanking him went away.

Very few respectable Indians will allow their daughters to marry an European. Very few good caste Indians will permit their womenfolk to associate with European men on intimate terms. Hardly any, if any, high caste Indians living in India or Africa would allow their daughters to marry an Arab, though they may be of the same religion.

No Indian living in India or Africa would sanction the marriage of his daughter to a full blooded black though they may be of the same religion; though some Indians in Africa cohabit with black women, and as a rule the Black men do not seem to mind.

No pure blooded Arab living in Africa would allow

his daughter to marry a full blooded Black, though they may be of the same religion. Many Arabs, however, cohabit, with black women, and the black men take no notice of it.

If you ask an Arab why he will not allow his daughter to marry a Black or a religionist he will reply, "I belong to the old ruling race, I do not intend to allow my daughter to be shamed, or my race brought to dishonour by such a union." Numbers of Black tribes hold aloof from other Black races and will not sanction the marriage of their daughters to men of these races.

I know of an instance where a Somali has killed his daughter because she had entered a Camp occupied by black troops, though there was no evidence to show she had misbehaved herself.

In the Southern States of the United States of America, where perhaps there is more sympathy between the Negroes and Whites than in any other place in the world, the views of both races on the question of cohabitation between white women and black men are so universally known that it is unnecessary to state them.

The suggestion that the riots have been caused by Alien agitators is, of course, utterly ridiculous. These gentry would gladly see our country flooded by Blacks. They well know the harm that has already been done in India and the Colonies to our prestige, as the ruling race, from us allowing these blacks already here to live in intimate terms with our women.

In fact, many Englishmen who have had great experience of Indian affairs say, that it is their firm belief, we have, to a great measure, lost the respect of Indians through allowing our womenfolk to carry on with such members of their

race as have been to England. I have no hesitation in saying that, to an Indian, who looks on maintaining the honour of his own womanfolk as his first duty in life, a race that allows him to carry on unchecked with its womankind is to say the least of it extraordinary. Nobody who knows India well, and really understands the working of the Indian mind is at all surprised at the trouble we have brought on ourselves in that country.

Imagine the thoughts of a respectable Indian, who, while walking in the streets in England may see an Indian sweeper, a caste so low, that no other Indian treats him as an equal, arm in arm with a well-dressed English girl.

Imagine again, the thoughts of a respectable Indian when he sees an English chambermaid performing tasks for him which in his own country would only be performed by the despised sweeper caste. Later he may see this same girl chatting on terms of equality with some English gentleman, a fellow guest of his at the Hotel or Boarding-house he is staying at, she may even be taken out for a walk or to the Theatre by this fellow guest. He may even know of cases where gentlemen have married into this class. The result of all this is that he ends by despising our whole race.

I was yesterday informed by an Officer of the Indian Army just home from India that even the fact - incredible as it may appear to those who have no knowledge of the Indian mind - that white ladies had nursed sick and wounded Indians in Hospital had greatly lessened the respect for English ladies in India. Anyone, however, who knows the duties of a nurse and understand the Indian knows that the employment of White women on this work could have no other result.

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In India and in England I have asked Indians of a good class what they would do if they found an European man carrying on with their womenfolk and the reply has invariably been "I would kill him!"

A marriage between an Indian and an Englishwoman nearly always ends in abject misery for the woman, sometimes for both. The white wife on landing in India not only finds herself despised by her own race, but utterly detested and despised by the Indian community - especially the women.

The half caste in India is looked down upon by the English community and utterly despised by the Indians. I believe that many white women married to Indians and living in India when they realize this would rather die than bear children.

In race the Indian is much nearer in blood to an Englishman than a Black man, but his caste prejudices, customs, and sometimes his religious beliefs, not to mention his "colour prejudices," draw him in reality even further apart, if possible, from us than the Negro.

Any attempt at establishing social equality between the English and Indian races, which permits our women to mix with their men and does not allow their womenkind to mix with us is not really equality, but an admission of the superiority of the natives; at any rate, that is how they look on it at the present time.

I hope, Sir, that you will not think that, as a government official, I am saying more than I am entitled to, when I say that the association of our English women with black men is not only an outrage against nature, but is criminal folly, because of the irreparable harm it does to our efforts

At peaceful rule over the Black and coloured peoples whose destinies we control.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

*W E H Barrett* - Lieut: Colonel.

District Commissioner British East Africa.

(late 1/5 King's African Rifles).

Siveton Hall,  
The Marina,  
Boscombe,  
BOURNEMOUTH.

June 26th, 1919.

Box 139

28th July 1919

Dear Sir,

I am desired by Lord Milner to acknowledge  
the receipt of your letter of the 26th June with reference  
to the colour question.

Yours truly,

H. C. T.