

inquiring as to their business. They mention to us that they have brought cattle. We ask them how many cattle they have brought; they say there are four. We ask for a description of those four cattle; they say the cattle are of such and such a description. We ask for what purpose they have been brought. They say the cattle have been brought for purpose of marriage. We question them as to where and with whom they propose to marry. They say they have come to marry this kraal of ours.

'Then we sit silent and consider that matter and at length. In the end we say to them four cattle are too few for our daughter, we will nevertheless accept these four for the time being, but they [the men] must return whence they have come and bring us one more beast now, and more later.

'If they agree to do this, we accept "u-Swazi", and thereby is the agreement to the marriage concluded. We slaughter a goat for the men and we eat meat. We do not slaughter a sheep because it is silent under the knife. We slaughter a goat because it bleats and its bleating is a good omen. Hear the bleating of the goat!'

It must be made clear that I was present as the different matters described were proceeding. The goat was brought up to the hut door to be approved by the head of the kraal before it was slaughtered. It was slaughtered while I was within the hut, and my attention was drawn to the fact that it had bleated. The three girls had meantime been instructed as to where they would be required to spend the night, and it was not made evident that they seriously objected to the duty imposed upon them.

*(Communicated by F. BROWNLEE, Native Commissioner, Matatiele, South Africa.)*

### *The South African Native College.*

The South African Native College at Fort Hare, Cape Province, is one of the most important centres of native education in South Africa. It was opened in 1916 by the Prime Minister of the Union. The foundation of the College was mainly due to the efforts of protestant missionary circles, but from the beginning the Government took an active interest in the plan, and it is entitled to nominate four representatives to the Governing Council.

The College is designed to provide a liberal education of University standard, and also training for those who wish to qualify themselves to enter upon one of the learned professions or to take up agriculture, commerce, industries, or domestic arts. Native, coloured, and Indian students are admitted. The inclusive fee for students in attendance at any courses is £30 per annum. A number of scholarships are available. The number of students has been steadily increasing and amounted to 160 in 1931. In 1930 there were 130 students, 122 men and 8 women; 8 of the students were coloured and 5 Indian, so that the great majority are South African natives,

54 of these speaking Xosa, 25 Suto, 18 Zulu, 2 Chuana, 6 Pedi, and 12 Pondo.

The courses comprise English, Afrikaans, Bantu Studies, History, Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Zoology, Botany, Logic and Psychology, Ethics and Economics. Theological courses have been established by the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa and the United Free Church of Scotland Mission.

The language of instruction is English; the genuine University character of the College teaching is demonstrated by the fact that in certain courses Latin is also taught. But on the other hand, South African languages are at least not excluded altogether. Xosa, Zulu, Suto, and Chuana are among the subjects mentioned in the Calendar<sup>1</sup> for 1932. In addition to languages, social anthropology with special reference to South Africa is a subject of study. In one of the earlier publications of the College the intention was expressed that the College should be made a real and active centre of Bantu studies. How far this plan is being carried out cannot be seen from the Calendar. The opportunities for it are unique. All the chief vernaculars are represented in the College, and they are not sufficiently numerous to make the establishment of courses in each of the languages in any way difficult. The students will through their study be far-sighted enough to realize how important it is for them not to neglect their own languages, which already possess such encouraging beginnings of a real indigenous literature; and they, as the future leaders of their people, are the ones who should co-operate in the improvement of this literature and in collecting native poetry and historical tradition which without their co-operation might be lost.

In the Principal's report it is stated that 'the handwriting and English of most students are weak', that there is 'a lack of originality in English composition', 'the teaching of English composition is, not unnaturally, one of the most difficult tasks we are set.' This is indeed natural, since English is a foreign language to the students. But from experience in other parts of Africa it might be assumed that a mastery of the foreign tongue would be acquired more thoroughly and also with less loss of time if the students had a firm and scientific grounding in the grammar and general structure of their own language.

The South African Native College has in the short period of its existence become a dominating factor in the higher education of the native people, and the work already achieved deserves full admiration.

<sup>1</sup> South African Native College. Fort Hare, Alice, Cape Province. Calendar for 1932.